CONCord, CALIF., May 20, 2021 – Con Fire today announced its fire investigators were able to quickly determine the point of origin and cause of yesterday’s two-alarm fire on Cambark Court in Martinez that destroyed one home and threatened at least a dozen more.

Investigation revealed the fire originated in the backyard of a neighboring home on Arthur Road and quickly spread through dry grass to the home above. The fire was caused by three teenage boys playing with fire. The three teens had a fire in a pit they had dug in the backyard and ignited a tennis ball and played stick ball with it. One of them hit the burning tennis ball into some dry vegetation resulting in the grassfire.

The fire burned one home and an extensive surrounding storage yard containing numerous vehicles. Sounds of explosions from the fire scene were caused by vehicles and propane tanks burning. A dozen homes surrounding the fire structure were protected by firefighters in a swift and overwhelming response.

Because of the accidental nature of the fire and no prior criminal histories, the juveniles were released to the custody of their parents. Fire investigators will forward the case to the Contra Costa County Juvenile District Attorney and the Youth Fire Setter program.

Fireworks were not involved in this fire.

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About Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (Con Fire) -- A recognized fire service leader - - Con Fire provides fire and emergency medical services to more than a million people across its 304 square-mile District area, and through mutual aid, in and around the 20 cities and unincorporated communities of Contra Costa County, California. With few exceptions, county emergency ambulance transport services are provided by Con Fire through its unique sub-contractor Alliance model across the District and beyond to include some 520 square miles of the county. In 2020, the District responded to some 75,000 fire and EMS emergencies and dispatched some 95,000 ambulances, providing expert medical care on more than 74,000 ambulance transports. The District, with 26 fire stations and more than 400 employees, is dedicated to preserving life, property, and the environment.

Media Contact: Steve Hill, Public Information Officer, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, (925) 941-3300, Ext. 1203 (Office), (925) 532-6512 (Mobile)

For incident-related media queries 24/7, please call our On-Call PIO Line at 925-660-PIO1 (7461).
PHOTO RELEASE

CON FIRE ANNOUNCES ORIGIN AND CAUSE OF SECOND-ALARM VINE HILL NEIGHBORHOOD FIRE

Investigators Determine Fire that Destroyed One Home, Threatened a Dozen More, Caused by Teenagers Playing with Fire in Neighboring Yard

CONCORD, CALIF., May 20, 2021 – Con Fire today announced the Cambark Court fire in Martinez that destroyed one home and threatened at least a dozen more originated in the backyard of a neighboring home on Arthur Road and quickly spread through dry grass to the home above.

Photos above show extent of damage and proximity of fire to other structures. The photo at left shows point of origin of fire in the middle right of view. The photo at right reveals post-fire condition of home, center bottom, and storage yard. Click on images above for full-size images. Please credit Con Fire.

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