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KOKOMO PERSPECTIVE

Fire Prevention Week: State Fire Marshal Urges Residents to "Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned."

Posted: Monday, October 5, 2009 3:15 pm | *Updated:* .

INDIANAPOLIS: The statistics are staggering. Each year roughly 3,000 people die as a result of home fires and burns, and more than 200,000 individuals are seen in the nation's emergency rooms for burn injuries. Indiana alone had 78 people killed in home fires in 2008 and fire departments responded to over 6,300 home fires. There were 106 reports of children burned from fireworks in Indiana last year.

That's why Indiana's State Fire Marshal is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for Fire Prevention Week 2009 - October 4-10 - to urge residents to "Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned." This year's campaign focuses on ways to keep homes fire safe and prevent painful burns. Additionally, fire safety educators will be teaching local residents how to plan and practice escape from a home in case a fire occurs.

"The most common types of burn injuries result from fire or flame burns, scalds and contact burns," said Jim Greeson, Indiana State Fire Marshal and Indiana Department of Homeland Security Division of Fire and Building Safety Director. "Burns are painful and can result in serious scarring and even death. When we take extra caution in our homes to ensure that the curling iron is out of children's reach or pot handles are turned away from the edge of the stove, such injuries are entirely preventable. Keeping our homes safe from fire and preventing devastating burn injuries is a healthy change we can make happen."

By following simple safety rules, you can "Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned."

. Keep hot foods and liquids away from tables and counter edges so they cannot be pulled or knocked over.

. Have a 3-foot "kid-free" zone around the stove.

. Never hold a child in your arms while preparing hot food or drinking a hot beverage.

. Be careful when using things that get hot such as curling irons, oven, irons, lamps, heaters.

. Install tamper-resistant receptacles to prevent a child from sticking an object in the outlet.

. Never leave a child alone in a room with a lit candle, portable heater, lit fireplace or stove, or where a hot appliance might be in use.

. Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.

. Set your hot water temperature no higher than 120 degrees.

. Install anti-scald valves on shower heads and faucets.

Fire Prevention Week is actively supported by fire departments across the country. For 85 years fire departments have observed Fire Prevention Week, making it the longest running public health and safety observance on record. For events in your area please contact your local fire department.

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Rural Linton fire ruled arson

Monday, October 5, 2009

By Timberly Ferree, Staff Writer

The state fire marshal has ruled arson in an early Sunday morning fire that completely destroyed a rural Linton home.

The two-story home on SassafRAS Road and owned by the Moore family was ruled a total loss, according to authorities.

Richie Budd, a Linton firefighter, provided the details about the fire run.

"We got the call at 3:30 a.m. on Sunday. The house was fully engulfed. It (house) had been empty and the utilities were off for several months," Budd said, noting that a neighbor made the 9-1-1 call.

Firefighters were on scene until 7 a.m. on Sunday.

"It's a total loss," he added.

On Monday, firefighters were called out to the scene again.

"We had some hot spots we couldn't get to," Budd explained.

Wright Township, Dugger and Sullivan fire departments assisted on scene Sunday.

Rachel Meyer, spokesperson for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, provided additional details on the arson ruling.

"The fire did start on the front porch and we have ruled out all accidental causes. It has been ruled as intentionally set. It was arson," Meyer explained.

The investigation is complete and has been turned over to the Greene County Sheriff's Department.

In 2006, Janice "Jana" Moore was found murdered in her vehicle at the residence on SassafRAS Road.

After her death, the home was heired to Jana's three sons, Jeremiah, Jordan and Levi Moore.

Jeremiah, 32, is currently serving time at the Correctional Industrial Facility in the Indiana Department of Corrections. His scheduled release date is May 11, 2012.

Jordan, 24, is currently serving time at the Branchville Correctional Facility of the Indiana Department of Corrections. His release date is March 3, 2010.

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Story URL: <http://gcdailyworld.com/story/1576093.html>

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September 28, 2009

Little Nashville Opry blaze ruled arson

Official: No suspects in concert hall fire

By Deanna Martin
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Ind. — Someone set the fire that destroyed the Little Nashville Opry concert hall earlier this month, authorities said Monday.

