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Fire Protection

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HISTORICAL REPORT

of the

FIRE PROTECTION SECTION

MINIDOKA PROJECT

Compiled by:
Verner Campbell, Fire Protection Officer

Section Heads:
W. L. Yeager, August 18, 1942 - September 13, 1943
Ivan F. Burke, September 13, 1943 - December 2, 1943
Samuel Ressner, December 14, 1943 - April 17, 1944
Gordon M. Nimmo, April 17, 1944 - June 8, 1945
Verner Campbell, June 8, 1945 - October 15, 1945
Robert L. Hill, October 15, 1945 - January 31, 1946

MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER

HUNT, IDAHO

HISTORICAL REPORT
of the
FIRE PROTECTION SECTION

Introduction

In War Relocation Centers, as in all other urban communities, the hazard of fire with its threat to life and property was an important concern of the local government. Necessary steps had to be taken to develop adequate preventive and protective measures so that the residents could live without serious fear of their lives or the destruction of property. War Relocation Centers differed materially, however, from the ordinary urban community in two important respects.

First, the government of the community so far as providing fire fighting equipment and men trained in fire fighting were concerned was vested in the War Relocation Authority itself. The community council, which provided local self-government at the relocation centers, was without power to levy taxes, purchase equipment or otherwise handle the problem.

Second, almost all property at the relocation centers was owned by the Federal Government and consisted principally of buildings and community facilities. There was very little private property at relocation centers, and that which did exist consisted of clothing, bedding, furniture, and other personal effects. There were no privately owned homes or business establishments; therefore, residents had much less incentive to exercise fire caution in the relocation centers than in ordinary communities, where they would have had an important part of their savings invested in homes, household furniture, farm implements, live

stock, merchandise, or other forms of wealth or means of livelihood. It was also significant that an important segment of the residents of relocation centers - perhaps forty per cent - had heretofore lived in rural areas and were not fully aware of urban fire risks.

Therefore, one of the early jobs in the relocation centers was to develop a consciousness on the part of the residents of the hardships they would suffer individually if a large portion of the community should be destroyed by fire. To an important extent cooperation in our fire prevention activities was promoted by that type of approach.

In these new communities we had an opportunity to test the recommendations of fire prevention authorities who emphasize how sharply fire losses can be cut by proper fire prevention measures.

The following report is based on careful observation of the fire risks at this center and reflects administrative problems which the War Relocation Authority has encountered in its efforts to provide facilities and trained personnel for fire prevention and suppression work. In brief, this report summarizes the writer's observations after three years of service as Fire Protection Officer and is taken from records, reports, and recommendations contained in the files of the Fire Protection Section. The fire protection program included the following:

1. Maintenance of fire stations with personnel and motor equipment
2. Inspection of water mains and fire reporting systems
3. Training and drill of fire fighting personnel
4. Inspection and reporting of fire hazards

5. Inspection of and setting standards for places of public assemblies

6. Inspection of and setting standards for heating devices, electrical systems, open fires, vehicle parking, and community education in fire prevention

7. Use of first aid fire fighting equipment

PROBLEMS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The first train load of evacuees arrived at the center on August 11, 1942, before all the barracks had been completed. As the barracks were finished, more evacuees were moved in from the assembly centers. The resident population of this center reached a peak of approximately 9,800 people. They were housed in 20' x 120' wooden, barrack-type buildings of the army theatre-of-operations-type construction, each subdivided into five or six family apartments. Each apartment was heated by an individual stove which burned coal and wood and vented smoke through a terra cotta chimney, a half chimney extending up through the roof. All buildings were constructed of unseasoned lumber and covered with 58-pound tar paper. The roofing of each consisted of 90 pounds of fire resistive composition material.

These dwellings were grouped in 36 blocks, each consisting of 15 buildings. There were 40 feet between buildings in the same block and 120 feet between the end buildings of blocks. In each block there was a mess hall with kitchens containing three army-type coal-burning ranges. Each mess hall cooked for approximately 250 people three times per day. In each block there also was one community wash and shower building, with water heated by boilers - fired with coal

and wood. The heating stove burned coal. Every block had a recreational hall of the C.C. prefabricated all-wood-type construction, with a 90-pound tar paper roof. Other buildings were used for offices, schools, warehouses, hospital, administrative living quarters (consisting of approximately two blocks), a motor pool where automotive equipment was repaired, painted and parked, and a chicken and hog ranch where approximately 13,000 chickens and 800 hogs were housed. All these buildings were heated by individual coal stoves with the exception of staff housing buildings, which were heated by oil furnaces providing hot air, and the hospital, which was heated with steam.

