



BENTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #2

P.O. Box 719, Benton City, WA. 99320 | www.benton2.org

Station 210: 1304 Dale Ave. | Station 220: 49504 N. Whitmore PRNW

Phone: 509-588-3212 Fax: 509-588-4343

MEDIA RELEASE

“OIE FIRE”

PREPARED BY: Assistant Fire Chief – Todd Dormaier

INCIDENT COMMANDER(s): Todd Dormaier/Steve McGhan

ESTIMATED ACREAGE: 820.5

CONTAINMENT: 85%

START DATE: 6/14/2026 @1225HRS

AREA OF FIRE: Benton County, North of the Yakima River, South of Old Inland
Empire Hwy (OIE), East of Chandler Power Plant

CAUSE: Under Investigation

STRUCTURES DAMAGED: (5) Primary Structures, (17) Outbuildings

INJURIES: (2) Firefighter (minor | treated/released), (0) Civilian

CLOSURES & EVACUATION LEVELS: Current Level 2 evacuations are still in place for the immediate fire area. An evacuation Level 2, “SET”, has been kept in place due to the “Red Flag Warning” covering the affected area, the continued wind and wind gusts, also as a result of continued hot spots in areas of very limited accessibility.

OVERVIEW: The OIE Fire was fueled by extremely dry fuels, wind, topography and limited access, in and out of drylands, crops, residential areas, and throughout areas considered to be wildland urban interface. Firefighters from: Benton County Fire District #1, Benton County Fire District #4, Benton County Fire District #5, Richland Fire Department, Kennewick Fire Department, Pasco Fire Department, Hanford Fire Department, Franklin County Fire District #4, Franklin County Fire District #5, and WADNR (Washington State Department of Natural Resources) all assisted with initial attack; West Benton Fire Rescue assisted with both initial and extended attack.

Aviation resources were requested via HB1498 at 1303hrs (1:03p) however, due to numerous other fires, no aviation was readily available; in total, (3) rotors were requested. At 1425hrs (2:45p) a single Type 2 rotor was allocated and arrived on scene. Due to the severity and complexity, in combination with the number of structures threatened, (2) LAT's (Large Air Tankers) were ordered by Air Operations and were immediately put to work once on scene. These LAT's are typically guided by lead planes however, due to the draw down of aviation resources, and the immediate need of retardant, Initial Attack certified air tankers were dispatched, and Air Operations guided the tankers into their targeted and prioritized locations. A second rotor arrived on scene however, shortly thereafter, (1) rotor and (1) LAT had to return to base due to mechanical issues; issues were not related to each other and were independent issues.



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(cont.)

The remaining LAT on scene was requested to load and return with additional retardant loads. As fire progression exponentially grew, a VLAT (Very Large Air Tanker) was requested along with a Lead Plane and Air Attack. Air resources along with BCFD#2's dozer operations, stopped forward progress of the main head of the fire at approximately 2045hrs.

Prior to the region being exhausted of available units and due to other large local fires in the area, a Washington State Mobilization request was made sooner than normally requested; this request was made at approximately 1750hrs (5:50p). The request consisted of an immediate need of: (1) Strike Team for the night shift of 6/14/26, and an additional (2) Strike Teams for the days to follow, for day-time operations. This request and resource order was approved by the State Fire Marshal Office via the WSP at 1800hrs (6p) 6/14/2026. Strike teams were allocated from Yakima Valley (immediate need – night shift), along with a strike team from Clark County and a strike team from Puget Sound. All (3) strike teams arrived ahead of schedule and were very effective in suppression and mop-up operations. As a result of initial attack, extended attack, and efforts of all strike teams, the original foot print of the OIE fire never broke it's perimeter and acreage as not increased since 6/14/2026.

RESOURCES *(approximately 160 personnel at the peak of suppression efforts):*

- (12) Overhead Personnel
- (1) Dozer
- (11) Structural Firefighting Apparatuses
- (27) Wildland Firefighting Apparatuses
- (10) Water Tenders
- (3) Medic Units
- (1) Rehab
- (3) Helitack Personnel
- At the peak of aviation assets, on scene:
 - (1) Lead
 - (1) Air Attack
 - (2) LAT's
 - (1) VLAT
 - (3) Rotors
 - (2) Type 1
 - (1) Type 2

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