

3-13-81

Baffling Flashes Over the Bay

Witnesses as widely separated as Marin County and the South Bay last night reported seeing a pair of flashes along the East Bay shoreline in Southern Alameda County, but local and federal authorities said they had no explanation for the mysterious lights.

The lights — which appeared to be explosions near Fremont or Union City to witnesses in the North and West Bay — flared briefly around 11 p.m., and were visible for miles. One caller said he thought he could see flames leaping into the sky following the flashes, but other witnesses failed to report any fire.

Dispatchers at the Oakland, Hayward, Union City, Fremont, and San Leandro police departments and at the Alameda County sheriff's department said they were baffled by the flashes, and had received no reports of fires or explosions.

A watch supervisor at the Federal Aviation Administration's air traffic control center in Fremont said, he had received calls from people who had seen the mysterious flashes, but had no reports of unusual air traffic or downed aircraft.

Watch officers at Moffet and Alameda Naval Air Stations and the Coast Guard station at Yerba Buena Island said they had heard of no unusual activity that could account for the flashes.

The National Weather Service reported no lightning or other electrical phenomena during last night's rain and wind storm.

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