Since construction was of the army theatre-of-operations-type, serious fire hazards were always present. The basic hazard of fire loss at this center arose from the type of construction and the fact that very little consideration had been given to the matter of fire safety. For the most part, the center was built rapidly to meet the pressure for quick evacuation of the evacuees from the coastal districts. The buildings were subject to progressive deterioration from the hot sun and high winds which added to the fire hazard. Basically these homes offered a serious fire hazard in themselves, and, in addition, the threat to human life at this center was increased by the fact that the hospital, schools, and office buildings were of substantially the same type of construction as the barracks.

But the fire hazards were not alone a matter of type of construction. They also arose from the natural setting in which the center was situated. It was located in a semi-arid section of the country

which is subject to high winds, at times more than 40 miles an hour. The area has a short summer season and a long winter season, the temperature ranging from 100 degrees above zero in the summer to 22 degrees below zero in winter, with an average humidity of 55 per cent.

DWELLINGS

Most apartments in the area were only 30' x 20' and large families were housed in these small quarters. The apartments contained their personal effects, as well as furniture, leading to much overcrowded conditions. During the severe cold weather when clothes could not be hung outside on wash days, there was a tendency for the residents to hang clothes over and around the stoves inside the apartments to dry. Moreover, they would store considerable amounts of coal, kindling wood and waste paper behind and around the stoves. In some cases stoves were located near windows, and there was always the danger of the curtains blowing over and onto the stoves. There was a constant danger of smokers' discarding cigarette butts on the floors and in corners by the coal and kindling wood or placing them in improvised ash trays.

SPACE HEATING

Heating of the living quarters offered another serious problem, because of the long season of severe winter weather. The types of stoves generally used were of good construction. In some cases there had not been the proper protection provided under or around the stoves. In most cases the occupants did not know how to handle coal-burning stoves or how to control the fires with dampers. There was a

tendency to overload them with coal, allowing the stoves to become overheated. The handling and disposal of hot ashes also was always a problem.

INADEQUATE WIRING

Inadequate wiring in living quarters at this center was a matter of serious concern. First of all, a sufficient numbers of outlets had not been provided, resulting in a tendency to overload existing lines. These conditions had to be watched carefully at all times because there were considerable amounts of electrical equipment brought into the center by the evacuees. Much of this was the ordinary 'dime store' type of equipment. There was also, quite naturally, the tendency to plug in extensions and to lead them from one end of the living quarters to another. Often the extension cords were hung over nails or a rafter, adding to the hazards of fire because the wear on the insulation would soon expose the wires and produce short circuits. This was particularly true in the hot, dry, summer weather when there is a tendency for the wire insulation to break down in a short time. The over-loading of the lines led to further complications. When fuses had been repeatedly burned out, many people would insert coins or make other improvised adjustments for bridging the fuses. This was watched very carefully by the inspection division and oversized fuses were replaced by them. If the condition was repeated very often, the residents were notified to disconnect or remove some of the electrical equipment. Electric hot plates were used quite extensively by the residents to cook meals in their homes.

WATER SYSTEM

The water supply for fire protection and domestic use is furnished from three wells, the total capacity of which is 1,350 gallons per minute. A fourth well, with a capacity of 400 gallons per minute, was operated only for a short period of time and then discontinued for two reasons: first, the nearness to the sewage disposal plant and the danger of contamination of the water; and second, the pumping of sand into the system.

The water from the deep well pumps goes directly into two elevated storage tanks, with capacities of 150,000 gallons each. The primary feeders from these storage tanks are 12 and 10 inch wood stave mains. The grids are made up of 8 and 6 inch wood stave mains with adequate cross ties and valves.

The two storage tanks are located northeast of the administrative area and northeast of housing group No. 28. The wood stave tanks, elevated on 80 foot wood towers, produce a static pressure of 55 pounds. A gasoline standby engine with a capacity of 400 gallons per minute is located in pumphouse No. 2.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

No fire alarm system of any kind had been installed on the project when it opened. There were no telephones installed in any location in the residential area, and very few, which could be used for emergencies at night, were located in the administration area. Considerable time elapsed before a system of boxes containing tele-

phones for emergencies only were installed in the area. When the evacuees first began to arrive at the center, the Fire Protection Section was limited to one pick-up truck. Later it was augmented by a convoy truck and a limited amount of first aid fire fighting equipment and water barrels. Some scattered lengths of garden hose attached to garden faucets and so placed that several lengths had to be used to reach a possible fire were available. There were a few shovels scattered around for use in case of a fire.

Little is known of the personnel of the Fire Department up until the date that the evacuees took over the department, because no records are available.

WAREHOUSE AND SHOP AREA

In this area are grouped together 17 warehouses of the army type, basically the same construction as other buildings in the center. The deminisions of the buildings are 112' in length, 48' in width, and 16' in height. They are grouped in rows 70' apart and 30' apart end to end.

