

PRESS RELEASE

Tifton Fire Department Responded to Car Fires on Private Property Adjacent to Rhythm and Ribs Festival Saturday

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 3, 2025

TIFTON, Ga. – Tifton Fire Department responded to a fire on a privately-owned property on March 1, 2025. The property was in proximity to the Rhythm and Ribs Festival that was taking place on Saturday.

Tifton Fire Department was dispatched to 6th and N. Tift Ave for a grass fire that was close to several parked cars.

The call to respond to the fires from 911 was received at 3:22:39 P.M. and Tifton Fire Department was on scene at 3:26 P.M.

Upon the first unit's arrival, the Incident Commander called for additional units to respond due to the number of cars involved.

Tifton Fire Chief Bobby Bennett reported, "We had every piece of apparatus and on-duty manpower available to respond to this location. The fire was started by a vehicle parked in high dead grass. Several cars were parked extremely close to each other which caused multiple cars to catch on fire."

On Saturday, there was a State-issued Red Flag Warning for no burning due to low humidity, very dry conditions and high winds. These conditions, combined with the close parking of the vehicles, can be attributed to the extreme fire spreading to multiple parked cars at the scene.

The fires burned underneath the vehicles which caused their fuel tanks to ignite. This situation caused the fires to be difficult to extinguish. Due to dry conditions, high winds,

and very closely parked vehicles with plastics, rubber, and fuel feeding the fire, the fires proved to be extremely challenging to extinguish.

The Tifton Fire Department applied foam to all vehicles to be able to extinguish the fires. The fire and hot spots were completely extinguished in approx. 40 minutes.

The Tifton Fire Department called in fire investigators to narrow down the cause and isolate which vehicle actually started the blaze. Due to the amount of damage to the cars and the vehicles' close proximity to each other, the Tifton Fire Department could not determine which automobile was responsible for starting the fire.

Tifton Fire Chief Bennett remarked, "It was very unfortunate to happen and our department did everything they could to limit the amount of vehicles involved. Due to their fast response and hard work, we were able to limit the damage. It could have been a lot worse."

No injuries were reported related to the car fires on Saturday.

Tifton Police Chief Steve Hyman said, "The recent car fires were unfortunate, and we understand the hardship this has caused those who lost their vehicles. However, parking on public streets can help prevent these incidents like fires and avoiding unauthorized use of private property. We can only address private property parking when a complaint is made, because we don't know if permission was given until it's brought to our attention. Ample parking is available on the streets, though it may require walking a little farther." "We continually patrol the area around the park to assist with traffic and ensure safety. Our thoughts are with those affected by this," added Tifton Chief of Police Hyman.

The Tifton Fire Department provides protection for life, property and the environment from the ravages of fire and other disasters, natural or man-made, with the best trained personnel possible in a prompt and professional manner for the citizens of Tifton. To learn more about the Tifton Fire Department, please visit: <https://www.tifton.net/182/Fire-Department>.

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