



## **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Blue Heron Paper Mill Incident**

### **Why is the Blue Heron Paper Mill structure still smoldering?**

The structures at the Blue Heron Paper Mill are deemed unsafe by the Fire Marshal and are due to be demolished. The involved structures are all connected, and their integrity has been compromised by the fire involvement. Due to the hazard associated with falling debris and the threat of partial collapse, Clackamas Fire is not putting their Firefighters at risk for a building that is a total loss and already planned for demolition. There is still smoldering material that is difficult to fully extinguish, as most of it is protected by a partially intact roof. We will continually monitor the structure, evaluating risks to our firefighters and the public. We expect the buildings to smolder until they are completely demolished, hopefully within a few weeks.

### **Why am I still seeing flames on the roof of the structure and why isn't the fire fully extinguished?**

The smoldering material is made of dimensional tongue and groove lumber, covered in roofing material and tar. As the smoldering material finds open space, expect to see flames pop up, then die down. Our efforts to extinguish the fire from a safe distance does not allow us to get water on every hot spot underneath and the intact roofing is shielding our efforts from above. With the threat to the Firefighters and the public mitigated, we will continue to evaluate risk as we work through occasional flare ups.

### **Why isn't Clackamas Fire on-site monitoring the structure?**

Clackamas Fire responded to over 33,000 calls in 2024 and has continued with a busy start to 2025. Our priority is to be available for 911 calls and improve outcomes during emergencies. The Blue Heron Paper Mill is no longer an emergency, rather it is in the process of total demolition. The property owner and Clackamas Fire are working together to address public concern and ultimately, getting the unsafe buildings torn down. With this, we are constantly monitoring the property, but the fire engines and Firefighters are back in their stations ready to respond to the next emergency.

### **When will the fire be fully extinguished?**

The fire will be fully extinguished when it is on the ground and the hot spots are separated and extinguished by the demolition company. We will continue to have smoke production until the building no longer exists.

**Is lingering smoke affecting the air quality?**

During the incident, there was ashfall that dropped across the area. On-site officials from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) surveyed the area and deemed there was no public health risk. Any ashfall could safely be hosed off with water. The property owners have hired a contractor to monitor the air quality on and around the site. If any positive readings occur, public notifications will be disseminated with instructions. At this time, there has been no threat to public health.

**When will the fire investigation be complete?**

The investigation process can take days, weeks, or months to conduct. In large scale emergencies, such as this incident, there are countless interviews that need to occur, as well as processing new information that comes in from the public. The Fire Marshal is working with the Oregon City Police Department (OCPD) to gather all the information and process it accurately. Clackamas Fire's staff and the OCPD did an amazing job during the first few hours of the incident to collect critical information.

*If members of the media have any questions, please contact the Clackamas Fire Public Information Officer at: [cfdpio@clackamasfire.com](mailto:cfdpio@clackamasfire.com) or 503.294.3555.*