On the outside of each building is attached a house hose line of 100' of linen hose with nozzle attached. Inside the buildings are placed adequate fire extinguishers of the type deemed best for the hazard involved. "No smoking" signs placed in these buildings were ignored almost in their entirety. They served, however, as a precautionary measure, as attested by the fact that we had no warehouse fires. The housekeeping in the warehouse area was generally good.

MOTOR POOL AND GARAGE

The motor pool and garage are located in the warehouse area. The work of servicing cars and minor repairs is carried on in warehouse No. 5, and major overhauling is done in warehouse No. 14. At one time the general appearance of these garages reflected poor housekeeping. Around the building were parked cars, trucks, and automotive equipment of all types. Much of it was too near the buildings. In July, 1944, Mr. George B. McIntyre, who succeeded A. H. Connor as Transportation and Motor Maintenance Supervisor, immediately set about to clean up the garages and the space around the buildings. He moved all automotive equipment a safe distance where a fence was placed around it. The picture changed from poor housekeeping to good, Mr. Glenn B. Rumley, Fire Protection Advisor, stated during a recent visit to this center.

Diesel fuel oil, which is just as good a gasoline for cleaning and much safer from a standpoint of fire, is used for cleaning parts. Extinguishers are always intact and are never robbed of fluid for cleaning purposes.

HOSPITAL

A dry-type sprinkler system was installed at the time of construction. The system has two control stations. One is located in ward No. 8, and the other is located in ward No. 14. At each control station a water driven gong is installed in the water line. 650 sprinkler heads are installed in the system, an adequate amount for the number of square feet protected. The system is checked twice daily by an evacuee member of the boiler crew and a log kept of air and water pressure. It is also

checked daily by a member of the Fire Protection Section. In the main corridor are placed asbestos-covered fire doors, spaced 100' apart. The doors are closed by means of weights and fuseable links. The fuseable links melt at 165 degree F., and the weights close the doors. The other corridors leading off the main corridor also have fire doors.

On the outside of each wing is attached a house hose line of 100' of 1-1/2" linen hose with nozzle attached. Throughout the hospital are placed adequate fire extinguishers of the type deemed best for hazards involved. The housekeeping has always been found to be very good.

SCHOOLS

Barracks were used as school houses. In Block 10, six barracks and a recreation hall were used as an elementary school. In block 22 a like number of buildings were used for another elementary school. All of block 23 was used as a high school. In each room of these buildings was placed 1 2-1/2 gallon Alaskan pump type extinguisher. Each room has 2 exit doors. Periodically fire drills were held in all school buildings. Sometimes they were supervised by members of the Fire Prevention Bureau. Other fire drills were given at different times. All schools were housed in 1-story buildings. The danger of loss of life in the event of fire was meager. The housekeeping in schools was generally good.

MILITARY AREA

The military area is detached so as to speak, since it is outside the fence. The buildings are 20' x 120' and of prefabricated

wood construction, with 90-pound tar paper roofs.

First aid fire extinguishers and house hose lines are installed in this area. The military police have a small group of volunteer firemen, but in the event of a fire the center Fire Department assists.

AUDITORIUM

In the fall of 1943, plans were completed by the Engineering Section for the erection of an auditorium and the preliminary work was started. The work progressed slowly due to some labor trouble, and apparently no real interest was taken by the evacuees as to whether it was ever completed or not. Early in the fall of 1944 an effort was made by Mr. Edward Huberman, Assistant Project Director in charge of Community Management, to help with completion of the auditorium by calling for male volunteer workers from the appointed personnel. The response was good but displeased the evacuee carpenters and workers. Despite numerous warnings to the Community Council by the Project Director, Mr. Harry L. Stafford, to the effect that after a certain date all constructions would be curtailed by the Washington Office, the auditorium was never completed. (See Engineering Section report for complete details.)

Since the use of the auditorium was imperative, a temporary floor was laid and a temporary heating system was put in by installing eight army-type coal-burning stoves placed in sand boxes. Four were set up on each side of the main auditorium room and riveted stove pipes were insulated with asbestos. No stoves were installed backstage or in the wings. This temporary heating arrangement was thought to be

reasonably safe and was approved by the Fire Protection Officer. An adequate number of fire extinguishers of the 2-1/2 gallon Alaskan pump type were installed.

Ample exits with easy agress were plainly marked by signs. A detail of firemen from the Fire Prevention Bureau inspects the building before and after each activity, and one or more members of the Internal Security Section are always present.

