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MOFD firefighter suffers heart attack after wildfire deployment

By Nick Marnell



responded on a task force to a wildfire in Solano County has been released from the hospital after suffering a heart attack.

A firefighter from the Moraga-Orinda Fire District who

According to Capt. Lucas Lambert the firefighter, who requested anonymity, spent 24 straight hours in heavy smoke and unfavorable conditions working the Nelson Fire, a 2,100-acre wildfire between Fairfield and Vacaville. The fire was contained on Aug. 12.

As he traveled back to the Bay Area, the firefighter felt chest palpitations, and he went to the emergency room the next day, where he was treated for a heart attack. He is resting and recovering at home.

"This was an eye-opener to us all," Lambert said, noting that the stricken firefighter was young, in good shape and apparently in good health. "We need to take care of

MOFD and ConFire crews at the Marsh Fire in July Photo courtesy Moraga-Orinda Firefighters

our bodies, especially during fire season."

Lambert himself was recently deployed at the Ferguson Fire, a 95,000-acre wildfire near Yosemite Valley, as a safety officer. Other MOFD personnel worked the Carr Fire, a 200,000-acre blaze in Shasta and Trinity counties, and crews from the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District were deployed to the Mendocino Complex fire, at 360,000 acres the largest fire in California recorded history.

ConFire Chief Jeff Carman told his advisory fire commission on Aug. 13 that the current fire season has already been record setting, and it has not yet fully matured. Fire officials say that fire seasons are growing longer and more intense with each passing year.

And more deadly.

"During my first week, we observed three moments of silence," Lambert said.

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, this year some 12,500 firefighters have worked more than 940,000 acres of state fires, which have damaged or destroyed over 2,000 structures, and have pushed the 2018 death toll among firefighters to six.

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