

Airmen Assist in Millwood Battle

A five-acre pile of logs caught fire in the Spokane Valley this afternoon and all available firemen, civil defense workers and sheriff's posse members and Geiger and Fairchild airmen turned out to fight the flames.

The big battle was to protect the warehouses and other property of the Inland Empire Paper company near the south bank of the Spokane river.

The fire broke out about 1 p. m. in some brush and spread to the big pile of paper company logs near by. The company uses the logs in making pulp for paper manufacture.

Fireman estimated the size of the fire at 3 p. m. as about 1200 to 1500 yards long. Involved were three rows of logs piled 20 to 30 feet high. Crane operators were working furiously to form a break in the log rows.

They were hoping to form a break-through which might be held if the fire reaches the point, which was upwind from the blaze.

At 3:15 p. m. the roof of the paper mill's storage warehouse on Empire avenue burst into flames. Sparks were also reported setting fires in brush on the north side of the river.

At 3:30 p. m. officials were considering declaring a state of emergency so that Spokane fire rigs could respond.

Valley Fire Chief L. E. Schucker expressed concern that if the wind should change, the flames would threaten not only the paper mill but the town of Millwood itself. A strong west breeze fanned the flames.

The fire was below an embankment from Millwood residential areas and was bounded on the north by the Spokane river.

Hundreds of spectators lined the embankment and the north shore of the river to watch the blaze.

Scores of youths helped firemen man the hoses.

Fairchild Sends Men

Fairchild air force base dispatched 30 busloads of men equipped with shovels to dig fire-break trenches around the flames. Geiger field sent two fire engines and crews.

Civil defense personnel were directing the heavy traffic attracted by the smoke and flames. The traffic slowed the arrival of some fire-fighting apparatus.

Trucks from four Valley fire stations, the naval supply depot and state forestry division already were at the scene. The Spokane county sheriff's posse and Valley civil defense personnel were summoned to help fire fighters.

The log pile covers about five acres of ground between the railroad tracks and the river.

A second smaller fire in the company's west yard, a half block off Argonne, started at the same time but was reported under control shortly before 2. Most of the flames then were in the mill yard log pile east of the plant, $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away.

Smoke was heavy.

A railway switch engine was used to move flat cars of logs from the danger area. Sparks from the engine reportedly set off another brush fire.

Fire fighters had to use oxygen masks to get close to the smoky blaze.

A small building owned by the Spokane International railway and used for miscellaneous storage was destroyed and several poles, stacked along the right of way and owned by the railroad, were damaged. The fire on the railroad property was brought under control at 2 o'clock.

THE WEATHER

Partly cloudy, cooler with expected low tonight, about 53; high tomorrow, near 78. Highest temperature yesterday, 88 at 2:45 p. m.; low today, 62 at 5:30 a. m.; 69 at 10:30 a. m.; 72 at 11:30 a. m.; 73 at 1:30 p. m. at the weather station at Geiger field.