U. S. GRAZING SERVICE FIRES

The off-shift firemen rendered valuable service to the U. S. Grazing Service during the fire seasons. A mutual agreement among the firemen was reached whereby a part of the off-shift firemen would respond to an outside fire of this kind according to the number of firemen required. The on-shift firemen would remain on duty without any compensatory overtime being built up, until the return to the center of off-shift firemen who would take their regular shift. The firemen received extra pay for this, which was an added incentive in keeping our Fire Protection Section nearly up to maximum strength. They also contributed in no small way to the conservation of grazing land so badly needed for range cattle and sheep.

Mr. Jack Keith, U. S. Grazing Service, Shoshone District of the U. S. Grazing Service, stated that these men were excellent fire fighters and that had it not been for their services during the man power shortage, much valuable grazing feed would have been destroyed, as well as some personal property.

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On August 2, 1942, W. L. Yeager, Associate Fire Protection Officer, arrived at the center and immediately set about giving the project some sort of fire protection. His sole equipment consisted of one pick-up truck, some first aid fire extinguishers, water barrels, and a few sections of garden hose.

After the arrival of the first contingent of evacuees, six evacuee firemen were recruited to help carry on the work of installing fire extinguishers and making inspections.

Upon the arrival of more evacuees, more firemen were added to the small crew. By September 1, two fire stations were in service, 1000 feet of 2-1/2" hose had arrived, and a Chevrolet truck was secured from the Motor Pool. The hose and some fire extinguishers were loaded on the truck and installed in fire station No. 1, manned by a small crew of evacuee firemen. At about this time, Emil D. Mauser, Assistant Associate Fire Protection Officer, arrived. Later Mr. Mauser was transferred to Gila River, Arizona.

On September 10, a Fire Prevention Bureau was set up, and four evacuee inspectors were employed. These inspectors reported to the Fire station twice a week for an hour's schooling and instruction.

Later four firemen were detailed as inspectors. Three firemen were assigned to the Fire Prevention Bureau to service fire extinguishers, flush fire hydrants, and investigate and correct fire hazards in general. This was necessary to make a complete coverage in inspections

of the center once a week. Four inspectors could not cover the center once a week, due to the large area, the camp being almost three miles in length. No doubt, the additional inspectors played an important part in keeping fire hazards at a minimum, thereby preventing numerous fires with their concomitant losses.

On September 18, two modern motor-driven fire engines, one a Segraves 750 gallon pumper and the other a Boyer 500 gallon pumper, arrived. The Segraves was housed in Station No. 1 and the Boyer in Station No. 2. With the arrival of the fire engines came an additional 4000 feet of 2-1/2" single-jacket fire hose. Firemen were drilled and given schooling in modern methods of fire fighting.

On September 18, 1943, the center had its first fire at the Twin Falls Canal bridge near the main gate, with no loss, according to the record. Due to the fact that many firemen went out on seasonal leave, the Fire Protection Section was depleted of personnel, and Fire Station No. 2 was closed for the time being. The Boyer fire engine and remaining crew moved to Fire Station No. 1.

On October 13, No. 2 Station was reopened with a crew of firewomen, one of the first, if not the first, such organizations in the United States. The women drove the fire engine, laid hose lines, and drilled in almost every phase of modern fire fighting. They really became proficient in the art of fire fighting, but the arrangement was not entirely satisfactory; and on December 1, they were replaced by men who returned from the fields. The women were retained for a time as inspectors.

On October 22, Wm. E. Hoffman, Fire Protection Adviser, from Washington, D. C., made his first official visit to the center. He aided the Fire Protection Officer with his advice and many helpful suggestions.

On December 1, 1942, Charles Roraback, Assistant Fire Protection Officer, arrived.

In January, 1943, the Fire Protection Section was allocated 57 firemen by the Washington Office. This figure was maintained until the next fall. At that time, it became alarmingly low again, but not nearly so low as the year before.

In February of 1943, Mr. Emil D. Mauser transferred to Gila, Arizona, and Mr. Gorden M. Nimmo transferred from Tule Lake, California, to this center.

At about this time, Mr. Roraback transferred to Jerome, Arkansas, and a Mr. Ivan Burk succeeded Mr. Roraback. The exact dates of these changes are not available.

As this was one of the few centers with three Fire Protection Officers, the Washington office recommended the service of one be dispensed with. Mr. Yeager, Fire Protection Officer, chose to resign and was succeeded by Mr. Burk, who in turn resigned after a month or two.

