

PRESS RELEASE
CITY OF BENICIA
Benicia City Hall
250 East L Street
Benicia, California 94510



Contact: Mario Giuliani
Deputy City Manager
Office: (707) 746-4289
Mobile: (707) 590-3464
mgiuliani@ci.benicia.ca.us

For Immediate Release:

Benicia Port Fire Extinguished

Benicia, CA (April 10, 2022) – The Benicia Port Fire that began Saturday, was declared contained at 9:40 a.m. on Sunday, April 10, and was declared extinguished at 12:24 p.m.

On Saturday April 9 at 12:20 p.m., the Benicia Fire Department was dispatched to a fire at the 1000 block of Bayshore Drive adjacent to the Amports port terminal.

“While responding, we received updates that the fire near the petroleum coke silos,” said City of Benicia Fire Chief, Josh Chadwick. “Benicia Battalion Chief 11 arrived on scene and reported an active fire at the base of a petcoke silo, with fire burning up a conveyer belt towards a docked tanker ship. Ultimately, the fire progressed to a fourth alarm, the maximum in the Solano County alarm matrix.”

The initial fire at the base of the silos, the surrounding vegetation and on the conveyor was extinguished quickly. A portion of the fire continued on the underside of the pier structure, which is constructed of large creosote coated timber covered by thick asphalt road surface. Fire crews worked through the night to contain the fire.

Fire assets from across Solano County, Contra Costa and Napa counties reported to the scene. Fire boats working the incident arrived from San Francisco, Oakland, Port Chicago, Southern Marin, Tiburon and Redwood City.

Along with the fire suppression response, Benicia Fire command staff coordinated efforts with multiple partner agencies including Solano County Office of Emergency Services, Solano County Department of Environmental Health, California Office of Emergency Services, California Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Coast Guard, Bay Area Air Quality Management District and representatives from the Valero Refinery and Amports.

“The primary concern was the safety of the community,” said Chief Chadwick. “The biggest potential threat to the community was air quality. The smoke emitting from the fire contained particulate matter and the potential of toxicity from chemicals. We were fortunate in having continuous wind blowing from the west, allowing the smoke to blow towards the water and dissipate before impacting other populated areas.”

Solano County Environmental Health staff were on scene all day yesterday performing mobile air monitoring, at no time did they register harmful readings.

The City coordinated with California Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Coast Guard on environmental impact. The U.S. Coast Guard is advising caution when navigating waterways and urges all vessel traffic to slow down while transiting through the channel due to an unknown amount of debris in the water. Boaters should maintain a safe distance while operations continue at the Benicia Port Terminal. Later today, 3,000 feet of boom will be deployed to help capture debris.

The Solano County Fire Investigation Unit is currently working to determine the cause and origin of the fire. Further updates will be provided as information becomes available.

In the coming days City staff will work closely with Valero and Amports to aid in evaluating the integrity of the port, determine operational capacity and make preparations for repairs and reconstruction.

###