

Natural gas leak closes Highway 97 in Redmond

by Cheryl McDermott

A natural gas line severed by a construction crew's backhoe working to install a light pole forced closure of Highway 97 for about 15 minutes Tuesday afternoon, officials reported.

Redmond Fire and Rescue monitored the air when the leak was discovered about 1:20 p.m., and found that gas was being vented into an adjacent building under construction and gas levels were approaching explosive limits on the highway.

In order to avoid possible ignition triggered by passing vehicles, Redmond Police and Oregon Department of Transportation personnel diverted the highway traffic between Odem Medo Way and Yew Avenue onto Canal Boulevard while Cascade Natural Gas crews arrived and the leak was stopped, Redmond Fire officials said.

No injuries were reported.

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