



## **NEWS RELEASE**

Date: September 4, 2011 at 10:10pm  
Release: Immediately  
Contact: TVF&R Public Information Officer, 503-441-9324 (pager)

### **(Firefighters' Fight Second-alarm Fire in Cedar Hills)**

Firefighters remain on the scene of a house fire this evening due to ongoing concerns about a natural gas line that continues to flow to a Cedar Hills home affected by a significant fire.

Just before 5p.m., several callers to 9-1-1 reported heavy flames, dense black smoke, burning trees and a suspected house fire in the Cedar Hills area. While initial callers were unable to provide an exact address, responding firefighters from Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue located the burning home at 20 NW Cedar Hills Blvd. The back side of the split-level home *-which is located up a steep, long and narrow driveway-* was engulfed in flames as first arriving firefighters aggressively extinguished burning fir trees to prevent the fire from spreading to nearby homes. At the same time, they began attacking the fire on the exterior of the home as flames burned into the attic and through the roof.

Firefighters continued to battle the fire from the outside until it was safe enough to enter the home and search for any occupants. The homeowners were not at home when the fire broke out and arrived within an hour after being notified by their security alarm company.

Due to the weather and high temperatures, fire commanders called for a second alarm to bring additional resources and ensure that firefighters could rest and hydrate between rotations. Though the bulk of the fire was extinguished within 30 minutes, firefighters were challenged by the continued flow of natural gas to the home. The home's gas meter was buried in charred and collapsed decking, preventing firefighters and natural gas technicians from being able to shut it off. Crews from NW Natural had to dig a trench to reach the gas main at the street level and encountered obstacles, including a buried water main, delaying shutoff.

At this time, firefighters are mopping up and dousing hot spots while the remaining natural gas is burning off. In order to avoid explosion, firefighters allowed the natural gas to burn while protecting and cooling the nearby yard and home remnants.

Once the scene is safe, fire investigators will begin the arduous task of digging out the fire to examine physical evidence. They will also evaluate burn patterns and conduct witness interviews to try and discern the fire's cause. There is no damage estimate at this time, but the home, contents and two vehicles parked in the garage sustained significant smoke, fire and water damage.

Several agencies assisted with this incident including Hillsboro Fire Department, Portland Fire and Rescue, Beaverton Police Department, Washington County and NW Natural Gas.

