

Idaho Firefighters Ambushed While Battling Brush Fire, Two Killed, One Critically Injured

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— Categories: Crime



What began as a routine call to fight a brush fire turned into a tragedy that has shaken the firefighting community in northern Idaho. On Sunday, two highly respected firefighters lost their lives and a third was critically injured when a gunman opened fire on crews responding to a blaze on Canfield Mountain near Coeur d'Alene.

Authorities believe the suspect intentionally set the fire to draw in first responders. Within the first hour of arrival, the firefighters were ambushed as flames continued to burn around them. A tense gunfight between the suspect and multiple law enforcement agencies, including the Spokane County Sheriff's Office, Idaho State Police, and the Coeur d'Alene Police Department, stretched on for about 90 minutes. The suspect was ultimately killed.

The fallen firefighters have been identified as Battalion Chief Frank Harwood, 42, of Kootenai County Fire and Rescue, and Battalion Chief John Morrison, 52, of the Coeur d'Alene Fire Department. Both men were seasoned professionals with decades of experience protecting their community.

Chief Harwood served 17 years in Kootenai County and was also a former Army National Guard combat engineer. He leaves behind a wife and two children. "Chief Harwood was a respected leader and an incredible person," said Chief Christopher Way. "This loss is deeply felt by everyone he worked with."

Battalion Chief John Morrison dedicated more than 28 years to the Coeur d'Alene Fire Department, rising through the ranks from firefighter to battalion chief. Gabe Eckert, president of the Coeur d'Alene Firefighters Union, shared a personal memory of Morrison, recalling a quiet moment when the two smoked cigars and talked about fatherhood, leadership, and becoming better firefighters. "I'm so grateful that gets to be my last memory with him," Eckert said, holding back tears.

Engineer Dave Tysdal, 47, also of the Coeur d'Alene Fire Department, was critically injured in the attack. He has undergone two surgeries and remains in critical condition, but has been able to open his eyes. Tysdal has served his community for 23 years. His family expressed gratitude for the outpouring of love and support during his recovery.

Fire Chief Tom Greif acknowledged that while firefighters constantly train for dangerous situations, no one could have imagined an ambush like this. "This wasn't an event that we had trained for," he said solemnly.

The three men shared nearly 70 years of combined experience, a testament to their dedication and courage. As the community mourns, many have reflected on the sacrifices firefighters make every day, running toward danger to protect others, never expecting violence to find them in such a way.

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