



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

MEDIA ADVISORY

CON FIRE ROUNDS-UP INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY FIREWORKS-RELATED RESPONSES

Limited Response Plan Implementation Ensures Responses to Exceptionally High Volume of Fireworks-Caused Fires

CONCORD, CALIF., July 6, 2023 – Contra Costa County Fire Protection District today made available details of the fire and EMS activity, much of it fireworks related, occurring across the district on the Independence Day holiday evening.

For the six-hour period from 8 p.m., July 4, to 2 a.m., July 5, the district dispatched crews to 69 fire incidents. This represents a more than 400 percent increase over other recent Tuesdays, which in June, averaged 20 fire dispatches for the entire day. Year-over-year, fire incidents were up nearly 60 percent.

The holiday evening's 69 fire incidents point up the dangers of fireworks use in current heightened fire danger conditions. Eleven of these fires are known to have been caused, and another 51 suspected of having been caused, by fireworks.

While the cool weather was favorable and the midweek timing had the holiday falling on a work night, fires numbered some 60 percent more than 4th of July 2023's 44 fire incidents for the same evening period.

In spite of more than 60 grass, vegetation and other exterior fires burning across the district on the evening of the Fourth, only four structure fires ensued. Of these, in three cases, fireworks could not be ruled out as the cause. In the worst structure fire of the evening, in the 2 a.m. hour in Antioch, a garage was destroyed and two adjacent homes substantially damaged as a result of fireworks. In all, four residents were displaced, and a dog died, as a result of this unnecessary fire.

Calls for emergency medical services were also up over normal, non-holiday periods with some of this increase likely attributable to fireworks activity. On the Fourth, 240 EMS incidents were dispatched with 64 of these occurring between 8 p.m. and 2 a.m. the next day. Total EMS responses represent about a 20% increase over more typical weekdays. On average, Con Fire responds to just over 200 EMS incidents daily.

In one particularly egregious case, a 66-year-old male in Martinez was gravely injured in the 10 p.m. hour when he lost part of a hand while holding an exploding firework.

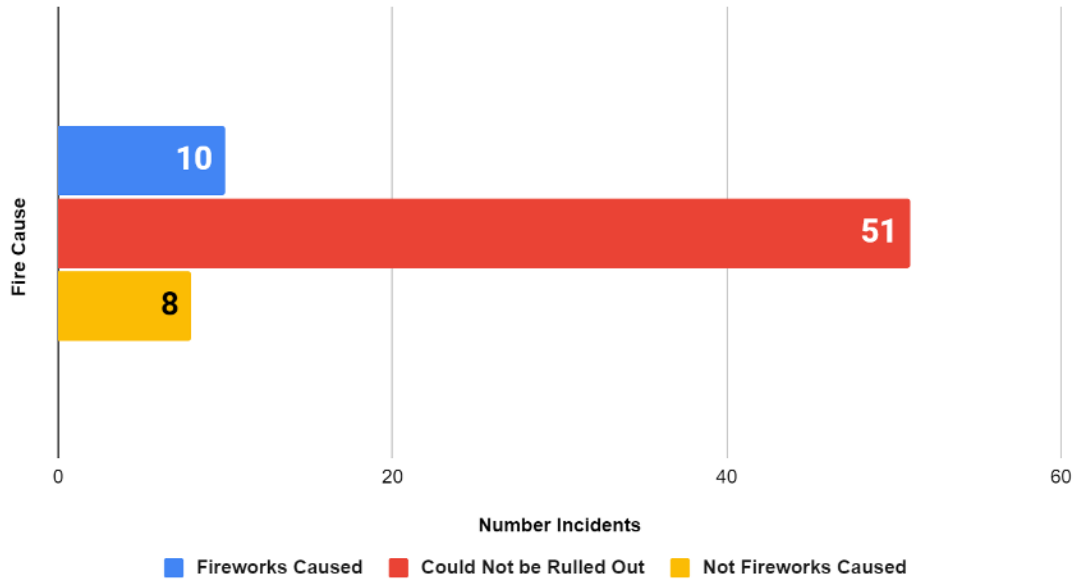
Considerable preparation across the district, including upstaffing of additional dispatchers; two hand crews and equipment; two fire dozers; and the district operations center, staffed by multiple chief officers; resulted in rapid and overwhelming responses, which served to limit fire spread, and resultant damage when fires did occur.

