



# NEWS RELEASE

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

*Mark A. Hartwig*  
*Fire Chief*

**DATE:** *February 18, 2012*  
**CONTACT:** *Tracey Martinez, Public Information Officer*  
*(909) 387-5950, 800-426-8689, pager #3307*

## **Transformer Ignites at Substation**

**Date/Time:** **February 18, 2012, 12:33 a.m.**  
**Location:** **Lugo Substation, Escondido/Bandicoot, Oak Hills**

**Summary:** San Bernardino County Fire received 9-1-1 calls from Oak Hills residents stating the Southern California Edison (SCE) substation was on fire and that they could hear several explosions coming from the area. In addition, heavy black smoke was pouring from the substation. When firefighters arrived on scene, they found that a transformer had caught fire and mineral oil was burning.

With the potential for 15,000 gallons of mineral oil to leak from the transformer, SCE brought excavation equipment to the facility in the event the burning mineral oil escaped the compound and to keep the foam runoff from reaching outside this area. SCE is well prepared for incidents of this kind and have built in precautions such as drainage containers for such an incident. Fortunately the mineral oil stayed within these designated areas. SCE had to de-energize some of the lines, however there was no loss of power to customers.

County Fire's "CRASH" truck was brought in from Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville. The "CRASH" truck carries 1,000 gallons of foam and is designed and utilized for flammable liquid aircraft incidents. Utilizing 200 gallons of this foam, firefighters were successful in cooling the container and extinguishing the fire at 7:10 a.m.

With the use of foam, firefighters were instrumental in keeping the fire from spreading to nearby transformers.

San Bernardino County Fire's Hazardous Materials Team and SCE environmental specialists were on scene. There is no contamination to the ground water or environment. Mineral oil is non-toxic and in this incident posed no health risks.

There were no evacuations and an SCE employee was at the facility when the fire ignited and was never in any danger.

Sixteen firefighters and hazardous material experts remained on scene throughout the early morning hours until the threat was mitigated.

The cause remains under investigation by Southern California Edison investigators.

###