The turn-over of Fire Protection Officers was almost as rapid as the evacuee firemen. In November, 1943, Mr. Samuel D. Ressner from Philadelphia, arrived as Fire Protection Officer, only to leave the service February 4, 1944. Mr. Gorden M. Nimmo became acting Fire Protection Officer. Mr. Nimmo was sole Fire Protection Officer on the

center for several months until Mr. Verner Campbell of Amache, Granada, Colorado, was detailed to this center June 1, 1944, and permanently assigned here on July 16, 1944. The parade of Fire Protection Officers had not ended and June 2, 1945, Gordon M. Nimmo left the service. On June 25, 1945, Robert L. Hill, formerly of Tule Lake, California, arrived as Assistant Fire Protection Officer.

As each new Fire Protection Officer took over, he employed slightly different ideas, but pretty much the same methods of fire protection, prevention, and training.

Due to the rapid turn-over of the evacuee firemen, constant training was necessary. Much time, approximately 3,000 hours, was spent in schooling and training, performing special detail work, and making inspections.

Fire inspectors were constantly on the alert for fire hazards and covered every phase of fire prevention. Approximately 196,122 inspections were made during the occupancy of the center over a period of a little more than three years.

One can point with pride to the performance and activity record of the local fire department and to the service it has rendered the community in promoting fire prevention, in combating fires with speed and efficiency, and in keeping losses at a minimum.

FIRE PREVENTION AND CLEAN-UP WEEK

Each year fire prevention and clean-up weeks were observed by short talks and fire drills in the schools conducted by the Fire Protection Officer and other members of the Fire Protection Section, as

well as members of the Fire Prevention Bureau. During Fire Prevention week, essay contests on fire prevention were carried on in the schools. Posters on fire prevention were also made by the Art Department in the High School. Many original ideas were very cleverly brought out. In 1944, some very fine silk screen fire prevention posters were received from the Amache Center, Granada, Colorado. All posters were displayed in the mess halls, the post office, the hospital, and many other prominent places.

Clean-up Week was generally observed in May. A special campaign was carried on to get rubbish, weeds, grass, and anything else of a hazardous or unsightly nature removed. In this we were partly successful. No doubt, this effort had considerable effect on keeping down the fire loss.

In 1945, there was no Clean-Up Campaign for two reasons: first, a ground maintenance crew, which carried on a daily clean-up, was recruited from the garbage crew when their services were no longer needed there; second, it was difficult to instill civic pride in the evacuees when they knew they would be here for such a short time.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
YEARLY REPORT

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
December 31, 1942

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

	Mess Halls	Ware-houses	Living Quarters	Service Bldgs.	Other Bldgs.	Grass Brush	Vehicles	Total
Number of Fires			9		4	7		$20.
Damage to Bldgs.			$25.					25.
Damage to Contents			8.					8.
Pvt. Loss			25.					25.
Govt. Loss			33.					33.
Total Loss			58.					58.

Regular Firemen Worked	MILEAGE		TIME				HOSE USED-FEET		
	Speed-ometer	Tach-ometer	WORKED Hr.	WORKED Min.	PUMPED Hr.	PUMPED Min.	2½"	1½"	1"
163	119	184	4	52	1	21	1000		450

FIRES OF $500. or MORE

DATE	LOCATION	AMOUNT
	NONE	NONE

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
December 31, 1942

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

FIRES UNDER $500.

DATE	LOCATION	BLDG.	CONTENTS	AMOUNT
November 9	Block 36	$5.		$ 5.
November 10	Block 12	5.		5.
November 16	Block 17	10.	$ 8.	18.
November 16	Block 7	5. Pvt.	25.	28.
			TOTAL	$58.

CAUSES OF FIRE

Overheated Stove	4
Unknown	6
Cigarettes	3
Matches	2
Rubbish	3
Welding Torch	1
Hot Coals and Ashes	1

Total Fire Loss $58.00 Loss Per Capita .6 of one cent

FIRE PREVENTION:

Inspections 16,911

Violation Notices Served:

Verbal 434 Firsts 0 Seconds 0 Finals 0 Total 434

Hours Devoted to Class or Drill: For Regular Firemen 490

Fire Prevention Talks: Number of Hydrants Tested 121

PERMITS ISSUED:

Fir Burning: 73; Construction: 9; Motion Pictures: 49; Pub. Assembly: 16

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
YEARLY REPORT

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
DECEMBER 31, 1943

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

	Mess Halls	Ware-houses	Living Quarters	Service Bldgs.	Other Bldgs.	Grass Brush	Vehicles	Total
Number of Fires			7	1	2	19	5	34
Damage to Bldgs.			$285.	$1389.	$225.	None	$1538.	$2737
Damage to Contents			28.06					28.06
Pvt. Loss								
Govt. Loss			313.06			None	1538	2765.06
Total Loss			313.06	1389	225.	None	1538.	2765.06

Regular Firemen Worked	MILEAGE Speed-ometer	MILEAGE Tach-ometer	TIME WORKED Hr.	TIME WORKED Min.	TIME PUMPED Hr.	TIME PUMPED Min.	HOSE USED-FEET 2½"	HOSE USED-FEET 1½"	HOSE USED-FEET 1"
254	59.1	171.2	40	54	2	05	2250	1100	1500

FIRES OF $500. or MORE

DATE	LOCATION		AMOUNT
October 1	Warehouse Area	Power Speeder Shovel	$1466.
November 11	Block 23	Laundry & Boiler Room	1389.
		TOTAL	2855.

