

Flare-up Recalls Firemen To Smoldering Yorklyn Plant

Firemen were called back today to a manufacturing plant at Yorklyn, destroyed by fire yesterday, when the debris was rekindled.

The Hockessin Volunteer Fire Co. returned shortly before last midnight and were still pouring water late this morning on smoldering rubble that was a four-story building.

The fire gutted the Crowell Corp., a gummed tape manufacturing plant. Fire officials

said today the blaze started on the fourth floor and was channeled to all sections of the building through a blower system.

Herbert B. Adelman, president of Crowell estimated the damaged at under \$1 million, according to Richard C. Lynch, chief deputy state fire marshal.

THE plant, along Red Clay Creek, was located in what was once an old snuff mill.

Debris from a collapsed wall

of the building blocked off Delaware 82 and is still causing a detour of all traffic on 82 between Snuff Mill to Nine Gates Roads.

Adelman said a contractor has started work on tearing down the remaining walls which are in danger of collapsing. Because of the danger, Hockessin Fire Chief Fred M. Roser said, Delaware 82 will remain closed until the demolition is complete.

THE firm will continue in business with an office already opened at 218 W. 8th St., Wilmington, Adelman said.

He added that the company will continue to serve its customers with competitors' products and shipments of orders will be made from a warehouse or warehouses to be leased as soon as possible.

Adelman said the firm will build a new manufacturing plant at another site. He explained that while there has been no decision as to the site for the plant, "it will not be at the old location."

He said that efforts will be made to keep all 40 of its employees working while rebuilding is under way.

FIVE fire companies were called to fight the blaze which broke out at about 11:14 yesterday morning. Chief Roser called for additional help at 11:30.

Roser said fire was pouring out of every window of the four-story brick building when firemen arrived.

Roser said that employees of the plant told him the entire building was involved within 10 minutes after the first sign of a fire.

Lynch explained today that the origin of the fire, of undetermined source, was on the fourth floor of the building.

HE said that a conveyor belt dryer system extended from the fourth to the first floors on the north side of the building.

The system, enclosed in duct work, with high powered blowers, was used to dry glue onto tape.

Lynch said the fire started in or near a machine on the fourth floor and then the blowers fed it quickly to all sections of the building.

THE deputy fire marshal described the situation as "practically a flash fire in all sections of the building at the same time."

Sparks from the blazing buildings ignited nearby woods and for a while residents in the area feared for their homes. Firemen, however, were able to put out the field fires before they did any property damage.

Donald Blevins of Yorklyn, a foreman at the plant, said he was one of the 35 employees working when the fire broke out in the structure, which was built in 1902.

FIREMEN said the plant was loaded with rolls of paper used

to make tape of the type used to seal cardboard boxes. They said there were also many barrels of glue, some of which exploded during the height of the fire.

The fire knocked out telephone service and power in the homes immediately surrounding the plant, including Blevins' home.

At one time about 15 pieces of equipment were involved in the fire-fighting. In addition to Hockessin, the Aetna Hose Hook and Ladder of Newark, were at the scene. The Elsmere and Wilmington Manor companies provided the standby coverage.

WHILE some men and equipment of the Talleyville Fire Co. battled the Yorklyn blaze, other units of the company responded to a fire at 3:32 p.m. in a house at 2110 Naaman's Road, which caused \$5,000 damage.

The fire was started, according to firemen, by a short circuit in a lamp in the kitchen of a part of the house occupied by Robert Lennart. The house is owned by Alva Wimmer, who lives in another part of it, firemen said.

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EVENING

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Staff Photo by Frank Fahey

CONTINUING BATTLE — A Hockessin volunteer fireman rests this morning as hose plays on

destroyed plant of Crowell Corp. in Yorklyn.