

08-86-3049

8/27/86

At about 4:50 on Tuesday afternoon, August 26, I was in my back yard working. I happened to look up toward my house and saw smoke from across the street. I ran to the house and got my walkie-talkie and ran out the front door and called in a structure fire at 905 Sierra Slope. The smoke was dark black and flames were coming up from behind the house. As I ran closer, I found out that the fire was not at 905, but behind that address. While running, I heard a couple of "boom-boom" sounds --not like aerosol cans--deeper and louder sounding. I ran two houses down and called in a structure fire at 505 Angel Fire.

I ran up to the privacy fence and it was chained. Another man and myself pulled and pulled on the post and gate. Mr. Graf came around from the back yard with a small child and kicked some boards off the fence and helped push as the man and I pulled the fence down. After running to the fence, I noticed it was a storage shed and not a house, but I did not call back to the fire department to say that it was a shed on fire. The shed was totally involved in flame and fire.

I was in shorts and barefoot.

A neighbor got a water hose and sprayed some water on the fence and another man tried to spray water on the shed. It was hard to get close to the shed due to the flame. I notified the dispatcher to call T.P. & L. as the house electrical line was on the ground and it was burnt through.

The fire department arrived and was told to use an inch and a half line and the fire was under control in 10-15 minutes. I helped 484 engineer get water to the line. I was asked if 482 needed to hook up to a plug and saw that the basic fire was out on the shed and the water level was down to 1/4 on the 484 tank. I told 482 to dump its water in 484 and that should be enough water.

After the shed was just to the smoldering stage, Mr. Graf (Ed) came out into the backyard and said that his two sons were missing. I asked Tim Fason and Jimmy Clark to go door to door in the neighborhood and ask about them after getting ages and descriptions. Before Tim and Jimmy got to the street to look for the kids someone said that they found a body in the shed. I told Tim to stand at the gate and that no one other than police or fire personnel were to come into the backyard. I told Jimmy to attempt to do investigation as to the cause of the fire. The police were informed of the body found and the fire department looked further for any other victims. Another victim was found in the far north corner of the shed about 3-4 feet from the first victim.

The police were notified and the fire department was told to leave the victims pending the arrival of the Justice of the Peace. Some salvage and overhaul and investigation was done while waiting on the J.P., but nothing was moved by either victim.

Both lawn mower engines by the door to the shed were completely melted. The floor was completely burnt through by the front door which was the only way of escape. Investigation was ongoing by the following fire department members: T. Lucenay, J. Clark, W. Roberson, J. Howard, L. Adkins, J. Sutter, and P. Greenawalt.

After the J.P.'s arrival Compton Funeral Home picked up both victims with the help of Chuck Sprung and Larry Adkins.

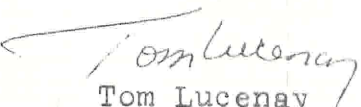
Investigation of possible cause was done for about 30 more minutes. The hottest part of the fire was by the lawn mowers and the door. A fire and explosion of unknown origin resulted in the complete gutting of the shed.

All smoldering was out.

Chief Caswell asked if I would go in with him to offer condolences to the family. I did, and offered to remove the shed for them if they wanted. Ed said he would appreciate it and wanted everything gone if possible. A friend of the family asked if we would try and salvage any pictures or papers, and that was done.

At about 7:15, we got a front-end loader and 2 dump trucks and cleared up the back yard of all debris. It took until about 9 p.m. About 10 fire personnel helped in this cleanup.

Observation of backyard: Barbeque cooker by house; patio had furniture, bikes, wading pool, toys, and a 2½ gallon gas can; swingset further in back of yard; and a woodpile with wheelbarrow next to fence by the shed. There was no electricity to the shed.


Tom Lucenay
Deputy Fire Chief

8/27/86

Fluorescent light fixture

2 chairs

Shelves w/ paint/oil can
Asbestos/PAINT thinner
on middle shelf

old lamp

Bucket

victim #2

Recliner chair

victim #1
in shirt (Lamp chair
underneath)

BATTERY CHARGE CORD

old w/ 1/2
SHELVES

Box containing
miscellaneous

ROPE
(Buena)

Shelves
with
miscellaneous
items

Door

From power source
the shed

Stacks of boxes
with papers & papers

SKILL SAW
in the box
Tools/mis

Floor completely Buena
through
Mason

Wood frame shed with metal roof
NO ELECTRICITY TO SHED
No windows