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Commercial Structure Fire- Humboldt Machine Works

ARCATA, CA – January 28, 2018 – At 2:04 AM Arcata Fire District was dispatched to a commercial structure fire at 933 I Street, Arcata. The first engine to arrive was out of the Arcata Fire Station and reported moderate gray smoke in a large commercial mixed-use occupancy. The crew began forcing entry through multiple doors trying to access the fire.

The second engine from Mad River Fire Station arrived and supported the first engine with a fire attack. Once the fire attack team made entry, they reported smoke throughout the business and advised the incident commander that a sprinkler head had activated.

A third engine from McKinleyville Station arrived and began searching the business for occupants. This was a priority because the building is attached to a winery and there were occupants in the winery.

The fire was located in a loft area above Humboldt Juice Bar. The fire attack team had to use ladders to gain access to the loft. They were able to deploy a hose line to the fire and complete extinguishment.

Battalion Chief Sean Campbell reported, “This was our second commercial fire in less than 24 hours. We had the potential to burn down two complete city blocks during our shift but thankfully we were able to prevent that from happening. Our firefighters did an amazing job working with our mutual-aid partners to avoid another disastrous conflagration.”

The estimated loss to Humboldt Juice Bar and Humboldt Machine Works is \$3,400 and the estimated save to the businesses is \$2,760,973. The saved value for the immediate exposure business to the north (The Griffin) \$710,482. These values do not account for lost sales revenue, lost sales tax, or lost employment.

Fire Chief Justin McDonald reported, “Once again, I am proud of my team. I have to attribute this success to the dedication of our firefighters. They work hard to be the best at what they do and it showed during these two incidents. This incident resulted in a 99% save ratio, which is an A+. Although some of this success is attributed to the sprinkler system, these fires still require firefighters to complete extinguishment and conduct salvage operations. The save ratio is based on *Value Saved* divided by *Total Value (minus Loss)*. We attribute this to good work and a great relationship with our Mutual-Aid partners.”

This incident was caused by an illegal firework being set off in front of the business. Arcata Fire is working with Arcata Police to identify a suspect in this case. Anyone with information is asked to contact Arcata Fire or Arcata Police.

“There were hundreds of witnesses in the area when the fireworks were ignited. We hope someone will come forward and help us identify the suspect responsible for this fire.” Stated Chief Campbell.

A total of thirty-one firefighters and three volunteer support personnel managed this incident. Arcata Fire District would like to thank Westhaven, Cal Fire Trinidad, Blue Lake, Humboldt Bay, Samoa, and Fieldbrook Fire for their support and hard work.

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