No one has been blamed for the arson, and investigators are seeking tips about the fire, which leveled the venue that had featured many of country music's most famous acts since it opened in 1975.

The Sept. 19 blaze began near the stage, and electrical causes have been ruled out, said Wayne Dixie of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Investigators declined to give additional details about the fire, which started hours after a concert. No injuries were reported at the Brown County facility.

State Fire Marshal James Greeson asked for the public's help in reporting tips "so we can hold criminals accountable for their violent and costly actions."

The telephone number for tips is (812) 988-6620.

Records show that the building's owner, Esther Hamilton, owed about \$70,000 in back taxes, and the Opry did not apply for a required entertainment permit this year, authorities said. A message seeking comment left at a Morgantown phone number listed in Hamilton's name was not immediately returned.

Brown County Prosecutor Jim Oliver said Hamilton was among dozens of people who had been interviewed by investigators but cautioned that it was too soon to start naming suspects.

"The investigation is continuing," Oliver said.

Media outlets have reported that the Brown County Volunteer Fire Department has responded to two other fires since 2002 at properties Hamilton owned, but officials at a news conference Monday said they would not look into past incidents.

"We won't be reinvestigating the old fires," said Scott Southerland of the Brown County Sheriff's Department. "We have the fire reports from the fire departments that were on the scene at the time. But given that they were several years ago, there won't be any additional investigation."

Chief Deputy Treasurer Marty Davidson, of the Brown County Treasurer's Office, said Hamilton owed nearly \$44,000 on the Opry building itself, \$11,300 on the land and nearly \$15,000 on the building's contents.

Some of the taxes had gone unpaid since 2001, she said. If the taxes are not paid, the property could be offered in a tax sale next year.

Rachel Meyer, a spokeswoman for the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, said the Opry did not apply for an entertainment permit for 2009.

A permit requires an inspection by the state fire marshal's office. Operating without one is illegal and can cost the owner \$750 per day for violations in county and state fines.

The Opry also went without a permit in 2003 but wasn't fined, Meyer said.

The last time the building was inspected was in April 2008, when two exit signs were found not to light up. The Opry replaced the bulbs and complied the same day, Meyer said.

The fire caused the Opry, now a burned-out shell, to cancel its upcoming shows, including November concerts by Loretta Lynn and George Jones.

Nearby business owners hope someone will rebuild quickly and draw more visitors to the area.

Stanley Lucas, who owns the Red Bud Inn next door to the Opry, said he has already lost 20 reservations over several weekends because of canceled concerts. He hopes the fall leaf-watching season will attract more people to his 15-room hotel.

"There's more to do in Nashville than just the Opry," he said. "As long as the leaves are here, people will come."

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TheIndyChannel.com

State Fire Marshal: Little Nashville Opry Blaze Intentionally Set

Federal, State Officials Hold 11 A.M. News Conference

POSTED: 6:35 am EDT September 28, 2009

UPDATED: 7:44 pm EDT September 28, 2009

NASHVILLE, Ind. -- Indiana State Fire Marshal Jim Greeson said Monday that the Sept. 19 fire at the Little Nashville Opry was intentionally set.

Additional information about how investigators reached that conclusion wasn't immediately released.

Investigators said releasing those details could compromise the investigation into who started the fire.

Slideshow: [Fire Guts Little Nashville Opry](#)

Video: [Uncut: Little Nashville Opry Fire Ruled Arson](#)

"Specific information regarding the fire and the investigation will not be released, as the investigation into the criminal act is continuing," Greeson said.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives sent an investigative team to Nashville last week to determine the fire's cause.

"The ATF National Laboratory will analyze the fire debris and evidence to assist in determining the cause of the fire," said Christopher Sadowski, ATF special agent.

Damage to the venue, which had hosted popular country music stars since 1975, was estimated at \$3 million.

Last week, the Brown County treasurer said the opry's owner, Esther Hamilton, owes \$72,000 in back taxes on the facility, a figure she disputes.

State officials also said the opry had been operating without a state-required permit that included an annual inspection.

