



NEWS RELEASE

Date: December 28, 2008 at 6am
Release Date: Immediately
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(Massive Semi-truck Fire on I-5 Near Wilsonville Still Burning: Highway Will Remain Closed for Several Hours)

Just before 3am this morning, firefighters responded to reports of an explosion and fire near the southbound lanes of I-5 near the Wilsonville Road exit. It was unclear to the passerby who called 9-1-1 as to what was on fire. When firefighters arrived, there were heavy flames showing from a semi-truck with two trailers that was located on the west shoulder of the highway. There were no visible occupants in the truck, nor were there any identifiable placards. Initial attempts to extinguish the fire only intensified the flames. It is unclear how many occupants were in the vehicle, but no one was found near the scene and the environment in the truck's cab would be difficult to survive.

Due to the huge amount of fire and potential for additional explosions, firefighters were initially forced to stay back. TVF&R's Hazardous Materials Team also responded to the fire and advised the closest fire crews that it was best to let the truck burn. Though the fire has behaved in a way that suggests the product burning could be petroleum based, it has been impossible to confirm what the truck was hauling. The truck continues to burn at this hour and a huge plume of smoke has been visible for several miles since 3am. Trees near the truck burned as a result of the intense flames, but there are no threatened structures. The City of Wilsonville's Public Works Department is monitoring the sewage treatment plant approximately two blocks south of the fire to ensure that there are no problems with the plant.

Fire crews, law enforcement officers and ODOT personnel remain on scene. It is likely the highway will remain closed for several hours while cleanup and investigation take place.

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