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Navarro Pharmacy fire in Little Havana sends firefighter to hospital

A popular Little Havana pharmacy remained closed after an early-morning fire injured a Miami firefighter.

By Monique Madan

A major fire at a historic Navarro Pharmacy in Little Havana sent a Miami firefighter to the hospital Tuesday morning and heavily damaged the popular store, according to the Miami Fire Department.

Injured was Capt. Ray Pampin, 48, who following the blaze was on the store's rooftop checking for hot spots and fell through into the structure at 1243 SW Eighth St.

Pampin, a 25-year-veteran, suffered a spine injury and was taken to the Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial Hospital. He was released Tuesday afternoon.

"They were checking an area by an air-conditioning duct when he fell through a vent covered by debris. Crews called 'Mayday' and quickly treated him," Miami fire spokesman Ignatius Carroll said.

Pampin fractured his spine, "a pretty serious injury," Carroll said. He was not burned. He is recuperating at home and on injury leave.

It all began at 12:30 a.m. Tuesday after police dispatch received a call of an automatic fire alarm going off at the pharmacy.

More than 40 firefighters fought the blaze, which took more than one hour to control.

"The fire was determined to be accidental," Carroll said.

For the pharmacy chain, the Little Havana store has a special place in its history.

It is currently its oldest store and is the second store of Miami's first Navarro, which opened in 1961 five blocks west on the corner of Calle Ocho and Southwest 15th Avenue. Navarro moved the Little Havana store to its current site in the 1970s.

Company CEO Juan Ortiz, who visited the damaged store early Tuesday, said the store would remain closed until further notice because of the extensive damage.

Prescriptions are being filled at a store at 1601 W. Flagler St., and will be delivered to customers free of charge.

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In addition, a trailer has been set up in the burned store's parking lot, where customers can take their prescriptions or refill their orders, Ortiz said.

"We are very concerned about delivering medication to our patients," he said.

Customers concerned about their prescriptions can call 305-643-9762.