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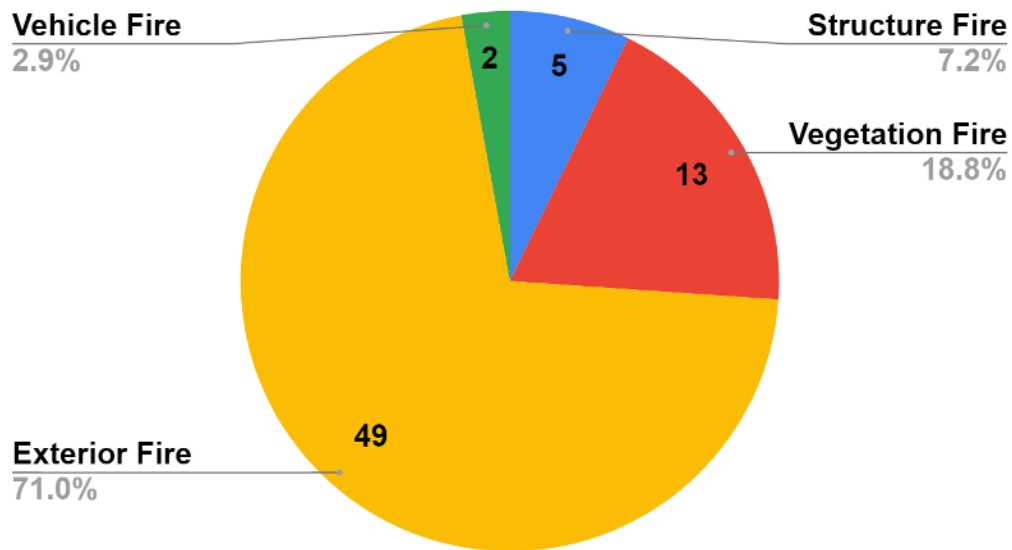
CON FIRE ANNOUNCES INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND RESPONSES/2-2-2

All 60-plus grass and exterior fires were kept small, limiting potential for structure damage as a result of rapid and overwhelming responses as well as early notifications to 911 by residents.

2023 July 4th Fire Causes -- 2000, July 4 - 0200, July 5

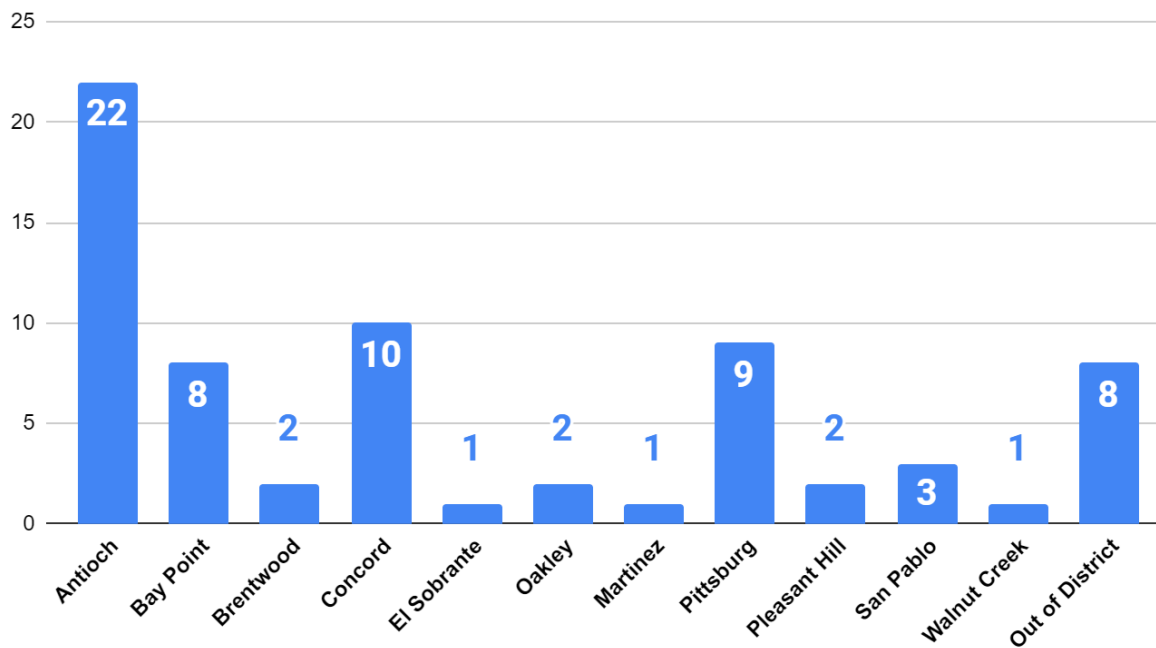


2023 July 4th Fires by Type -- 8 p.m., July 4 - 2 a.m., July 5



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2023 July 4th Fires by City -- 8 p.m., July 4 - 2 a.m., July 5



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