

## Wildfire Scare Sends SFV Sector Office Employees Home Early

By ADRIENNE S. BLYTHE

(Oct. 31, 2003) San Fernando Valley Sector employees had a close call last Monday afternoon when wildfires raged near their Chatsworth office. The office closed early when smoke made it difficult for many employees to breathe.

"The air was clear throughout the morning and then around 2:30 the wind shifted and within 10 to 15 minutes the air became black," said Community Relations Officer Eric Rapp. "You could not see a quarter of a mile in front of you."

When employees walked outside they could see the flames rising from the hills across the street from the office.

"The pavement and the pool cars were covered with ash and the smell of smoke remained in the building until Thursday morning," Rapp said.

Many of the surrounding neighborhoods in the community of Chatsworth were evacuated and the winds were blowing directly towards the MTA office building. The office closed at 3 p.m. just to be safe.

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Photos taken by Eric Rapp on Monday show progression of wildfire. View is from the San Fernando Valley sector office, looking north and west up Topanga Canyon Blvd.



... at 11 a.m.



... at noon



... at 3 p.m.