The opry canceled the remainder of its show schedule for 2009, which included performances from country stalwarts Loretta Lynn and George Jones.

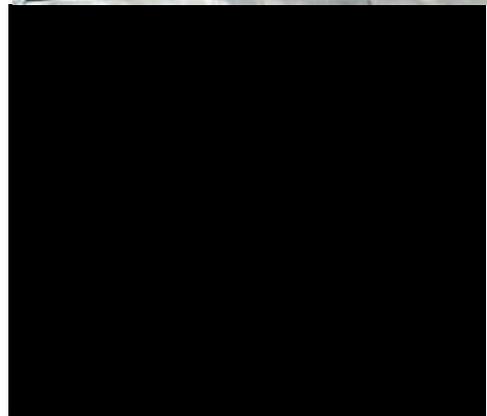
Residents and area business owners said they were sad to learn that the fire had been intentionally set.

"It's a landmark that's been here for many, many years, and it's something that, you know, can't be replaced," said Donald Stevenson.

Stan Lucas, who owns the Red Bud Inn next door to the opry, said he may have to lower room rates after several cancellations.

"With the economy the way it is, this is just a really bad time for it to happen," he said. "(The arsonist) hurt my business, they hurt the community's business. I hope they catch them. I hope they prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law." Local tourism officials said they're working to try and fill the void.

Related To Story



"We certainly hope they'll be able to rebuild. We know that some of the entertainers have volunteered to do a benefit, to come back and help with some rebuilding efforts," said Jane Ellis, director of the Brown County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Others said they're still skeptical of the arson claims.

"I really question whether it's true or not. That's always what they say when something burns," said visitor Sally Dillier.

Investigators asked anyone with information about the blaze to call 812-988-6620.

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Flood damage reports due Wednesday

September 28, 2009 12:43 pm

— The Indiana Department of Homeland Security urges anyone who sustained damage caused by severe weather, including wind and flooding, during Aug. 4-9 and has not yet reported it or discovered additional damage that was not previously reported to do so online.

The counties include Ripley, Franklin, Brown, Clark, Floyd, Jackson, Jennings, Marion and Rush.

IDHS will be accepting additional damage reports on its Web site at www.in.gov/dhs until Wednesday, Sept. 30. Those reporting will be asked to provide their name, address, phone number, damage to property and type of damage the property sustained. Losses can include structural damage to homes and loss of personal property.

Federal Emergency Management Agency administrator Craig Fugate notified IDHS Sept. 24 that the request for a major disaster declaration caused by the storms and flooding was denied.

“We know the affected Hoosiers have experienced great suffering,” said Joe Wainscott, IDHS executive director. “We are committed to seeking additional measures to provide needed support.”

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Most fires are avoidable

Debbie Blank

October 07, 2009 08:48 am

— Batesville Fire Chief Todd Schutte worries that with the recession, more area residents may try alternative heating methods this winter, which could lead to an increase in chimney and portable heater blazes. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security offers safe heating tips (please see box on page 14) and other fire prevention tips on the Web site www.in.gov/dhs. Volunteers haven't responded to many house fires in the past two years, but 2009 produced two business incidents, a grease fire at China Wok July 13 and a lightning strike at KFC/Taco Bell Aug. 10.

During Fire Prevention Week Oct. 4-10, the chief advises local restaurant managers, "Make sure that you're keeping your kitchen area clean and your hood systems maintained."

He dreads winter blazes. "It gets bitter cold sometimes." While the fire offers some heat, once it's out, "there's nowhere to get warm." He recalls arriving back at the fire station and standing up uniforms, waiting for them to thaw out.

There's more work to be done once firefighters leave a scene. "Depending on the size of the fire and how much equipment we had out, it can take from one to three hours" to clean and store it. What can city residents do better to aid firefighters' efforts? While hydrants are rather "unsightly when you're trying to manicure a lawn," they must not be hidden behind shrubs or enclosures.

The chief points out, "It's hard for us to locate them and hook up hoses to them." The city has an ordinance stating objects cannot be placed within 5 feet of hydrants.

