

FIREHOUSE[®]

Blaze at Ohio Plant Causes Over \$20M in Damage

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The News-Herald, Willoughby, Ohio
Created: July 28, 2014

Mentor firefighters spent hours tackling the fire at Metal Seal Precision.

July 27--Crews including the Mentor Fire Department and private chemical clean up companies worked all day on July 26 in picking up the pieces from a large industrial fire in Mentor that occurred a day prior.

Mentor Fire Battalion Chief Kevin Edmond, who was at the scene for much of Friday, returned on Saturday to help oversee the recovery after the fire caused an estimated \$20 million to \$30 million in damage to Metal Seal Precision at 7333 Corporate Drive.

An exact cause of the fire has not yet been determined, but Edmond said it was probably a mechanical failure.

Fire crews battled a few flare-ups throughout the night in the portion of the building that collapsed, but were able to keep it under control.

The hydraulic oil that was the main fuel for the fire also was a major environmental concern.

"We've been monitoring all the dams we put in place," said Edmond, adding that no hydraulic oil has appeared in a nearby retention basin that is close to state Route 2.

An earlier news release from the department said that some of the oil ran off into a pond and creek next to the building, but that crews set up containment areas to keep the oil from spreading farther.

He said the Environmental Protection Agency was at the scene and was "very satisfied" with the cleanup and containment of the chemicals.

"The company (Metal Seal Precision) really got out ahead of the curve on this one," Edmond said.

The fire was first reported at 10:07 a.m. and Mentor firefighters were on scene six minutes later. When they arrived, they found flames coming through the roof of the building.

A fire wall in the building helped contain the fire and the blaze was ruled under control at 1:23 p.m. A reverse 911 call also was sent out at 11:40 a.m. evacuating any buildings and businesses within one mile of the fire. The evacuation was cancelled at 12:41 p.m.

Soon after the fire started, Metal Seal Precision owner John Habe told The News-Herald that 260 employees were inside the shop when it began.

No one was injured.

Nearly 20 other fire departments assisted at the scene including Willoughby, Painesville Township and City, Concord, Kirtland Fairport Harbor, Eastlake, Wickliffe, Willowick, Perry, Euclid, Leroy, Willoughby Hills, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights, Richmond Heights and Chardon.

Workers remained on site throughout the evening on July 26, and Edmond said the fire department would likely keep a presence at the site until the afternoon of July 27.

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