

# Rapid Lesson Sharing

**Event Type:** Parked in Black Engine Fire

**Date:** August 18, 2017

**Location:** Wildfire near Cut Bank, Montana



## Engine Parked in Cold Black Catches Fire

On August 18, a Type 6 Engine, E-512, was dispatched from the Wolverine Fire, located near Babb, Montana, to a new start located approximately 69 miles southeast, near Cut Bank, Montana.

E-512 was sitting in cold black. When parked, there were no open flames or any hot spots under the vehicle. Suddenly, another engine noticed flames coming from underneath E-512's cab. The Engine Boss and the Crewmember jumped out of the vehicle and started spraying with hardline hose. "Instinct quickly kicked-in to put the fire out," the Engine Boss said.



E-521 burn damage occurred to: the wiring harness located on the driver's side of the frame, the wiring above the transfer case, and two plastic/rubber fuel lines.

No firefighters were injured, but the engine became inoperable.

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The engine was towed from the fire to a local vehicle dealership where these damaged parts were replaced.

#### **Incident Determination**

After a hands-on examination of this engine and the fire, it was determined that this incident was neither a mechanical error nor defect. No electrical lines had been cut or damaged.

Therefore, the buildup of fine fuels in the undercarriage that came from crossing wheat fields to access another incident prior to being dispatched to this initial attack incident in Cut Bank most likely provided the fuel for this fire.

### **LESSONS**

#### **Success**

If it was not for the other engine on scene that quickly and immediately communicated the fire, this could have gone unnoticed for a longer period of time. This incident could be considered a near miss. Standard Operating Procedure for the Bureau of Indian Affairs is that two engines would respond in tandem within this fuel type, as occurred on this incident.

#### **Challenges**

Multiple initial attack incidents during the previous days most likely led up to fine fuels gathering up under this vehicle. The current standard PM checklist is to include viewing the undercarriage. But how do you do this in between IA response?

**This RLS was submitted by:  
Duty Officer in Support of Agency/Tribe**

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