

Basalt & Rural Fire Protection District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: **Richard Cornelius, Division Chief**
(970) 230-0575 (c) / rcornelius@basaltfire.org

Tree Farm Drive Structure Fire

El Jebel, Colorado – July 16, 2018, 12:00 p.m.

On July 15, 2018 at 4:34 p.m. Basalt & Rural Fire Protection District (B&RFPD) was dispatched to a reported structure fire at 350 Tree Farm Drive. Initial dispatch information indicated there was a structure fire rapidly spreading with multiple 911 calls. A plume of smoke could be seen from incoming resources and active flames were observed. B&RFPD apparatus and personnel were on the scene within five minutes.

Firefighting efforts were aggressive and crews were able to have knockdown of the fire at 5:15 p.m., preventing further spread to adjacent structures or a wildland fire outside of the property. Five fire apparatus, one ambulance, one command vehicle and 22 personnel from B&RFPD were on the scene working for several hours to extinguish the fire and perform overhaul operations. Numerous trees on the property had to be cut down.

A wooden storage building with a metal roof containing fourteen solar panels was a total loss. Additionally, a conex shipping container used for storage and a Quonset hut were also a total loss. Tar paper on an adjacent home melted; however, no other damage was reported to the home. A loss cannot be estimated at this time.

Propane tanks, acetylcholine bottles, and oxygen bottles were reported to be in the immediate area of the structure fire. The conex shipping container was also reported to have firearms, ammunition and reloading equipment.

The cause of the fire has been determined to be human caused. An occupant on the property was cutting steel on the west side of the storage building with a cutoff saw when sparks ignited cheatgrass. The operator of the cutoff saw attempted to stomp out the fire but it rapidly spread and caught the structure on fire. No injuries were reported.

Basalt & Rural Fire Protection District would like to remind everyone Pitkin and Eagle County State II Fire Restrictions are in place. A hot work permit is required for operations including cutting, welding, Thermit welding, brazing, soldering, grinding, thermal spraying, thawing pipe, installation of torch-applied roof systems or any other similar activity that could produce sparks. Please contact the Fire Prevention Bureau with questions or for further information at (970) 704-0675.

Basalt & Rural Fire Protection District was assisted by the following agencies: Basalt Police Department, Carbondale & Rural Fire Protection District, Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control, Colorado State Patrol, Eagle County Sheriff's Office, Holy Cross Energy and Snowmass-Wildcat Fire Protection District. Additionally, Basalt Fire Volunteer Deputy Chief Cleve Williams provided a front-end loader and operator to help with overhaul.

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Basalt and Rural Fire Protection District
1089 JW Drive
Carbondale, CO 81623
Ph: (970) 704-0627, Fax: (970) 704-0625
www.basaltfire.org