

Four Hurt as Fire Truck, Prius Collide

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Four people were hurt—one airlifted—after the crash of a fire truck responding to a tenacious woods fire and a Toyota Prius. The crash occurred at about 4:10 on Old US 421 near Parkway School when the Stewart Simmons brush truck, heading to the fire call, pulled out to pass other south-bound traffic. When the truck entered the on-coming lane, the blue Prius, also south-bound, turned left into a driveway and was struck by the fire truck. The impact forced the small Toyota well off of the road, up a hill, where it finally came to rest, while the fire truck stopped just off of the road down the embankment. Four ambulances were called to the scene, one from Watauga Rescue, three Watauga Medics units, one meeting the Med Center Air chopper at the helipad at Watauga Medical Center. Trooper R. C. Townsend said that the man driving the Prius was airlifted to Carolinas Medical Center, but that he was in stable condition last night, in spite of serious chest injuries and a possible collapsed lung, while his two passengers—a man in the front, a woman in the rear—were treated at Watauga Medical Center and probably would not be admitted. The fireman driving the Stewart Simmons brush truck was released after treatment, according to Townsend, who said he had not been able to talk to either driver and would release names after he was able to do so, and the accident was still under investigation last night.

The fire call the Stewart Simmons truck was responding to was initially a 3:50pm Deep Gap call to what was found to be a quickly spreading fire off of Brady Lane in Deep Gap. A firefighting effort was set up on two sides of the fire as it spread up a hill, but as dusk hit and winds calmed, the firefighting effort had the blaze surrounded and eventually put out.

video posted: <http://www.youtube.com/user/GoBlueRidgeNews>