

# Firefighters Battle Blaze at Recycling Plant



NAZARETH, Pa. (AP) — A blaze that destroyed a recycling plant Tuesday sent massive clouds of black smoke high into the air in eastern Pennsylvania and challenged 200 firefighters from 50 companies who spent hours knocking down the heavy flames.

The fire began around 5 a.m. at Nicos Polymers Group in Plainfield Township, about 55 miles north of Philadelphia. The intense heat and flames destroyed the 180,000-square-foot fabricated steel structure and billowed thick smoke plumes that could be seen for miles.

Plainfield Township Fire Chief Greg Dawe said three employees were inside the building when the fire broke out, and all got out safely, according to The Morning Call of Allentown.

The fire was about 80 percent contained by Tuesday afternoon.

The state Department of Environmental Protection was on the scene to monitor air quality and water runoff but reported no problems.

Firefighters had a tough time getting enough water to fight the fire, supplementing their own tankers with water trucks on loan from dozens of fire companies and a nearby landfill. They managed to keep the flames from threatening a large propane tank.

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The fire's cause was unknown. There were no reports of injuries.

The building contained plastics products and a large number of boxes and wooden pallets, landlord Jim Knicos told The Express-Times of Easton. He said the building was insured.

Knicos sold Nicos Polymers four years ago. The company was in bankruptcy when recycling firm Coll Materials of Zanesville, Ohio, purchased it earlier this year. Coll had intended to close the Plainfield Township plant and transfer 70 jobs to a new facility it is planning to open in Lehigh County.

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