

# FIRE DEPARTMENT

## MEDIA RELEASE

**Date Of Release:** 08/20/2021  
**Fire Incident Number:** 21-0071117  
**Incident Commander:** Battalion Chief Matt Brock  
**Incident Type:** Vegetation/ encampment fire  
**Date/Time of Incident:** 12:42 pm, 07/11/2021  
**Incident Location:** Ventura, CA – Southbound Hwy 101, south of Seaward avenue  
**Cause/Origin:** Unattended cooking fire  
**Injuries Reported:** None  
**Units Committed On-Scene:** 2 Medic Engines, 1 Water tender, 1 Battalion Chief  
4 CHP traffic units  
**Total Fire Personnel On-Scene:** 15  
**Agencies Involved:** Ventura City Fire, CHP

**Narrative:** Ventura City Fire units were dispatched to a report of a vegetation fire in the area of Peninsula St. and Harbor Blvd. in the city of Ventura. Emergency personnel responded and arrived to find a growing fire in an encampment area and nearby vegetation that was best accessed from the southbound lanes of the 101 freeway, south of Seaward Ave. Fire crews made an aggressive attack on the fire and prevented it from spreading to a nearby eucalyptus windrow. The fire was contained and completely extinguished within an hour. CHP units were on scene to assist with needed traffic control on the freeway. The cause was determined to be an unattended cooking fire in the encampment. No injuries were reported.

The Ventura City Fire Department is committed to working with the City's Safe & Clean Program and regional partners to address any ongoing life-safety and property threats posed by homeless encampments in Ventura. Fires can occur in the river bottom because of unsheltered individuals living in the area who use fire for warmth and cooking. These fires can grow quickly and produce a lot of smoke because of strong winds, dry brush, fuel, and tall grasses.

The City's Safe and Clean program continues to work on long-term housing solutions and provides preventative resources for our most vulnerable populations. Safe & Clean works proactively with the Ventura Police Patrol Task Force, the Ventura City Fire Department, various social service providers, and community partners to clean up brush and debris in the riverbeds. City staff also visits these areas weekly to share education, health, and social services to unsheltered individuals, who legally, cannot be relocated from the river bottom to a safer location.

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