

Community Preparedness Pays Off

Ross Valley's Close Call with Wildfire

Early Saturday morning on August 17th, the Ross Valley Fire Department responded to a reported commercial structure fire on the "Miracle Mile". Upon arrival, the crews discovered a working fire within the structure, which had spread into a ¼ acre vegetation fire in the eucalyptus trees, advancing uphill towards homes in the nearby neighborhood. Thanks to the swift and coordinated efforts of multiple agencies, a potential disaster was averted, showcasing the effectiveness of Marin County's comprehensive emergency management system.



As the fire spread towards residential areas, immediate evacuation orders were issued and efficiently implemented by law enforcement and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Residents in the affected area received timely alerts via Nixle, and law enforcement's high-low sirens ensured that everyone was aware of the urgent situation.



"This goes a long way in building trust amongst community members that our public safety agencies will be prompt and effective with evacuation notifications," said Mark Brown, Executive Officer of the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority.

The successful containment of the fire can also be attributed to the excellent defensible space maintained by residents in the area above the fire. Just recently, Wildfire Home Evaluations from Marin Wildfire were conducted in the neighborhood, informing residents of their critical role in wildfire safety. Chief Dan Mahoney of the Ross Valley Fire Department noted the significance of this preparedness: "The fire reached the fence line and virtually stopped. It did that before fire crews arrived on scene. If this homeowner had not provided the defensible space that was needed, their structure would have definitely been compromised."

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The incident not only highlights the critical importance of community preparedness, but also underscores the success of Marin County's layered emergency response system. From residential defensible space adherence to effective evacuation protocols, the coordinated efforts of various agencies and community members made all the difference. In the aftermath, Chief Mahoney posted a [video](#) on the RVFD Facebook page, showcasing the scene and reinforcing the importance of these preventive measures. The Ross Valley Fire Department has also issued a [press release](#), with additional coverage provided by the [Marin Independent Journal](#) and [KPIX](#), celebrating the success of this collaborative effort.

In wildfire prevention, an ounce of preparation truly proves to be worth a pound of protection. What could have turned into a disaster was stopped in its tracks. While the outcome may not seem dramatic, the fact that residents still have their homes—and possibly their lives—speaks volumes about the importance of wildfire preparedness



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