

July 2, 2008

Seniors flee mill fire

By JASON BUCKLAND, SUN MEDIA

WOODBIDGE -- A blaze at a flour mill located just metres from a nursing home continues to burn this morning, after it sent 150 seniors out into the night on Canada Day.

Residents of the Pine Grove Lodge Long-Term Care and Retirement Residence -- near Islington Ave. and Hwy. 7 -- were evacuated around 9:30 p.m. as firefighters battled flames at Hayhoe Mills.

Investigators on the scene said they did not yet know what started the fire, but neighbours lining the street said they were told a filter in the mill had exploded.

More than 100 firefighters, police and paramedics rushed to the scene after the fire began around 7:30 p.m.

As thick smoke billowed into the sky, medics treated people for minor breathing problems but no serious injuries were reported.

Seniors from Pine Ridge were taken by Viva Bus to a church on Islington Ave. or to surrounding nursing homes based on medical needs.

Nearby Pine Ridge Condominiums was also evacuated, leaving about 100 people with no place to stay last night.

Condo residents Francesco Lofranco and Maria Pascente said they were told to leave their unit because there was a chlorine storage inside the mill that had caught fire.



Firefighters in Woodbridge fight a fire near Islington and Pine Grove on Canada Day. (CRAIG ROBERTSON/Sun Media)