



## CITY OF PARK RIDGE

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# NEWS RELEASE

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

On Wednesday, July 17, 2019 at 5:07 p.m., the Park Ridge Fire Department was dispatched to 969 North Northwest Highway for a reported fire. Fire Department personnel arrived on scene in approximately three minutes and found a vacant commercial building fully involved with fire. A defensive fire attack ensued and the Incident Commander upgraded the response to a “working fire”, which called for more fire department resources at the scene and provided coverage for the two Park Ridge fire stations. Multiple hand lines and elevated master streams from ladder trucks were utilized to keep the fire from spreading to nearby structures, one of which was a multistory apartment building. Due to the intensity of the fire that included explosions and one broken hydrant, the response was upgraded again to a Box Alarm, bringing in additional fire companies. At some point during the firefight, crews noticed the water runoff from the fire contained a white residue. A Hazardous Materials Box Alarm was called bringing several fire department hazardous materials technicians to the scene. Eventually, it was determined that 90,000 pounds of calcium peroxide was being stored in the building. This fact contributed to the intensity of the fire as the chemical reacted with water.

When the fire was extinguished, our focus became the decontamination of fire department personnel and containment of the site. A private hazardous materials cleanup crew was called to the scene by the owner of the property in order to clean the public streets and sidewalks, and continues to work on the site today. The Illinois EPA is working with the owner to determine a corrective action plan for the property.

There were two (2) reported injuries to fire department personnel in this incident. Both firefighters were treated and released from Lutheran General Hospital. The Park Ridge Fire Department was assisted on scene by companies from the Deerfield, Des Plaines, Elk Grove Village, Glenview, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove, Mount Prospect, Niles, North Maine, Norwood Park, Prospect Heights, Schiller Park, Skokie, and Wheeling Fire Departments.

The Buffalo Grove, Evanston, Northbrook and Rosemont Fire Departments covered the Park Ridge stations during this incident, handling emergency calls during the approximately five (5) hours that they provided the coverage.

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