

MIDDLETOWN

Utility lines spark fire, shoppers evacuated

Firefighters responded to the Shoppes at Flowers Mill on Sunday.

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Shoppers were evacuated from a Middletown shopping center after underground utility lines sparked an electric fire just before 3 p.m. Sunday and caused several businesses to lose power, officials said.

Underground wires behind the Shoppes at Flowers Mill sparked a fire ball that shot about 6 feet in the air, Langhorne-Middletown Fire Chief Frank Farry said. Authorities evacuated the premises as a precaution for about a half hour before opening again.

Firefighters from Langhorne-Middletown, Parkland, William Penn and Penndel fire companies responded. No damage was done to the shopping center and no injuries were reported, officials said.

A PECO spokesman said the utility company shut down a transformer that serves part of the shopping center. The spokesman said crews were on site Sunday and would work through the night to repair the lines so all the stores have power today.