

Defensible space credited for no structures lost in West Slope fire

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

Twenty-five homes in the Somerset area of El Dorado County were threatened Tuesday afternoon by a fire that burned 15 acres of heavy brush.

The Sand Fire started at 11:35am Oct. 2 on Sand Ridge Road near Bucks Bar Road southeast of Placerville. As of this evening, the fire's progress had been stopped and it was 50 percent contained, according to a CalFire news release.

No injuries or structural damage has been reported.

"Some of the homeowners had done an excellent job creating defensible space around their homes and it clearly made the difference between them returning to their home or a pile of ashes, since the fire literally burned right up to their homes," Robert Little, a spokesman for CalFire's Amador-El Dorado Unit, said in a written statement.

Officials said the fire spotted across Mount Aukum Road. The El Dorado County Sheriff's Department oversaw voluntary evacuations of the Meyers and Moody roads area until the spot fires were contained.

Mount Aukum/E-16 was closed to traffic for a few hours. One lane then was opened with the California Highway Patrol escorting vehicles between Grizzly Flat and Paradise Ranch roads.

CalFire was assisted by the El Dorado County, Diamond Springs, El Dorado Hills, Georgetown, Rescue and Pioneer fire departments, and the U.S. Forest Service.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.