

**SAN ANTONIO FIRE
AFTER ACTION REVIEW
MAY 15, 2007
1100 HRS**

On May 14, 2007 at approximately 1300, Helicopter 320 was dispatched to the San Antonio Fire located on the Sierra Vista Ranger District, Coronado National Forest, for initial attack.

IC requested water drops, H-320 landed at dip site near heel of fire, HELM and two HECM's attached bucket and remained at dip site while H-320 provided water drops for IC near head of fire.

What was planned?

HELM instructed crewmembers to suppress fire near the heel that was backing towards landing/dip site.

What actually happened?

Crewmember was using handtool (swatter/flapper) to suppress fire in short annual grass using direct tactics. After observing a large clump of tall buffleggrass ignite next to him, he decided to withdraw. While crewmember was moving away, the flames reached a height of about 10 feet, leaned over and contacted the right side of his face. The result was minor burns to his right ear, cheek and side of nose.

Why did it happen?

Crewmember was knowledgeable of the intensified fire behavior and increased flame lengths associated with buffleggrass from Safety Alerts and operational briefings. This aided in his decision to withdraw, but crewmember did not anticipate a gust or sudden change of wind that probably caused the flame to lean over.

What can we do next time?

We learned that indirect suppression tactics need to be applied in taller grass when using handtools, and the use of a Nomex face/neck shroud would reduce areas of exposed skin and prevent radiant burns while using direct tactics.

Contact Dallas Van Gorden, Helitack Supervisor at 520-237-3324 for more information.

FMO's at D-4 and D-5 advised on 05/15/07

SAFENET # 739RN7SAFE submitted on 05/16/07

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