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Commercial Structure Fire- Tomo Arcata

ARCATA, CA – January 27, 2018 – At 8:27 AM Arcata Fire District was dispatched to a commercial structure fire at 708 9th Street, Arcata. The first engine to arrive was out of the Arcata Fire Station and reported thick black smoke in Tomo Restaurant. After noting smoke in the Hotel Arcata, the crew initiated an aggressive fire attack to control the fire and prevent spread to the Hotel Arcata, which is directly above the restaurant.

The second engine from Mad River Fire Station began search operations in the hotel. The Fire Captain from the Search Team reported black smoke on all floors of the Hotel. The Search Group coordinated a search of all rooms using Arcata Police Officers to assist.

A third engine from McKinleyville Station arrived and began efforts to remove smoke from the hotel and restaurant. Additional engines from Humboldt Bay Fire, Blue Lake Fire, and Cal Fire-Trinidad responded into the scene and assisted with fire control and search efforts. Westhaven Fire and Samoa Fire covered District stations while the incident was occurring.

The fire was contained in less than six minutes and a search of the restaurant was completed a minute after the fire was controlled. It took approximately 20 minutes to evacuate occupants from the Hotel Arcata.

Battalion Chief Sean Campbell reported, “This type of incident is why communities have fire departments. We were able to control this fire quickly and prevent a huge loss to the community. Tomo Restaraunt estimates they will be out of service for one week, which is better than one month or one year. They have 60 employees that will be able to go back to work sooner than later. Had this fire spread to the Hotel Arcata or the rest of the block, the economic impact would have been devastating.”

The estimated loss to Tomo Restaurant is \$19,272 and the estimated save to the restaurant is \$707,928. The saved value for Hotel Arcata is \$8,220,473. These values do not account for lost sales revenue, lost sales tax, or lost employment.

Fire Chief Justin McDonald reported, “Our team did an excellent job at this incident today. This incident resulted in a 97% save ratio, which is an A+. The save ratio is based on *Value Saved* divided by *Total Value (minus Loss)*. We attribute this to good work and a great relationship with our Mutual-Aid partners.”

An overloaded electrical circuit caused the fire. Investigators believe the fire was smoldering for over three hours. The restaurant had heat detectors but no smoke alarms. A total of twenty-one firefighters and seven volunteer support personnel managed this incident.

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