

By LARRY PHILLIPS

• Leader & Times

A prairie wildfire threatened the Oklahoma Panhandle town of Optima Tuesday afternoon, and firefighters had to stop the flames right at the edge of the city, according to a statement issued by Guymon Fire Department Assistant Fire Chief Grant Wadley

“Tuesday afternoon, Guymon firefighters along with Hooker (Okla.) and Optima firefighters responded to a grass fire just east of Optima,” Wadley noted. “The emergency call was received by the Guymon Fire Department at 5 p.m., reporting a fast-moving grassfire ¼ mile east of Optima just off U.S. Highway 54.

Once firefighters arrived at the scene, they discovered the fire was immediately threatening homes.

“First arriving units from Guymon immediately had to knock down the lead of this fire before reaching numerous mobile homes that were directly in the path,” Wadley said. “This fire reached the northeast corner of Optima city limits.

“Once the first units had this contained, they were assisted by Hooker and Optima units,” he added.

Wadley noted it took all the units approximately an hour to contain and completely extinguish

the fire, and he estimated between two and three acres were burned.

“The cause of the fire is undetermined, but fire officials do know the fire began on the south side of the roadway of Highway 54,” Wadley noted. “Firefighters had to deal with 15- to 20-mph winds along with warm and dry temperatures.

Wadley added that no injuries were reported and no homes were damaged.

“It’s important to remember that conditions in our area are still very dry and very favorable for fast spreading fires,” Wadley concluded. “Extreme caution should be used at all times.”