

# Mayor: Fire Crews Were at Texas Plant Before Blast



Emergency workers evacuate elderly from a damaged nursing home following an explosion at a fertilizer plant Wednesday, April 17, 2013, in West, Texas. An explosion at a fertilizer plant near Waco caused numerous injuries and sent flames shooting high into the night sky on Wednesday. (AP Photo/Waco Tribune Herald, Rod Aydelotte)

WEST, Texas (AP) — The mayor of West, Texas, says volunteer firefighters went to fight a fire at a fertilizer plant about a half-hour before a massive explosion tore through it and damaged surrounding buildings.

Mayor Tommy Muska says he's a volunteer firefighter himself and his helmet was knocked off when the explosion tore through the West Fertilizer plant around 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Muska says the blast badly damaged buildings for a five-block radius around the plant, including a nearby middle school and nursing home. He says the nursing home's 133 residents were safely evacuated.

A Waco hospital official says at least 66 people were taken there for treatment, including some who were seriously hurt.

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