

Cactus Ropes Plant Destroyed by Blaze

PLEASANTON, Texas—A fire believed to have begun in a wax vat destroyed the 17,000 square-foot factory of Cactus Ropes, the nation's second-largest rope manufacturer, on Jan. 26. The company's warehouse, offices and work areas were destroyed.

Fire trucks from five departments in south Texas responded and fought the blaze for more than eight hours.

According to a company spokesman, the blaze apparently started with a malfunction in a wax trough—a long narrow vat filled with paraffin wax and heated with a propane burner to a specific temperature. Freshly spun ropes are dipped into the hot wax as part of the curing process.

The company's rope machines appear to have survived the blaze.

"Amazingly, the machines are still in excellent condition," said Cactus Ropes engineer Barry Berg. "These machines are the core of our company. The fact that they were saved is a huge victory for us. As soon as we get our new building up, we will be spinning ropes again and back in business."

Hours before the \$5 million factory was declared a total loss, plans were being laid for a new building.

"We have been in business for 13 years," said Mike Piland, vice president and general manager. "In that time, we have gained a lot of experience in what does and doesn't work. There have been things we wanted to do better and more efficiently. Now, we can build a new factory around the experience we have gained and plan for growth."

A full line of Cactus Ropes is expected to be back in stores by April.

Piland told a television station in San Antonio that the company will continue to pay its 25 employees, knowing it will take all of them to rebuild.

"We hate that our customers are going to be out of our ropes for a while," Piland said, "but our loyal customers and dealers are why we want to rebuild." ©



A blaze that apparently began in a wax vat destroyed the \$5 million plant of Cactus Ropes in Pleasanton, Texas. The rope machines were salvaged and are expected to be the starting point for rebuilding the company.

Over 300 New Items in 2004

Patented Turnout & Stable Blankets

Tekno-Dri™ Foal Saver

Pull & Tie

DURA-TECH Tack Case

Stretch Fleece Slickers

DURA-TECH Bandage & Quilt Case

10 and improved EASY-UP organizers

BRIDLE

BRIDLE

5479

E-Z View Patented Pads

Ultra Complete Grooming Line

Grooming Products

Call for New catalogs

SS SCHNEIDERS

8255 E. Washington St., Chagrin Falls, OH 44023
800-365-1311 or 440-543-2700