



The Web Site of The Sacramento Bee

Register Now to Read SACBEE, SACTICKET

SEARCH SACBEE AND SACTICKET

Go!

SEARCH YELLOW PAGES AT sacramento.com

Go!

- News | Sports | Business | Politics | Opinion | Entertainment | Lifestyle | Travel | Women | Classified | Homes | Cars | Jobs | Shopping | XML

Sacbee: / News / Sacramento Fire Department

SUBSCRIBE: Internet Subscription Special

- Sections:
- 24-HOUR NEWS**
    - [Top News](#)
    - [State](#)
  - COLUMNS**
    - [R.E. Graswich](#)
    - [Marjie Lundstrom](#)
    - [Bob Sylva](#)
  - COMMUNITY**
    - [Community](#)
  - ARCHIVES**
    - [Back-Seat](#)
    - [California](#)
    - [Corrections](#)
    - [Courts](#)
    - [Crime](#)
  - [Education](#)
  - [Energy](#)
  - [Environment](#)
  - [Medical](#)
  - [Local Gov't](#)
  - [Obituaries](#)
  - [Religion](#)
  - [Sacramento](#)
  - [Science](#)
  - [Transportation](#)
  - [Whatever Happened To](#)
  - SPECIAL SECTIONS**
    - [Bee Photos](#)
    - [News Projects](#)
    - [School Guide](#)
    - [Government Guide](#)

## News SACRAMENTO FIRE DEPARTMENT

### 'Joy rides' by city fire crews alleged

Officials probe reports of engines being used to pick up women near bars.

By Elizabeth Hume -- Bee Staff Writer  
Published 2:33 am PDT Thursday, July 8, 2004

Get weekday updates of Sacramento Bee headlines and breaking news. [Sign up here.](#)

Days before on-duty firefighters attended a "Porn Star Costume Ball," Sacramento city officials launched an investigation into reports that crew members were cruising streets near bars and dance clubs, and using fire engines to pick up women.

The investigation began June 30, after a Sacramento woman wrote to City Councilwoman Lauren Hammond and Sacramento Fire Chief Julius Cherry saying she witnessed firefighters giving "joy rides" on engines to women outside the Empire dance club on R Street and the Zebra Club bar on 19th Street.

The allegation was raised two days before last weekend's "Porn Star" event, when crews based at Station 20 in Del Paso Heights apparently joined 1,800 revelers at a costume ball at the Radisson Hotel celebrating the sex industry.

Seven firefighters, including one captain, have been placed on paid administrative leave, pending the outcome of the investigation, Sacramento police spokesman Sgt. Justin Risley said at a press conference Tuesday.

A 24-year-old Sacramento woman

### sacbeeTOPJOBS

[RESTAURANT Breakfast Cooks, Swing ...](#)

[RESTAURANT EXECUTIVE CHEF ...](#)

[RESTAURANT F/T & P/T positions open ...](#)

[Restaurant LINE COOKS OK, imagine ...](#)

[RESTAURANT MARY'S PIZZA SHACK Seeking ...](#)

[Restaurant New Year's Resolution:Find ...](#)

[RESTAURANT](#)

[RANCHO ...](#)

[Restaurant TIN STAR Sizzle, Smoke ...](#)

[RESTAURANT, Servers & Bussers Apply ...](#)

[RETAIL Crossroads Trading Co Store ...](#)

[Retail FACE CHALLENGES HELP OTHERS ...](#)



complained to police early Saturday that she had been sexually assaulted by an on-duty firefighter outside the Radisson on a fire vehicle used to fight grass fires, Risley said.

"This will be a swift, thorough and complete investigation, and people will be held accountable as soon as is administratively and legally possible," Cherry said in a telephone interview Tuesday.

Authorities are conducting three separate investigations into allegations of criminal sexual assault, misconduct by on-duty firefighters Friday night and reports of crews giving unauthorized rides in vehicles.

Cherry said the Fire Department is investigating two reports of firefighters from other parts of the city cruising city streets aboard fire engines and offering rides to women they encounter near bars and nightclubs.

Sacramento Fire Department spokesman Capt. Niko King said the city's policy for ride-alongs includes filling out a formal request that has to be approved by the Fire Department administration.

