Two Workers Treated For Burns After Fire At Shively Ethanol Plant
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By Caton Bredar

(LOUISVILLE) -- A flash fire at an ethanol plant in Shively sent two men to the hospital Thursday with severe burns. WAVE 3's Caton Bredar has more on the fire that was out almost as quickly as it started.

The 'flash fire' happened about 7:30 a.m. Thursday at Parallel Products on Bernheim Lane just off Seventh Street during some routine maintenance work. The blaze itself only lasted a minute or two, but for the workers, the scars may last a lot longer.

Company spokesman Hal Parks says the fire started as two contract maintenance workers were replacing a section of old pipe in the filling station area of the facility.

"There was a small amount of fuel came out of the pipe," Parks said. "This was a pipe that really had not been used for several months."

As workers moved the lift they were working on, firefighters believe some sparks from a motor may have ignited the fuel and caused a flash fire.

Parks says the fire "was short lived, less than a minute or two at the most."

Chief Wendall Vincent with Shively Fire & Rescue told us "there doesn't appear to be any liquid or residuals on the ground or anything. It probably was consumed in the flash fire. It appears to be just a small amount, just enough to cause the flash."

Parks added: "There was no release of fumes or dangerous chemicals at this time; whatever was released was completely contained."

The workers were burned on their hands and face, but their injuries are not considered life-threatening.

Parallel Products refines outdated sugar-based and alcohol-based products like perfume and soap and distills them into ethanol. The company says the accident was caused by a denaturant.

Fire officials were still trying to pinpoint the exact cause of the blaze.

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