



NEWS RELEASE

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(Investigator Determines Cause of Fire on Tigard High School Campus)

Investigator Jeremy Foster from Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue has determined the most probable cause of a fire which started just after midnight on the campus of Tigard High School. Based on the examination of physical evidence combined with interviews of school district staff and first-arriving firefighters, it is believed that oil-soaked rags are to blame for the small fire.

An alert driver from Pride Disposal Company called 9-1-1 to report flames near the school's track. When firefighters from Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue arrived, they found a burning pile of debris next to a portable modular building. The debris proved to be the remnants of an 8' x 8' shed which was used to store landscaping tools. Yesterday school maintenance staff had been using linseed oil to recondition the wood handles of rakes, shovels and other equipment. They placed the oil-soaked rags into the shed. The rags likely spontaneously combusted and spread fire to the shed's contents.

The shed is a complete loss, but thanks to the alert passerby and quick response of firefighters, the damage to the modular was limited to some burned siding and eaves. There were no injuries as a result of the fire.

Wood-refinishing and conditioning products usually contain linseed or other oils derived from vegetables or animals which, as they dry, generate their own heat. These oils can spontaneously ignite.

- ✓ Read carefully and follow all manufacturers' instructions on the stain container.
- ✓ Clean brushes and applicators according to instructions and either hang to dry or allow all items to dry flat on a non-combustible surface away from any combustible materials.
- ✓ Allow rags and tarps to dry flat on a non-combustible surface away from your home or place them in a metal container partially-filled with water and cover with a metal lid.

For more fire and life safety information, visit www.tvfr.com .

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