



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Mark A. Hartwig
Fire Chief / Fire Warden*

DATE: *Thursday, August 11, 2016*
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COUNTY FIRE FIGHTS VEGETATION FIRE ONE ARRESTED FOR ARSON

Date/Time: Thursday, August 11, 2016 3:40 p.m.
Location: N Little Mountain Dr / W Edgehill Road San Bernardino, CA
Incident Type: Vegetation Fire with Arson Arrest

At 3:40 this afternoon, San Bernardino County Fire responded to numerous reports of a vegetation fire at Blair Park in the City of San Bernardino. Callers described smoke and flames visible up on the slope near a hiking trail.

Firefighters arrived minutes after dispatch and discovered one half-acre of annual grasses already consumed, with the fire pushing upslope toward an array of communication towers. Reinforced by additional units, County Fire rapidly attacked the expanding fire and stopped the forward spread ultimately holding the burn to one acre.

Seven engines, one hand crew, one water tender, Sheriff's helicopter Air Rescue 7, one chief officer, and three investigators were assigned to the incident. There were no injuries to civilians or firefighters.

Two of the assigned arson investigators immediately started determining the origin and potential cause of the fire, while Fire Marshal Mike Horton began canvassing the park for potential witnesses. He contacted a nearby group who described an hispanic male in his mid-20's leaving the potential origin of the fire.

During a subsequent patrol of the area, Fire Marshal Horton detained and questioned a suspect matching the witnesses' description. After a short interview, Johnathon Lopez, 21, of San Bernardino admitted to being in the area and ultimately starting the fire. Lopez was placed under arrest by FM Horton.

With the assistance of San Bernardino City Police, Lopez was transported to the Central Detention Center and booked by fire investigators for violation of Penal Code 451(c), arson of a structure or forest land, a felony.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact San Bernardino County's Office of the Fire Marshal at 800-468-4408.

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