"If, in fact, these allegations are true, that would be a breach in our policy," King said.

Hammond's staff confirmed that she had received the letter, but the councilwoman could not be contacted for comment Tuesday.

Police said their investigation of the assault allegation at the Radisson is focused on a city firefighter assigned to Engine 20, which is attached to Station 20. The woman told police she willingly entered a vehicle used to fight grass fires about 11:30 p.m. Friday and that she was sexually assaulted some time after that.

After she reported the incident about 1:15 a.m. Saturday, police responded to Station 20 at 300 Arden Way. The 10 firefighters who work there on the C shift were immediately separated and interviewed. The fire engine and grass fire rig also were processed for physical evidence, Risley said.

The woman was taken to the University of California, Davis, Medical Center for an evidentiary exam about 3 a.m.

By the middle of next week, detectives will forward their findings to the Sacramento District Attorney's Office, Risley said, which will determine whether charges will be filed, he said.

"At this point investigators don't believe they have probable cause to make an arrest," Risley said.

Cherry dismissed rumors that Engine 20 had missed or been delayed to a 911 call because of the firefighters' presence at the ball.



[Retail Furniture Sales PT & FT New ...](#)

[RETAIL](#)

[Save Yourself ...](#)

[RETAIL Store Manager Immed opening. ...](#)

[ROOFERS -- METAL Journeyman & Apprentices ...](#)

[ROOFING JOURNEYMAN SHINGLER comp ...](#)

[ROOFING Lg comm roofing co has immediate ...](#)

[SALES](#)

[KCRA 3-TV SALES ...](#)

[SALES OPEN HOUSE](#)

[SALES Tired of Selling Cars, ...](#)

[SALES -- ACCOUNT REP FT, Multiple ...](#)

[SALES Admissions Representative ...](#)

[SALES An estab'd importer of cast ...](#)

[SALES Comm. Sell to auto body shops. ...](#)

[SALES COORDINATOR for fresh produce ...](#)

[SALES District Sales Manager Northern ...](#)

[View All Top Jobs](#)

"I have looked into this today, and I assure you that no citizen was delayed treatment as a result of this incident," Cherry said.

He would not divulge details of the dispatch logs, which would indicate where the fire crews were and what time the 911 call came in.

City Councilwoman Sandy Sheedy, who represents the district that Station 20 covers, said City Manager Bob Thomas has kept council members updated with daily reports.

"You hear everything, and then you have to divide it and see what is really there," Sheedy said in a telephone interview Tuesday. "I can't comment on it because there's an investigation going on other than to tell you that there's a whole lot of good firefighters out there and not all are involved in this."

Two years ago the Sacramento Fire Department investigated sexual harassment complaints by Carol L. Irving, a firefighter at Oak Park's Station 6. The department hired John Cabrerra, a former Sacramento Police Department homicide detective, set up a hotline and conducted extensive interviews. After more than a year the investigation was closed. No disciplinary action was taken.

"There is no question we learned from that experience," Cherry said. "Every angle is being looked at, and every possible thing that can be done is being done."

"I would hope people would reserve judgment and allow us to complete the investigation. Give us the benefit of the doubt until I can find out who's accountable and to what degree, and not paint the entire department with the same brush."

---

#### About the Writer

-----

The Bee's Elizabeth Hume can be reached at (916) 321-1203 or [ehume@sacbee.com](mailto:ehume@sacbee.com).

**The Sacramento Bee** - Get the whole story every day - [SUBSCRIBE NOW!](#)

---

## Gulf Hurricane Relief

Help Support Health Clinics Providing Critical Aid  
to Evacuees.

[www.DirectRelief.org](http://www.DirectRelief.org)

Public Service Ads by Google

[BACK TO TOP](#) 

[News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Business](#) | [Politics](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [Travel](#) | [Women](#) | [Classified](#) | [Homes](#) | [Cars](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Shopping](#)

[Contact Bee Customer Service](#) | [Contact sacbee.com](#) | [Advertise Online](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Help](#) | [Site Map](#)

[GUIDE TO THE BEE:](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Manage Your Subscription](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Bee Events](#) | [Community Involvement](#)