Fire Rescue Continues to Manage 3rd Alarm Fire

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 29, 2012

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CITY RESPONDS TO 3RD ALARM FIRE AT THE 24 HUNDRED BLOCK OF 11TH AVENUE SOUTH

GREAT FALLS, Montana – Great Falls Fire Rescue will remain on site overnight to continue managing an ongoing fire incident. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation. Firefighters responded to a fire at 2 a.m. this morning at the 24 hundred block of 11th Avenue South. The fire, which eventually turned into a 3rd Alarm Call brought out approximately 35 fire personnel and resulted in the total loss of at least 4 busineses at the location. More information about the incident can be found below.

GREAT FALLS, Montana - On Monday, October 29 at approximately 2 a.m. Great Falls Fire Rescue responded to a fire at the 24 hundred block of 11th Avenue South. At this time impacted businesses at the location include Rioux Windows & Doors, Hutchinson's Electrical, Nelson's Insurance and Pretty Girls. Upon arrival the building showed smoke coming out of the eaves and the center of the structure. Three engine companies with 10 personnel responded to the initial call and upon arrival the 2nd Alarm was struck and Tower Ten was called to the scene, which brought 3 more personnel and the aerial truck. Within twenty minutes of the initial event, the 3rd Alarm was struck and all Fire Rescue personnel were called to respond.

There were approximately thirty-five personnel on site assisting with the fire. A thirty foot perimeter was set up to manage the scene and an initial "exterior fire attack" was used during the incident. This meant firefighters stayed out of the building due to the concern that the roof might collapse. The roof did collapse, and at this point a "defensive fire attack" was utilized. Personnel then became concerned with exposure and containing the fire. The primary focus then became not allowing the fire to spread from the existing structure to nearby buildings. While there continues to be flames and smoke in the structure, firefighters have been successful in containing and

managing the fire.

According to Fire Chief McCamley, “This is a catastrophic fire and approximately 4,000 gallons of water was being used every minute to manage the incident.” The last 3rd Alarm fire in Great Falls was Downtown in the Rocky Mountain Building in 2009. At this time there are no reported injuries and the cause of the fire is currently under investigation.

Residents should expect to see smoke and flames from the scene for a number of hours and are asked to use alternate routes this morning. While there are no road closures, please use caution and expect delays when near the area.

For additional information regarding this incident please contact Fire Chief McCamley at 727-8070 or Jennifer Reichelt, Deputy City Manager at 788-9172.

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Supporting Documents

Press Release - 3rd Alarm Fire (261 KB) (PDF)

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