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
December 31, 1943

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

FIRES UNDER $500.

DATE	LOCATION		AMOUNT
January 26	W.R.A. Checking Office near Main Gate	Bldg.	$ 25.
March 6	Block 21	Bldg.	5.
March 29	Block 40	Bldg.	5.
April 1	Warehouse Area	Vehicle	45.
July 20	Block 37	Contents	28.06
August 29	North of Block 17	Guard Tower	150.
Sept. 24	Block 22	Vehicle	12.75
Sept. 25	Ad. Area	Vehicle	4.25
October 15	Hospital Area	Vehicle	10.
Nov. 16	Block 40	Bldg.	25.
		TOTAL	310.06

CAUSES OF FIRE

Careless Smokers	13	Set by Man (Mental Case)	1
Unknown	5	Soot Ignited in Chimney	1
Cigarettes	2	Grease Boiled over Stove	1
Matches	2	Sparks From R.R. Train	1
Spontaneous Combustion	2	Rubbish	1
Short Circuit in Motor	2	Electric Switch Left on Hotplate	1
Overheated Stove	2		

TOTAL FIRE LOSS $3165.06 Loss PER CAPITA 36¢

FIRE PREVENTION:

Inspections 68,138

Violation Notices Served:

Verbal: 384; Firsts: 97; Seconds: 0; Finals: 0; Total: 481

Hours Devoted to Class or Drill: For Regular Firemen 1249

Fire Prevention Talks: 15 Number of Hydrants Tested 484

PERMITS ISSUED:

For Burning: 57; Construction: 11; Motion Pictures: 21; Pub. Assembly: 7

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
YEARLY REPORT

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
December 31, 1944

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

	Mess Halls	Ware-Houses	Living Quarters	Service Bldgs.	Other Bldgs.	Grass Brush	Vehicles	Total
Number of Fires	3		6		4	16	2	31
Damage to Bldgs.			$263.				$725.	$263.
Damage to Contents			292.70					292.70
Pvt. Loss			900.				725.	900.
Govt. Loss			1455.					1455.
Total Loss			1455.				725.	2180.70

Regular Firemen Worked	MILEAGE Speed-ometer	Tach-ometer	TIME WORKED Hr.	Min.	PUMPED Hr.	Min.	HOSE USED-FEET $2\frac{1}{2}$"	$1\frac{1}{2}$"	1"
297	125.2	269.9	24	27	2	18	1200	600	1800

FIRES OF $500. or MORE

DATE	LOCATION	Bldg.	Contents	Private	AMOUNT
May 27	Block 7	$100.	$40.	$800.	$940.
August 14	Vehicle $450, 1 mile N. of Center		52.70		502.70
				TOTAL	1442.70

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
December 31, 1944

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

FIRES UNDER $500.

DATE	LOCATION	BLDG.	CONTENTS	PRIVATE	AMOUNT
January 26	Block 24	$ 5.00	$ 50.00		$ 55.00
June 6	Tractor $275 4 mi. E. of Center				275.00
June 28	Block 22	93.00		$100.00	193.00
July 26	South of Block 12	35.00	150.00		185.00
September 8	Staff housing area	5.00			5.00
October 24	Block 3	25.00			25.00
				TOTAL	738.00

CAUSES OF FIRE

Careless smokers	9	Grease spilled over stove and ignited	2
Matches	3	Short circuit	2
Cigarettes	3	Rubbish	2
Unknown	2	Smoke scare	1
Spontaneous combustion	2	Sparks from chimney	1
Defective oil burner	2		
Gasoline spilled on hot exhaust pipe and ignited	2		

TOTAL FIRE LOSS $2180.70 LOSS PER CAPITA 29.3

FIRE PREVENTION:

Inspections 64,279

Violation Notices Served:

Verbal: 387; First: 114; Seconds: 12; Finals: 0; Total: 513

Hours devoted to Class or Drill: For Regular Firemen 357

Fire Prevention Talks: 10 Number of Hydrants Tested 484

PERMITS ISSUED:

