

March 9, 2021

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RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE FIRE IN MCKINLEYVILLE

(McKinleyville, CA) – March 9, 2021 – Arcata Fire District was dispatched to a residential structure fire in the 1700 block of Babler Road at 6:45 PM. A Chief Officer, out of the McKinleyville Station, arrived in less than two minutes and reported a single-family residence 50% involved with fire. The McKinleyville Engine with two firefighters arrived approximately two minutes later and began a defensive fire attack. Firefighters quickly confirmed the occupants had made it out of the house safely but they indicated their dog was missing.

The McKinleyville engine fought the fire with two firefighters until they ran out of water. A few minutes later, the Arcata fire engine arrived and was able to establish a water supply to a fire hydrant. Firefighters resumed a defensive firefight until additional resources arrived from Fieldbrook, Westhaven, CAL FIRE, and Blue Lake. Once there were enough firefighters, the firefighting strategy transitioned from a defensive fight to an offensive fight. Firefighters were able to get inside and finish controlling the fire.

The home sustained major damage with the loss estimated at \$492,403.00. Unfortunately, the family's dog was not able to make it out and perished in the fire. Thankfully, no injuries were reported to the occupants or firefighters.

The Red Cross was at scene assisting the family with temporary housing. Arcata Firefighters Local 4981 provided a \$250 Visa gift card for the family to use for immediate needs.

Battalion Chief Campbell reports, "Our second engine came from the Arcata Station, which is ten minutes away. This is a result of our temporary rotating station closures. The ten-minute delay is one reason we were not able to secure a water supply quickly. We are looking forward to getting our third station opened in 2022 when we receive our Measure F funding."

Working smoke alarms is what alerted the family of the fire. The owner tried to grab a fire extinguisher but the fire grew so fast, he was not able to use it. They exited the structure and called 911 from a neighbor's house.

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