

FIRE DEPARTMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

Date Of Release: July 17, 2022
Fire Incident Number: 22-0063416
Incident Commander: Battalion Chief Matt Brock
Incident Type: Vehicle fire
Date/Time of Incident: 07/17/2022, 7.54pm
Incident Location: Katherine Dr. and Main St. Ventura, CA 93003
Cause/Origin: Under investigation
Injuries Reported: None
Units Committed On-Scene: 11
Total Fire Personnel On-Scene: 27
Agencies Involved: Ventura City Fire, Oxnard Fire, AMR

Narrative: Fire units were dispatched to a reported commercial structure fire. Units arrived to find a growing fire in a vacant building which had sustained a prior significant fire on May 10, 2022. The building was previously operated as an auto parts store and has been boarded up with a security fence on the perimeter since the May 10th fire, Due to the unsafe status of the building, fire crews took a defensive posture while making an aggressive exterior attack on the fire. Fire crews thankfully prevented fire spread to other nearby buildings and homes. The fire originated in the interior of the building and the cause is determined to be suspicious and is currently under investigation in coordination with the May 10th cause investigation.

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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