



Pittsfield Charter Township

Department of Public Safety

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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

4/11/2019

TYPE OF INCIDENT: Hazardous Materials Fire

DATE: Thursday, April 11, 2019

TIME: 1230 PM

LOCATION: 4811 Carpenter Rd.

FIRE COMPLAINT NUMBER: 19-386052

INFORMATION: The Pittsfield Township Fire Department responded to the report of a fire at Ann Arbor Welding located in the 4000 block of Carpenter Rd. First arriving crews found heavy fire and smoke with multiple explosions coming from the rear of the building. Crews found a 2000 gallon propane tank was on fire along with several smaller propane, butane and acetelyne tanks. Crews immediately met with staff to ensure all occupants were out and management confirmed that all were accounted for. A second large propane tank and a 30,000 gallon butane tank were exposed to the fire which prompted an isolation and evacuation distance of one mile in all directions due to the risk of a major explosion affecting a wide area. Smaller tanks also began to explode becoming projectiles and putting anyone at risk within the danger area. Mutual aid was requested from Ann Arbor City Fire, Ann Arbor Township Fire, Ypsilanti Township Fire, Huron Valley Ambulance and the Washtenaw County Haz Mat team to assist at the scene. The Western Wayne Haz Mat Team also assisted with bringing and operating a drone for use on scene. Once the area was deemed safe to work in, crews cooled the tanks and applied firefighting foam to the areas where flammable liquids were still burning. One of the large capacity propane tanks was venting product that is being allowed to burn off while crews stand by and monitor the situation. Damage to the tanks and outside equipment was severe, but the building suffered only minor damage. According to staff, when the fire started an employee was working outside in the yard when he noticed flames coming from the tanks. He was able to safely evacuate before the fire spread and was not injured. Two other employees were treated and released for smoke inhalation, but no other injuries were reported during the incident. The Pittsfield Township Police Department and Washtenaw County Sheriff assisted with evacuations and traffic within the isolation area. At the time of this release, Carpenter Rd. has been re-opened and all residents were allowed to return to their homes and advised to shelter in place.

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FURTHER INVESTIGATION: Pittsfield Township Fire Marshal's Division

CONTACT PERSON: Matthew Harshberger, Director of Public Safety 734-822-4921