

Buzz Bee Claims Home in Aberdeen

Local News

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ABERDEEN, Wash. - Investigators know that fireworks were the cause of another fire this week in Aberdeen, Battalion Chief Damon Lillybridge said the owner's son notified him that he was lighting fireworks near the home in the 2200 block of Pacific Avenue just before 3:30 when a buzz bee flew under an opening in the doorway. 20 minutes later the owner was notified and 10 minutes after that said the home was fully involved in flames. One person was transported to Community Hospital for smoke inhalation, damages were estimated at over 60 thousand dollars.

The Aberdeen Fire Department reports ten units with twenty three personnel responded to this incident to include a command unit, three pumpers, five ambulances and a ladder truck. The extent of smoke and heat as well as structural integrity limited any entry that could be made through doors or windows for an offensive operational mode. Because of the type of construction (balloon) and the rapid extension of fire into the walls and attic area the decision was made to forego any offensive attack and to focus on adjacent exposures as our primary goal by initiating a defensive attack on all sides of the structure. Ultimately the collapse of the roof into the interior of the structure and the possibility of structural collapse eliminated any possibility of entering the structure to perform overhaul, primary and secondary searches, and investigation. Once the fire was under control overhaul was completed and the scene was released back to the owner. The incident was managed on a 2nd alarm basis. Designated roles were established for Safety and Rehab. Staging was managed at the command post.



Investigation suggests that the fire originated on the southwest floor of the first story on the “southwest” side of the structure. At one time the involved structure served as an apartment behind a main residence addressed at 2204 Pacific Ave. Eventually the building was no longer used as an apartment and became a storage facility for the occupants of the main residence. Access to the involved structure was limited to an alley ditch and the yard of the main residence. The owner stated that he was working on his car in the driveway of the main residence when his son came and told him that smoke was coming from the “back house”. From there the owner ran to the rear structure and saw the smoke coming from a doorway located in the middle of the structure on the “south” side. He then went to get a hose and when he came back he noticed fire extending from the doorway throughout the structure. He stated the building went from smoke to fully involved in approximately 10 minutes. The owner’s son admitted to accidentally starting the fire. He stated that he was lighting fireworks when one of the flying, twirling fireworks (buzz bee) flew across the yard and under the closed door of the rear structure. The base of the door was broken and rotten leaving a void which allowed the firework to enter the building. From there the son went to check on the firework that entered the structure and did not notice any residual smoke or flame. Twenty minutes later when he came back he did see smoke and that’s when he went to alert his father.



The building was built in 1924. Balloon construction and lathe and plaster walls were definitely a contributing factor in fire growth and extension. As a result of the fire there was extensive heat, smoke and water damage to the interior and exterior of the structure. The roof, attic, and complete 1st story sustained extensive heat damage throughout. Damage to the structure would be considered a total loss. The replacement cost exceeds the total value of the building. Estimated loss for structure and contents is \$62,169. One individual was treated and transported to GHCH for smoke inhalation.

This Fire was the result of a Class "C" firework ignited in an unsafe area within close proximity to two different structures. Once the firework display was complete the residual debris was not properly extinguished. It should also be noted that the fireworks were ignited in violation of Aberdeen City Ordinance, which states that fireworks can only be ignited on the 4th of July. This incident took place on the 6th of July.