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(Wyo)-Sat Fire Damages Torrington Cold Storage Facility

By: John Axtell Posted at: 02/04/2019 07:43 AM

Firefighters from eastern Wyoming and the Nebraska Panhandle spent more than 6 hours Saturday morning fighting a blaze near downtown Torrington at a cold storage facility.

Torrington Volunteer Fire Chief Lance Petsch told KNEB radio flames could be seen coming from the roof of Roy's Cold Storage as firefighters arrived shortly before 7:00 a.m. He estimated the building was a 95% loss with a garage and cooler surviving but with heavy smoke and water damage.

Petsch said an adjacent building with a common wall may have suffered water damage as firefighters worked to prevent the spread of the flames. The Wyoming State Fire Marshal is investigating and Petsch says a report on the cause will likely take a week or more.

A mutual aid request went almost immediately to other departments on both sides of the state line with about 50 firefighters and 10 trucks arriving from Lingole, Yoder, Camp Guernsey, and Veteran in Wyoming and Morrill, Lyman, and Scottsbluff in Nebraska.

Chief Petsch said he specifically requested the Scottsbluff city department's tower truck to try to get water to the center of the burning complex after footing on the roof of the building became "spongy" and firefighters had to leave it.

Crews were hampered by bags of cork insulation that continued to smolder and re-ignite before being carried outside, and Petsch also had to deal with 2 other emergency calls as Lingle firefighters responded to a grass fire while a Yoder crew and a Torrington unit went to a traffic accident. Their loss forced him to rotate firefighters to minimize exhaustion.