For Burning: 218; Construction: 1; Motion Pictures: 48; Pub. Assembly: 7

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
YEARLY REPORT

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
September 1, 1945

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

	Mess Halls	Ware-houses	Living Quarters	Service Bldgs.	Other Bldgs.	Grass Brush	Vehicles	Total
Number of Fires	1	1	7	1	1	9		20
Damage to Bldgs.	75.80		83.40					159.20
Damage to Contents			33.05					33.05
Pvt. Loss			538.00					538.00
Govt. Loss								
Total Loss	75.80		116.45					730.25

Regular Firemen Worked	MILEAGE Speed-ometer	MILEAGE Tach-ometer	TIME WORKED Hr.	TIME WORKED Min.	TIME PUMPED Hr.	TIME PUMPED Min.	HOSE USED-FEET $2\frac{1}{2}$"	HOSE USED-FEET $1\frac{1}{2}$"	HOSE USED-FEET 1"
267	101.7	292	12	30	3	5	3100	1600	1350

FIRES OF $500. or MORE

NONE

YEARLY REPORT ENDING MIDNIGHT
September 1, 1945

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CENTER Minidoka

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY

FIRES UNDER $500.

DATE	LOCATION	BLDG.	CONTENTS	PRIVATE	AMOUNT
January 4	Block 40			3.00	3.00
January 11	Block 34	42.40		85.00	127.40
January 25	Warehouse Area	75.80			75.80
March 15	Block 39	9.00		50.00	59.00
May 10	Block 22	32.00	33.05	400.00	465.05
				TOTAL	730.25

CAUSES OF FIRE

Cigarettes	2
Overheated stove ignited grease	2
Boy and matches	1

TOTAL FIRE LOSS $730.25 LOSS PER CAPITA 15.1

FIRE PREVENTION:

Inspections 44,940

Violation Notices Served:

Verbal 36 Firsts 55 Seconds 3 Finals 1 Total 95

Hours Devoted to Class or Drill: For Regular Firemen 112

Fire Prevention Talks: 0 Number of Hyrdants Tested 242

PERMITS ISSUED:

For Burning: 43; Construction: 0; Motion Pictures: 0; Pub. Ass.: 24

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
SUMMARY FIRE REPORT

FIRE REPORT SUMMARY FROM
AUGUST 1, 1942, through AUGUST 31, 1945

931 firemen traveled 405 miles and worked 82 hours and 43 minutes while combating 47 building fires, 51 brush and grass fires, and 7 vehicle fires. There was a total fire loss of $6,133.96 with an average per capita loss of 20.3. This is considerably lower than the national fire loss of $2.26. The 1945 per capita loss was based on a population of 4819 as of June 30, 1945.

The large number of brush and grass fires accounts for the seemingly excessive number of hours spent in combating fires. It also accounts for the low mileage, because a pickup truck and a convoy truck were used in most cases to fight brush fires.

The Fire Prevention Bureau made a total of 194,268 inspections.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE

FIRE PROTECTION SECTION

Minidoka Relocation Center

Hunt, Idaho

Compiled by:

Robert L. Hill
Acting Fire Protection Officer

Positions held at WRA Centers
Associate Fire Protection Officer
April 5, 1943 to June 25, 1945
Tule Lake, California

Assistant Fire Protection Officer
June 25, 1945, to January 31, 1946
Hunt, Idaho

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE

FIRE PROTECTION SECTION

As evacuee Fire Protection personnel became depleted as of October 1, 1945, it became necessary to employ Caucasian firefighters to carry on the fire protection work. The administration allowed six men, three on each shift of twenty-four hours, with the Acting Fire Protection Officer on call at all times. The regular fire protection force was assisted in a very creditable way at any time they were needed by the volunteer firemen, who were requested by the Project Director to give assistance in case of an emergency. It was decided upon that the regular firemen man one piece of apparatus, and the volunteers the other piece, which has proven very satisfactory.

There has been some difficulty with the firefighters that were employed. First, they were men without previous fire fighting experience, and second, owing to the short duration of the job it was hard to get them interested in fire protection work, which is necessary to be an efficient fireman. Bad weather has prevented all but very little outside drilling, which should have been done regularly, especially with untrained men, during the period of putting the closed area of the project in a reasonably safe fire-proof, stand-by, condition.

The fire hazard greatly increased due to the cold weather and the easy accessability to stoves and fuel throughout the area. It became very difficult to control the fires in the closed barracks which were left unattended, as the workmen moved from one barrack to another. Due to this condition, it was deemed advisable by the administration to supplement the fire protection personnel by two extra men during the clean-up period. Two men were detailed from other sections during this time, which at least gave the fire protection personnel a greater feeling of security during this seemingly hazardous time, as practically all combustionable material has been removed from within and between the barracks, all power lines disconnected. The possibility of fire in the closed area is very remote especially so during the winter months.

