

GREEN SHEET

Sacramento Metropolitan Fire Protection District

Informational Summary Report of Serious Injuries, Illness,
Accidents and Near-Miss Incidents



Dozer Rollover

October 7, 2012

CA SAC 12-0127823

River Incident

A Board of Review has not approved this Summary Report. It is intended as a safety and training tool, an aid in preventing future occurrences, and to inform interested parties. Because it is published in a short time frame, the information contained herein is subject to revisions as further investigation is conducted and additional information is developed.

SUMMARY

On October 7, 2012 at approximately 19:25 Dozer 1 was operating at a wildland fire along the American River Parkway. While cutting a containment line in heavy fuels, Dozer 1 rolled onto its right side. The dozer operator was not injured during the rollover. The dozer was not damaged.

CONDITIONS

Location: American River Parkway at Mile Marker 6

Topography: The area of the accident was relatively flat. The soil in the area was sand.

Fuel Type: Riparian with heavy undergrowth, hardwood trees 40-50 feet tall, 6-12 inches in diameter.

Weather:

Temperature: 65°F

Relative Humidity: 54%

Winds 8 mph at SSW

Equipment: 2006 Caterpillar D5N XL with a six way blade, Type II Dozer

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

At 1727 on October 7, 2012, the Sacramento Regional Fire and EMS Communications Center (SRFECC) began receiving calls reporting a wildland fire on the American River Parkway at Mile Marker (MM) 6. This location is within the City of Sacramento. The SRFECC dispatched a battalion chief (BC3), and two type IV engines (Patrol 19 and Engine 405). Dozer 1 was added to the dispatch.

BC3 arrived on scene at 1736 and assumed River Command. BC3 reported that there were several acres of heavy brush and trees involved with spotting across the bike trail. BC3 requested 2 additional type III or IV engines.

Dozer 1 arrived and was ordered to place a dozer line around several spot fires in light fuels. Dozer 1 completed this task and was assigned to Division A. The fuels in Division A were much heavier. There was thick brush and trees. The trees were 6 – 12 inches in diameter and approximately 40 feet tall. Dozer 1 completed a one blade width line from the bike trail to the heel of the fire and then from the heel back to the bike trail.

After completing a one blade-width line around the fire, Dozer 1 began to widen and improve the line. Visibility was decreasing as the sun had set and there was dust and smoke in the area. While pushing down trees into the burn area, the operator felt the Dozer slip to the right. The operator then stepped on the brake and decelerator bringing the Dozer to a stop. The slide to the right continued. The operator felt the right track drop into a hole. The Dozer was now listing toward the right and began to roll. The operator shut off the engine which also shut off the radios. The Dozer continued to roll onto its right side.

A firefighter who witnessed the rollover transmitted "Emergency Traffic, Dozer 1 rolled over." The operator was able to contact River Command with his portable radio and advise that he was not hurt. The operator exited the Dozer and went to the incident command post.

INJURIES/DAMAGES

The dozer operator was not injured.

A check of the Dozer after the incident did not detect damage.

SAFETY ISSUES FOR REVIEW

- Always wear safety belts when operating mobile firefighting equipment.
- Wear proper Personal Protective Equipment, including helmets specifically designed for the dozer operator.
- Maintain a minimum 50 foot clearance to the rear and sides and 100 foot clearance in front of operating dozers.
- Have a portable radio in addition to the mobile radio.
- Maintain situational awareness when operating in the wildland environment. Be aware that obstacles and depressions may be hidden by vegetation.