



# Cedar City

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Cedar City Fire Department quickly knocks down two fires over Pioneer Day weekend thanks to efficient staffing**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 28, 2023

**CEDAR CITY, UT** – Cedar City firefighters were able to slow the spread of two potentially catastrophic fires over Pioneer Day weekend thanks to the quick response from the fully staffed 4-person engine company that is ready to respond every day of the year.

On Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> a fire that is currently under investigation began at Top Spot restaurant on Main Street at approximately 1:56 p.m. The fully staffed engine company out of Station #1 located on 800 West was able to respond in 6 minutes. The next Cedar City engine company to respond arrived on scene 15 minutes after the first engine and provided additional support and resources from volunteer firefighters. Thick dark smoke was seen by many in person and on social media, however, the outcome was less catastrophic than it could have been.

“The quick response by having a 4-person engine company readily available really made all the difference in preventing this fire from spreading,” stated Fire Marshal Mike Shurtz, who arrived on scene four minutes after the first engine company. “The fire didn’t have time to develop and get into the structure, so every second truly matters when we are saving lives and property.”

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Cedar City Fire Department has been operating a 4-person engine company since 2016, and while the volunteer workforce is still very much needed to augment the existing full-time staff, the benefit of having the fully staffed engine is visible any time an incident occurs.

Another close call occurred on Sunday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> at approximately 5:30 p.m. near Ridge Road when a vegetation fire broke out west of the I-15 freeway and the SUU stadium in an area known to firefighters as the Wildland Urban Interface.

“With the current dry weather conditions, high heat, and low humidity these fires have the ability to spread quickly,” said Captain Russel Brunson who responded to the incident. “But with the quick response time, the fire was contained to less than an acre.”

Cedar City Fire Department trains willing volunteers every year, who get paid when working shifts or responding to a fire from their home. The longtime fire service model of having volunteer firefighters has still provided a huge benefit to our community and will continue to play a major role in the quality of service and response times.

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**About Cedar City, UT** - Cedar City encompasses nearly 35 square miles and is located 250 miles south of Salt Lake City and 52 miles north of St. George on Interstate 15, with a current population of nearly 40,000 residents. Information regarding the City and the many programs and services provided to the community can be found at [www.CedarCity.org](http://www.CedarCity.org), as well as via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.