

Firefighters Injured Battling House Fire

Saturday, February 25 2012 16:46 - Last Updated Saturday, February 25 2012 19:08

At 2109 hrs. on Friday, February 24, 2012 units were alerted to respond to the reported house fire at 6404 57th Avenue in Riverdale Heights. E807B, E809 and TK809 arrived on the scene within minutes and reported a 2 story single family dwelling with fire showing from the basement window and requested the working fire dispatch.

E807B advanced an attack line to the front door and awaited forced entry from TK809. Upon entry, crews were only able to advance into the home 5 - 10 feet when the then entire first floor erupted in flames forcing the crews to evacuate the structure. During this period, crewmembers from E807B and TK809 suffered various injuries. The Emergency Identifier from TK809's crewmember was activated, and command ordered all personnel to evacuate the building. Command also requested the working fire task force and an EMS task force due to the report of injured firefighters. While EMS crews were tending to the injured firefighters, crews from the remaining units on the call made quick work of containing and extinguishing the fire.

In total 4 members of Riverdale (807), 2 members of Bladensburg (809) and 1 member of College Park (812) were transported to MedStar for evaluation and treatment.

The following is a statement from the PGC FEMSD PIO Officer, Mark Brady:

UPDATE - Firefighters Remain Hospitalized - Two in Critical Condition

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Two Firefighters Remain in Critical Condition

Three firefighters remain hospitalized at the Washington Hospital Center after sustaining injuries battling a house fire in Riverdale on Friday evening.

Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Fighter Ethan Sorrell, 21 years of age, remains in "Critical" condition with burns to his airway. Family members left Durham NC, last night to be with him today.

Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Fighter Kevin O'Toole, 22 years of age, was evaluated late last night/early this morning as being in "Critical" condition with 2nd and 3rd degree burns over 40% of his body. Family members from Long Island, NY, were en route last night to be with Kevin.

Riverdale Volunteer Fire Fighter Michael McClary, 19 years of age, continued to receive treatment for injuries to his upper body/ribs. His ribs are not fractured, however, bruised with possible cartilage damage. He may be released as early as today. Family members were with him last night.

Dozens of family, friends and fire service personnel have been at the hospital throughout the night with the injured firefighters and remain there today. The Burn Unit at the Washington Hospital Center, their Doctors and staff are the very best at what they do - treating burn patients.

The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department sincerely appreciates the support provided by the DC Firefighters Burn Foundation. The Foundation is dedicated to assisting in the recovery and rehabilitation of injured firefighters and burn patients in the D.C. Metropolitan Area. Members of the Foundation were at the hospital before the first firefighter arrived and started support efforts for the injured firefighters, family and co-workers. Two of the injured firefighters have primary family members coming from out of town. The Foundation made accommodations for them at a nearby hotel and will continue to provide support for as long as is needed.

Firefighters that have been previously burned and treated at the Burn Unit become members of a fraternity. These firefighters return to the Burn Unit whenever a firefighter receives burn injuries and provide valuable insight to family, friends and co-workers about the treatment and recovery process. One of those fraternity members is Riverdale Volunteer Chief Chuck Ryan.

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He sustained critical burn injuries while on the job with DCFD. Ryan was at the Burn Unit overnight helping others to understand the treatment process that Bladensburg firefighters were receiving and what to expect in the days to come.

The volunteer leadership of Blandensburg, Riverdale, College Park as well as Fire Chief Marc Bashoor and the entire Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department acknowledge and are grateful the tremendous outpouring and offers of assistance from fire departments across the National Capitol Region. We are also inspired by the numerous well wishes, thoughts and prayers being offered from across the Country for our injured firefighters.

Prince George's County Fire Investigators continue their work to determine the cause and origin of the fire. The investigation is open and on-going. Fire loss to the vacant structure is estimated at \$75,000.

Updates on the medical condition of the injured firefighters will be provided as additional information becomes available.

Prince George's County Fire Chief Marc S. Bashoor will be at the Washington Hospital Center and will make himself available for comment anytime after 9:30 am. Please contact me to make arrangements.

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