

## Fire Destroys Bend Plating Robotics Division Plant

*by Bend Weekly News Sources*

A raging fire completely destroyed the interior of a 1,500 square foot building at Bend Plating Inc. Robotics Division on the afternoon of Thursday June 22nd, causing an estimated \$1.2 million in damage to the building and contents.

Twenty firefighters from the Bend Fire Department responded to the alarm at 520 SE Bridgeford at about 12:30 to find the structure fully involved with heavy black smoke and flames, prompting the evacuation of the immediate vicinity along SE Bridgeford Blvd.

Wilson Avenue between 9th and 15th street was closed due to heavy smoke at ground level, according to Fire Inspector Dan Derlacki.

The building that burned contained three robotic arms used to polish steel parts. Each arm was enclosed in a dust filtration system, and further investigation on Friday determined that the fire most likely started when sparks from the grinding process ignited a dust filtration system. The building did not have a fire sprinkler system, said Derlacki.

Bend Plating provides metal plating, electroplating, polishing & adonizing services, using potentially toxic chemicals in the plating process. Fortunately the robotics building destroyed by fire, one of five at the location, was not used to store any of the chemicals.

Crews made initial attack from the exterior, and the fire was completely contained within an hour with no resulting injuries, Derlacki said. The building was insured, and damage estimates released Friday estimated the value of the building at \$100,000 and contents at \$1.1 million.

520 SE Bridgeford - Photo Credit: Bend Weekly