



Town of Falmouth
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NEWS RELEASE - 2021-08

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Falmouth Fire-EMS Evacuates 12 Homes on Brookside Drive after Gas Leak

On Wednesday afternoon at 3:18 p.m. Falmouth Fire-EMS was dispatched to a report of gas leaking from a 500-gallon propane storage tank at 16 Brookside Road. Falmouth Fire Chief Howard Rice, Jr. was the first to arrive at the scene at 3:28 p.m. alongside Windham Engine 7, who responded from the Westbrook Prides Corner Fire Station where they were covering for Westbrook. Crews encountered a man in the road who advised of a gas leak from an underground propane tank. Windham Engine 7 stopped short of the residence and could see a white cloud of gas as well as what appeared to be a significant leak coming from the tank. Chief Rice requested Central Maine Power (CMP) to immediately shut off power to the area for fear of a possible explosion. The residence of 16 Brookside Drive is on a downward slope with a 2-car garage below grade. Given the properties of propane it was possible that propane gas could have built up in the basement area of the home and, with an ignition source, could have caught fire or exploded. CMP turned off the power to the area and sent a crew to the scene to isolate the homes on Brookside Drive and turn power back on the rest of the area.

Falmouth Engine 2 arrived and set up a supply line from a hydrant near the entrance to Brookside Drive to Windham Engine 7. Falmouth Ambulance 2, Tower 2 and Engine 1 also arrived on scene. Crews from Windham and Falmouth along with a Falmouth Police Officer immediately evacuated the houses on both sides of the residence with the leak. Given the size of the leak and the wind direction at the time of the incident, 12 homes were evacuated, all on Brookside Drive. Fire crews then kept back from the scene and, with the help of Falmouth Police and later Falmouth Public Works, cordoned off the area of Brookside Drive between Brook Road and Heritage Lane.

Once propane technicians arrived and surveyed the leak, fire crews were brought up to the scene to provide a charged hose line for protection of the gas technicians. The technicians were able to shut off the leak. Technicians called in more help to come to the scene to transfer remaining product from the underground tank to a propane delivery truck. When this did not work the technicians brought in crews to burn off the product. This was completed by 8 pm.

An Engine company from North Yarmouth covered the Winn Road Fire Station and an engine company from Cumberland covered Central Station on Bucknam Road. The coverage crews responded to 1 fire call and 1 EMS call while covering the Falmouth stations.

Brookside Drive remained closed to traffic until 6 p.m. and the last fire units cleared the scene by 6:30 p.m. There were no injuries on scene.

This was the first time several homes had to be evacuated from a gas leak since 10 homes were evacuated back in October 2012 from a gas leak on Foreside Road. That incident was also caused by a landscaper running over the cap of an underground propane tank,

End of release.

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