



Arvada Fire Protection District

7903 Allison Way, Arvada, CO 80005 • 303/424-3012 • 303/432-7995 fax

February 24, 2009

TO: All News Agencies

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Train Sparks Wildfire

AR VADA – Arvada Fire was called to a weed fire near the intersection of 72nd Avenue and Oak Street on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 3:24 p.m. While responding to the call, firefighters noticed a large amount of smoke coming from the area. Calls then started coming into Arvada Fire’s dispatch center reporting fire along the train tracks heading west from 72nd and Oak.

The fire was started by a Union Pacific train that had just headed west through Arvada on the tracks. Witnesses reported that the train had sparks coming from it. It is unknown what was causing the sparks.

Firefighters and residents with garden hoses were able to save all of the homes along the over five miles of affected train track with one exception. A home that sits on a hill above the tracks at 11877 W 80th Avenue was fully engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived. The elderly resident of the home (Marge Kusulas) and her daughter were able to get out of the home with the help of their next door neighbor (Terry Kemp).

Fire stretched along the tracks for approximately five miles, from 72nd Avenue and Oak Street to approximately Highway 72 and Highway 93. Firefighters from Arvada, Westminster, Coal Creek, Fairmont, Wheat Ridge and Rocky Mountain fought this fire. At this time, there isn’t a complete count of firefighters and equipment that was used on scene.

Crews will remain on scene at the house fire for several hours to mop up hot spots.

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UPDATE – February 25, 2009, 11:00 a.m. – Arvada Fire was on scene of the house fire until approximately 11:15 p.m. last night. Arvada crews responded overnight on two rekindle calls along the path of yesterday's fires. Neither of the rekindles was very large and no structures were threatened. Currently there are two Arvada Brush trucks patrolling the entire area to ensure that all fires are out.

The 9-1-1 calls have been released and can be found on our website at www.arvadafire.com. Navigate down to the bottom blue bar of the home page to find the recording.

We are still trying to get final personnel numbers from the outside agencies that helped us with this incident. There were 35 personnel from Arvada Fire working along the fire route.

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