



GREAT FALLS FIRE RESCUE

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GREAT FALLS FIRE RESCUE FIRE INFORMATION RELEASE

Great Falls, MT – It has been a busy few days for Great Falls Fire Rescue. From Saturday morning to this morning, GFFR responded to 64 calls for service. Of those 64 calls for service, three of those calls were working structure fires.

At 1:15am on the morning of October 7th, A platoon responded to a 2nd alarm fire at 3440 11th Ave S. GFFR arrived on scene to find a 12-unit apartment building with fire affecting three floors. On arrival, crews found three teenage girls trapped on a third floor balcony. The crew on Engine 3 was able to quickly evacuate the girls from the balcony, via a ground ladder. Meanwhile, GFFR crews rescued an elderly occupant from a first floor hallway.

The occupant of a first floor apartment was transported to Benefis East for smoke inhalation. Another occupant was assessed on scene for minor smoke inhalation, and was taken to Benefis East by a friend.

The fire caused extensive damage to the apartment building, and was very labor intensive for crews to get under control. As this was a second alarm fire, off duty personnel were called back into work. GFFR also received mutual aid from the Malmstrom Air Force Base fire department, and the Montana Air National Guard fire department.

The fire started in a first floor apartment, and was caused by a cigarette that was dropped on portable oxygen tubing.

The second fire occurred at roughly 4:30 am on the morning of October 7th. This fire occurred at 820 25th St N. The fire started in a ford pickup that was stored inside an auto repair shop. Video footage from the shop shows the fire starting in the driver side engine compartment. The fire fully consumed the pickup. The shop building was air tight which did not allow for oxygen to enter into the building and fuel the fire. Thus with the lack of oxygen the fire became oxygen deprived and snuffed itself out. Also, with the building being air tight, little smoke escaped from the building, so the fire went unnoticed until the owner of the building went to the shop around 11:30 and noticed smoke staining on the exterior of the shop. When he unlocked the front door of the shop, he found the entire building to be full of smoke. When GFFR arrived on scene, and the shop doors were opened, oxygen was reintroduced to building, causing the pickup to once again flare up with small fires.



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As this fire started at 4:30am, it is very fortunate that it did not fully involve the building, as GFFR crews were on scene fighting the fire at 3440 11th Ave S. If this building would have been fully involved, there is a high likely hood that the entire building along with other nearby buildings, would have been lost. The building itself, suffered heavy smoke damage, and heat damage from the fire. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

The third fire occurred this morning, October 10th at roughly 1 am. This fire occurred in an RV located on a property at the intersection of 8th Ave S and 6th St S. GFFR crews arrived on scene to find the RV fully involved in fire. GFFR was able to quickly extinguish the fire. There were no occupants in the RV at the time of the fire, and the RV is considered a total loss. The cause of the fire is undetermined.

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