

Firework deposit in flames

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The tall column of black smoke surrounded the buildings nearby, as dozens of fire trucks arrived. **There was a great deal of fear in the centre of Samarate**, because of the fire in the **deposit of the shop Mazzucchellis**; inside the deposit, there were toys, carnival costumes and various other materials, but also fireworks.

The alarm went off at around 10.30 this morning, and the firemen, with various means, fire engines, ladder trucks, rushed to Via Marconi. The fire started in the deposit of the children's toy shop Mazzucchellis (*see photo: the entrance in Via Marconi*) and **gradually spread to the houses** and also to the top of the garages of an adjoining condominium. The site of the fire is a few hundred metres from the town hall, right in the centre of the town, among old houses, cottages from the 1950s, and condominiums. After a few minutes, **the fireworks began to explode**, some also "shooting" outside the warehouse itself. At least **4 fire engines and two tankers** came to the scene, **also from Como and Legnano**. At first, it was difficult to locate the water system, and **a 30,000 litre super tanker** also arrived from Malpensa Airport. The carabinieri and local police force also arrived, to direct the traffic and to help evacuate the adjacent buildings.

The large cloud caused by the fire, which was fed by plastic materials, began to surround the buildings nearby; **first of all, the mini condominium of Via Marconi, No.6**, (nine families, mostly elderly, in part, foreign) **was evacuated**. Then, **after 11 a.m., the building at Via Libertà, No. 18**, which joins onto the back of the warehouse, was also emptied; 23 families were evacuated. What was of most concern was the garages right beside the burning deposit (*see photo, right*); these were emptied of all of the cars, while the firemen walked on the top to reach the flames. **At about 12.30, the flames on the Via Marconi side had been all but put out**, but **the fire was also attacking the roof of an old house** on the Via Libertà side. The firemen worked until after 1 p.m. to put this side of the fire out and to prevent the flames from spreading.

According to the initial information, **the damage to the shop and to the deposit is estimated to be around €500/700,000**, without considering the damage to the structures. The shop provided a living for the family of the owners and for one employee; now, they hope that the insurance company will cover at least a substantial part of the damage. According to the deputy Mayor, **Albino Montani**, who was on the spot, and who was in contact with the fire chiefs, the people evacuated will already be able to return to their homes this afternoon. Apparently, the deposit contained a certain, authorised quantity of fireworks; however, there were a lot of other objects, such as toys and carnival costumes, which fed the flames.

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