All first-aid fire fighting equipment is being moved from the vacated buildings, doors and windows securely closed. The sprinkler system in the hospital has been drained, all transformer fuses removed except the one supplying current to ward #15, which is necessary to leave on to provide heat for medical supplies stored there.

First-aid equipment is being left in places in the administrative and A/ P. apartment area, as these

buildings will very likely be in use for some time.

Major equipment is all in good serviceable condition. All fire hydrants are in serviceable condition and being kept accessable to the fire department at all times. Ample water supply has been kept at all times to combat any ordinary fire that may have occured.

In closing I extend my gratitude to the administration, Internal Security, and members of the appointed personnel who have whole heartedly supported the Fire Protection Section during the closing days of this center.

FINAL REPORT ENDING
MIDNIGHT, January 31, 1946

FIRE DEPARTMENT
MINIDOKA CENTER

Fire Report Summary

	MESS HALL	WARE-HOUSES	LIVING QUARTERS	SERVICE BLDGS.	OTHER BLDGS.	VEHICLES	TOTAL
Number of Fires			1	2			3
Damage to Bldgs.			$575.00	$221.40 25.00			
Damage to Contents			None				
Private Loss			None				
Government Loss			575.00	221.40 25.00			
Total Loss							$821.40

	Mileage	Time Worked	Time Pumped	Hose Used - Feet 2½"	1½"	1"
Regular Firemen Worked 8	4.7	3Hr.35Min.	1Hr.30Min.	950	400	150
Volunteer Firemen Worked 8	4.7	3Hr.35Min.	1Hr.30Min.	250		
TOTAL 16	9.4	7Hr. 10Min.	2Hr.30Min.	1200	400	150

CAUSE OF FIRE

Over-heated furnace	1
Unknown	2

PERSONAL NARRATIVE REPORT
of

VERN CAMPBELL

FIRE PROTECTION OFFICER

MINIDOKA RELOCATION CENTER

HUNT, IDAHO

BY

VERN CAMPBELL
FIRE PROTECTION OFFICER

Term of Service:
Associate Fire Protection Officer, August 24, 1942 - Sepbember 1, 1943
Fire Protection Officer, September 1, 1943 - October 15, 1945

PERSONAL NARRATIVE REPORT
Of

VERN CAMPBELL
FIRE PROTECTION OFFICER

Term of Service:
July 16, 1944 to October 15, 1945

Dated:
September 1, 1945

The Fire Protection Section is under the general supervision of the Assistant Project Director in Charge of Operations, and it receives its instructions with respect to administrative policies and procedure from him. It is my job to develop techniques for evacuation in time of fire; to plan and supervise the conduct of fire drills and tests in terms of special needs of the center; to determine the specific needs of the center for fire fighting equipment; to recommend the purchase of new equipment; to initiate requests for supplies and repairs; to select and organize a complete force of fire prevention inspectors among the evacuee residents and to instruct them in the inspection of community dwellings for the detection and elimination of fire hazards; to enforce fire regulations; to direct the dispatching of fire fighting equipment to the scene of fire and the work of extinguishing and controlling any fires that may occur; to organize a program of fire protection education among the evacuee population as a whole; to organize and train volunteer fire fighting groups; and to advise other center officials on fire protection problems.

II

A fire protection and fire prevention training program was carried out. First aid fire fighting equipment was installed and serviced regularly. Fire hydrants and fire reporting phones were tested regularly, and any failure was promptly reported for corrections. Permits were issued for open fires and public assemblies. Fire inspectors were constantly on the alert for fire hazards. If any such hazards were noted, they were reported for correction and in most cases corrected or eliminated. The purchase of equipment, supplies, and repairs was recommended. Authority was delegated to the proper persons for the maintenance of equipment and care of quarters. At the time of this report, this center is happy to report that no building has been a complete loss by fire, and the fire loss has been held to a minimum comparable with that of any city the size of the center.

III

This was accomplished by the cooperation of both the appointed personnel and the evacuees. In both cases they have proved to be very fire conscious and alert to any fire hazard. With the cooperation of my assistant and the evacuee personnel, the evacuee Fire Chief and his assistants did a splendid job, considering the amount of training and practical fire fighting experience they had received before evacuation.

IV

If I had it all to do over again, I would do pretty much the same with perhaps two or three rather important changes. First, I would select my personnel with care and make certain the right men were in command. Second, I would see that organization was properly set up

in regard to pertinent details. Third, I would set up a more rigid fire prevention rule or ordanance in regard to fire hazards erected or moved into blocks.

V

I would avoid any deviation from procedure or accepted rule. I would avoid hard-boiled tactics of any sort, and would 'just be firm'. I would avoid trying to do too much myself and delegate more authority to the evacuees.