

Fire Burns Logs, Warehouse At Millwood Plant

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — A fire, fanned by winds up to 35 miles an hour, burned through a huge pile of logs and a warehouse at the Inland Empire Paper company's plant at Millwood Saturday afternoon, just east of here, causing an extensive amount of damage.

Hundreds of firefighters, made up of Spokane Valley firemen, civil defense workers, sheriff's posse members and airmen from Geiger and Fairchild air force bases, fought the fire in the eight block-long pile of logs, stacked 30 feet high.

Fire Chief Lawrence E. Schucker of the Spokane Valley fire department said the blaze apparently started from sparks from a steam locomotive being used in the paper mill area.

A deputy sheriff estimated the fire ran along the Spokane River for three-quarters of a mile and burned through three 30 foot stacks of logs, used in making pulp for newsprint.

Embers Ignite Roof

The burning logs sent up embers on the 30 to 35 miles an hour winds and they ignited the roof of one of the firm's warehouses. Embers also set afire dry grass in the area.

A wall of flames, 100 feet, was sending out thick black smoke when some 30 truckloads of airmen arrived at the fire scene to help battle the blaze.

State forestry crews were also called into action to put out the rash of grass fires caused by falling embers.

An airman from Fairchild, Charles Leaper, was overcome by toxic gases while helping fight the warehouse fire. He was taken to a hospital where his condition was described as satisfactory.

At mid-evening, the flames were still eating through 30 foot high stacks of logs stretching about 2 1/2 miles along the southside of the river.