

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Plastic fire a great save by firefighters

Tuesday, 15 September 2009

The Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) responded to a significant fire at a plastics recycling plant at Kilburn in Adelaide's north-east last night which threatened two factories, a foundry and an industrial-sized LP Gas cylinder.

The fire, involving plastic recycling materials stored outdoors at 'Plastics Granulating Services' on Inwood Road, was clearly visible on Adelaide's skyline and prompted a major response involving 24 fire trucks and about 90 firefighters.

MFS Chief Officer, Grant Lupton says the blaze impinged on buildings and left a damage bill of about \$500,000 to plastic recycling products, but the committed effort of firefighters prevented structural damage.

"A main concern for firefighters was a large, 4000 litre LPG cylinder situated near the fire which was under threat and had the potential to explode. Another main objective was to prevent the fire from spreading to the two adjoining factories and foundry," Chief Officer Lupton says.

Also of major concern was the close proximity of a block of Housing Trust homes to the fire. The MFS was assisted by SA Police and SA Ambulance Service in establishing a 500 metre exclusion zone around the incident, and residents within a two kilometre radius were advised to stay indoors.

Smoke from the intense, volatile fire could be seen billowing into the air and across Adelaide's skyline.

MFS Chief Officer Lupton says the MFS had strong support from the Country Fire Service (CFS) during the incident and together firefighters from the two agencies performed a **tremendous save** in trying conditions.

"I'd like to thank the CFS, which not only provided firefighters and trucks at the scene, but also provided support at the MFS State Coordination Centre and back-up at MFS fire stations across Adelaide to ensure the community remained protected.

"This incident had the potential to have a far more devastating result, if it had spread to adjoining buildings or caused the large LPG cylinder to explode. Fortunately workers at the factory should be able to return to work today," Chief Officer Lupton says.

The fire started at just before 6 pm on Monday, 14 September and took MFS and CFS firefighters about three hours to bring under control.

At the height of the incident, 19 MFS fire trucks and five CFS fire trucks were responded. The fire was contained to plastic recycling products at the rear of the factory.

MFS firefighters have returned to the scene today to mop up after the incident, and MFS Fire Cause Investigators are working with SA Police to sift through the scene.

For media enquiries please telephone the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

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