



Saint Paul Fire Department
645 Randolph Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102
(651) 224-7811

Investigation Report

Case

Case Details

SPFD211126051787	Blank, Joseph	Closed	N/A
Case Number	Lead Investigator	Status	Name
Confidential	Accidental	Electrical System	
Confidentiality	Disposition	Fire Cause	
11/26/2021	15:25		
Start Date	Start Time	End Date	End Time
Saint Paul Fire Department		Saint Paul Police Department	
Primary Fire Department	Secondary Fire Department	Law Enforcement	

Case Narrative

The fire department was called to the report of a dwelling fire. Firefighters arrived and found smoke venting from a second floor window and an adult female standing outside [REDACTED]. The occupant states that she was sleeping downstairs and was awakened by her father who stated that there was a fire upstairs. The occupant was [REDACTED] from possibly going upstairs to fight the fire with a fire extinguisher and water from the kitchen sink but the victim was unable to be interviewed further [REDACTED]. Investigation revealed that there was an extension cord that had possibly had been run across a child's bed and had possibly arced and ignited the bedding. Investigation of the area of origin did not reveal any other competent ignition sources outside of the electrical cord that was plugged into the wall outlet or an intentional human act although there was no evidence to support an intentional act.

Case Background

Case Synopsis

This report is based on presently known and available facts, data, and information.

Investigation Comments

Fire

Ignition Sequence

Electrical System	Bedroom - < 5 persons; included are jail or prison		
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Fire Cause

Area of Origin

Equipment Power Source

Equipment Portability

Area of Origin Comments

Electrical arcing	Fabric, fiber, cotton, blends, rayon, wool
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Heat Source

Material Ignited

Cord, plug, other			
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Equipment Involved In
Ignition

Equipment Make

Equipment Model

Equipment Serial Number

Fire and Smoke Spread Information

Confined to building of origin	
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Fire Spread Material

Fire Spread Avenue

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Smoke Spread Material

Smoke Spread Avenue

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Fire Comments

Weather

		15	South
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Visibility

Relative Humidity (%)

Wind Speed (Mph)

Wind Direction

33.0	0	No	
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Temperature (Fahrenheit)

Precipitation

Lightning

Information Obtained
From Weather

Mostly cloudy			
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Weather Comments

Property Details (1 of 1)

Property

N/A

Name

657 Canton Street	
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Address

Apt/Suite/Room

Saint Paul	Ramsey County	Minnesota	55102
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City

County

State

Postal Code

\$65,600.00	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
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Pre Fire Value

Content Loss Value

Structure Loss Value

Property Description

Area

Structure	Urban	
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Area Type

Area Description

Area Quality

Structure

1 or 2 family dwelling

Occupied

Property Use

Structure Occupancy

Yes

Unknown

Alarm Type

Smoke Detector Present

Smoke Detector Performance

None

Sprinkler Standpipes

Sprinkler Standpipes Performance

56

15

2

Structure Length (Ft)

Structure Height (Ft)

Structure Width (Ft)

Number Of Stories

Number Of Units

Wood Frame

Type V

Construction Type

Structure Type

Structure Material

Crawl Space

Vinyl

Pitched

Asphalt

Foundation

Exterior Covering

Roof Type

Roof Material

The interior examination began at the front door which was on the east elevation. Inspection of the first floor revealed moderate to heavy contents and no signs of smoke or fire damage. Observation of the kitchen appliances and clothes washer and dryer in the kitchen showed no signs of damage or causation of the fire. The electric circuit panel distribution box was located on the first floor in the northwest corner of the first floor addition. Firefighters turned off the main circuit breaker during fire suppression activities and there were no tripped circuit breakers. The service panel showed no signs of smoke or fire damage and was eliminated as a contributing causation of the fire.

Inspection of the basement crawl space showed no signs of smoke or fire damage. There were two water heaters present along with a furnace in this crawl space. All appliances showed no signs of damage and were eliminated as a cause of the fire.

Examination of the second floor showed increasing smoke damage moving toward the east. In the east bedroom there was evidence of fire damage along the west wall from the level of a twin bed against the wall and extended to the ceiling with an area of clean burn visible on the ceiling over the head of the bed.

Investigation of the area of origin, at the head of the twin child's bed revealed only one ignition source - a red and white striped extension cord. This cord suffered fire damage along an approximately 16-inch length which matched an area of fire damage along the frame of the metal bedframe that contained melted plastic. This area of fire damage was consistent with the height of the bed. Tracing the cord showed that it was plugged into the west wall outlet. On the opposite end of the cord there was another extension cord plugged into it that continued toward the east wall. There were two small V-shaped patterns from the floor level that extended upward past the patterns that were greatest at the height of the top of the bedframe. These smaller patterns are from drop down fire.

Interior Exam

Observation of the east elevation of the structure revealed no signs of smoke or fire damage. Inspection of the south elevation showed a minor amount of gray smoke venting from a window. Examination of the west elevation of the structure revealed there were no signs of smoke or fire damage and there was a rear one story addition. There were several cigarette butts discarded on the northwest corner of the structure. Inspection of the north elevation showed the gas and electric meters. Both meters appeared in good condition with no signs of smoke or fire damage. The gas meter was turned off by firefighters during fire suppression activities.

Exterior Exam

Witness Statement

Tareeq	Darleen	J
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Last Name

First Name

Middle Name

Owner/Occupant	
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Type

Employer

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Interviewed Date

Interviewed By

Interviewed By Other

657 Canton St	
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Street 1

Street 2

Saint Paul	Minnesota	55102
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City

State

PostalCode

White	11/05/1979	
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Race

Date of Birth

Driver's License Number

Q: Can you tell me what happened?

A: My kids' grandpa just told me there was a fire upstairs and he got out with the kids.

Q: Were you upstairs when it happened?

A: No I wasn't. I was downstairs.

Q: Does anyone smoke in the house?

A: My kids' grandpa doesn't smoke in the house but he smokes outside.

Q: Does anyone use recreational drugs inside?

A: No.

Q: Do your kids play with lighters or matches or do they have access to them?

A: No, they shouldn't.

Q: How old are your kids?

A: [REDACTED]

Q: Boys, girls?

A: [REDACTED]

Q: And where were they during the fire, do you know?

A: They were outside.

Q: Who was upstairs?

A: My kids' grandpa.

Q: Was it in the bedroom that he was in? [referring to the fire]

A: I don't know. Was it the first bedroom? By the time I got upstairs..

Q: It looks like it was on the second floor and you were on the first floor?

A: There's two bedrooms upstairs, a little one and a big one.

Q: Did any alarms sound?

A: No.

Q: Do you have working smoke detectors?

A: I do have one. I have one hard wired upupstairs.

Q: And he woke you up about the fire? [referring to her kid's grandpa]

A: He came downstairs about the fire.

Q: Is he in the back of the house with the kids?

A: He drove around the corner with the kids.

Witness Statement Comments

Conclusion

Case Conclusion

After examination of the fire scene, observation of fire patterns of both movement and intensity and interview conducted, it is my opinion the fire began in at the level of the bed in the children's bedroom. The ignition source was probably an arc. The first fuel ignited was probably bedding. The oxidant was atmospheric air. The action that brought these items together was probably due to an electrical arc in an extension cord. The classification of fire cause is accidental. The concludes my investigation and report.

Signature

Blank, Joseph

Lead Investigator

Signature

Date Submitted

Document Attachment List

Photo Log

IMG_1503

IMG_1503