



PBS Hawaii back on the air after fire

By Star-Advertiser staff
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PBS Hawaii returned to the television airwaves this afternoon more than 24 hours after being knocked out by a fire Friday afternoon.

The public television station returned to cable TVs about 2 p.m. and to over-the-air viewers about an hour later, said PBS Hawaii spokeswoman Roberta Wong Murray.

Insurance adjusters are expected to visit the headquarters on Dole Street Monday to assess what repairs need to be done, Murray said.

The station is hoping to reschedule one program lost during the outage — “PBS Arts From Cleveland: Women Who Rock,” featuring Cleveland rock artists Cyndi Lauper, Darlene Love, Mavis Staples and Ronnie Spector.

“We’ll reschedule it at a later time, but we have to procure it first,” Murray said.

Other shows are time sensitive and will not be rescheduled, she said.

“We’re just really pleased to be back on the air and that, thankfully, nobody got hurt,” Murray said, adding that the station has high praise for firefighters who took care not to damage the station’s cameras.

The station’s studios on the University of Hawaii at Manoa campus were damaged during the fire at 11:15 a.m. Friday.

A light burst in the station’s main studio, causing a lighting gel to catch fire, fire Capt. Terry Seelig said.

The fire spread to a wall and entered the building’s air-conditioning ducts, causing a lot of smoke, Seelig said.

The television station and the university’s Children’s Center next door were evacuated. Police closed Dole Street between Hoonanea Street and University Avenue. Firefighters quickly brought the blaze under control.

Power was cut to the building at about 12:30 p.m., knocking the television station off the air.

The fire flared up again about 4:30 pm., and firefighters returned briefly.

Murray said technicians were preparing for a Monday taping of Leslie Wilcox's "Long Story Short" program when the fire began.

"The flames shot right up to the ceiling," Murray said.

The Fire Department estimated damage to the studio at \$250,000, but Murray said the final figure will be higher.

Workers were allowed back into the building's administrative office at 1:20 p.m. to retrieve personal belongings.