



## Humboldt Bay Fire News Release

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July 18, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Subject :** Multiple Incidents with Mutual Aid Response to Humboldt Bay Fire

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In the evening hours of 7/17/2021 Humboldt Bay Fire responded to over a dozen calls in a two-hour period, including several medical incidents, a major natural gas leak from a vehicle collision in to a gas service line and a separate, unrelated structure fire with occupants inside. Humboldt Bay Fire utilized assistance from mutual aid resources to handle all of the incidents.

Although there were multiple incidents occurring simultaneously, the first major incident of the evening was dispatched as a possible gas leak on the 3800 Block of Erie Street. A single engine responded to investigate a possible broken natural gas line. Upon that engine's arrival HBF personnel discovered a car had driven in to a gas meter, severing the line causing natural gas to flow uncontrolled from the break. The Fire Captain upgraded the response to a hazardous materials response which added an additional engine and duty officer. The first engine evacuated nearby residents from their homes and eliminated ignition sources. Pacific Gas and Electric personnel were notified and responded.

Once the second engine and duty officer arrived, a plan was developed for the fire crews to make entry in to the area with an attempt to stop the leak by "crimping" the line. Fire personnel tried multiple times to access the break with tools but were unable to with the vehicle on it. Due to the fire hazard, the vehicle could not be started and it was not safe to use a tow vehicle so close to the leaking gas line. With additional resources on scene, personnel successfully pushed the vehicle off of the broken gas line, with nearby crews staffing a hoseline in the event of ignition of the gas vapors. Once the line was removed Pacific Gas and Electric personnel stopped the leak.

During the incident on Erie Street, another Humboldt Bay Fire unit was moving to a location centrally located in the jurisdiction to provide coverage. While enroute to the coverage area, the Fire Captain of that unit noticed smoke in the area of the 3300 Block of N Street. That unit proceeded to the area to investigate and discovered smoke coming from the attic of a three-story Victorian style structure. Humboldt Bay Fire dispatchers simultaneously received 911 calls regarding the structure fire as the on-scene engine requested a full structure response. With units already committed on the natural gas leak, the response was upgraded to a second alarm. Two additional mutual aid units from Arcata Fire and Samoa Fire responded to assist on the structure fire. Humboldt Bay Fire Dispatchers requested two more units for coverage. Loleta Fire and Fortuna Fire also responded to provide coverage for the rest of the Humboldt Bay Fire jurisdiction, responding to multiple medical calls while in Humboldt Bay Fire's response area.

The initial engine that discovered the fire on N Street entered the structure and evacuated all occupants. Eureka Police Officers on scene assisted with evacuation of some occupants who were hesitant to leave. Additional arriving units attacked the fire that was burning in the attic and ventilated the structure. Humboldt Bay Fire units had the fire controlled within 30 minutes. Several occupants were displaced from the residence and Red Cross was requested to the scene to assist with the occupants' lodging needs. Pacific Gas and Electric also responded to secure utilities.

There were no injuries at the fire. The cause of the fire appeared to be a cooking fire that spread in to the attic of the kitchen area through a ventilation duct. Damage is estimated at \$50,000.

Humboldt Bay Fire wants to thank all of the allied agencies that responded to assist with these incidents. It demonstrates the commitment of all emergency services and allied partners in the Humboldt County area.

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