

# Alameda County Fire Department NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 13, 2011

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## ***Firefighters Battle 3-Alarm Apartment Fire in San Leandro***

*14 Residents Displaced, 5 Units Damaged*

San Leandro--On Monday, June 13, 2011, at 6:32 PM, 15 companies of Alameda County firefighters responded to a report of a structure fire at the Bel Mark Apartments at 1675 Hays Street. First arriving units from Station #9 on Estudillo responded within minutes to find a four-story, 66-unit apartment complex with heavy smoke and flames rushing out of the fourth floor of the building.

With smoke visible from nearly 3 miles away, Alameda County firefighters immediately began an aggressive interior fire attack coordinated with rooftop ventilation. A simultaneous and well-coordinated evacuation operation by firefighters and San Leandro Police Officers resulted in all of the Bel Mark residents exiting the building without injury. A wheelchair-bound, 84 year-old woman who resided with her husband in a third floor unit, was safely carried down three flights of stairs by three San Leandro Police Officers during the evacuation efforts. Over 60 firefighters were able to knockdown the bulk of the fire in 30 minutes before it could spread to additional floors in the apartment complex.

The bulk of the fire was confined to the unit of origin. A total of 5 apartment units sustained damage during the fire. One apartment (Unit #401) sustained severe fire damage, three units sustained significant water damage (Units #108, 305 & 306), and one unit sustained heavy smoke damage (Unit #402) and are uninhabitable. In total, the Red Cross was contacted to assist approximately 14 Bel Mark displaced residents with temporary shelter and food. Of the 14 residents displaced by the fire, four residents were children ranging in age from 3 to 14 years old.

After the fire, Building Inspectors from the City of San Leandro, PG&E and firefighters worked collaboratively to assess the damage in each unit of the apartment complex; The Red Cross also provided refreshments and blankets to approximately 100 residents that were temporarily displaced while the damage assessments were conducted. With the exception of the 5 units that sustained damage during the fire, residents in the remaining 61 units were able to return home at 11:20PM.

After a four hour fire investigation, Fire Investigators determined the rear bedroom in Unit #401 on the fourth floor to be the area of origin of the 3-Alarm blaze. The exact cause of the fire is undetermined.

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