Six or eight Batesville Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department members are making the rounds this week to remind citizens how to live through fires. Drills and alarm checks are taking place at all Batesville public and private schools. St. Louis and Jack and Jill preschool students have paid educational visits to the firehouse with St. Louis kindergartners through second-graders scheduled for Wednesday. "We also make a trip out to St. Andrews Health Campus that afternoon to talk to the seniors ... I hope we never, ever have an issue with one of the nursing homes" because of residents' decreased mobility.

The men will be giving tips at Batesville Primary School Thursday and Friday. Schutte reports, "We always focus on sitting down with their parents and coming up with a plan." He suggests to youth, "'Have a meeting place.' We give them some graph paper" so children can draw the house and yard layout and visualize how they will escape a burning structure.

"Make sure you stay low in the smoke," he advises. The traditional basics still are true: "Stop, drop and roll if your clothes are on fire. Make sure your house has address numbers on it. Call 911 in emergencies." To prevent kitchen scalds, he reminds students that pot handles should be turned inward on top of the stove so little ones can't pull the pots down on top of them.

Money is needed to purchase upgrades so volunteers can be more effective. Just like a year ago, "we've been working on some grants for handheld radios." He'd like each of the 25 members to

have one so help can be called in dangerous situations. The department has about 15 now. Two local entities have decided to help: Hill-Rom, \$5,000; and Ripley County Community Foundation, \$4,000. About \$10,000 is sought for the rest of the radios and accessories. In addition, when equipment breaks, it must be replaced and if there's a technology breakthrough, firefighters would like increase their skills. The chief wants to buy a state-of-the-art smokehouse costing around \$60,000 to replace the old one. The new version is set up like a classroom with house features. How to extinguish cooking and wastebasket fires and talk with a dispatcher after dialing 911 can be practiced. While BVFRD was denied a federal grant last year, "we're trying again."

To raise dollars, volunteers will host two major events in 2010, a February stillboard shoot and a two-day firemen's fest, which will be combined with SummerFest in July at Liberty Park. He emphasizes, "Of course, we always need volunteers." There is room at the station for seven more, which would ease the load on the current rescuers. "You never know (if you could handle the job) until you try."

Besides the satisfaction of helping others, department members are like a family. "You put your life in their hands and they put their lives in yours. That creates a tighter bond."

The volunteers meet twice a month, plus see each other at the station 10 to 15 more times when alarms are sounded. "Most of these guys are really close friends," socializing after work and cheering together for their kids on football fields.

Persons interested in becoming a firefighter or emergency medical technician should call Todd Schutte at 934-2230.

Debbie Blank can be contacted at 812-934-4343, Ext. 113; or debbie.blank@batesvilleheraldtribune.com. Copyright © 1999-2008 cnhi, inc

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Indiana Congressional team asking FEMA to reverse aid denial

By **DANIEL SUDDEATH**

Daniel.Suddeath@newsandtribune.com

October 06, 2009 11:27 pm

— Joining Gov. Mitch Daniels, the Indiana Congressional delegation has sent a letter encouraging the Federal Emergency Management Agency to reconsider declaring several Hoosier counties disaster areas as a result of Aug. 4 flooding.

According to a news release from 9th District Rep. Baron Hill, the letter highlighted new damage assessments that “came to light when the Indiana Department of Homeland Security reopened its various information gathering systems.”

Floyd and Clark counties are included in the relief request, which could entail public and individual assistance. In September, President Barack Obama rejected aid based on FEMA reports.

But Aug. 4 was not an isolated event, Hill argues. He said the letter stresses many Indiana counties have been impacted by flooding and wind damage on several occasions over the past year.

Hill said he spoke with Charlie Axton, acting administrator for disaster assistance for FEMA, during a telephone call Tuesday.

“I told Mr. Axton that I wouldn’t be doing my job if I didn’t ask him to change his decision,” Hill said. “People are really hurting, and he needs to know that.” Copyright © 1999-2008 cnhi, inc.

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THE NEWS-DISPATCH



Wednesday, October 07, 2009

The Real Deal

Training involves live-fire trailer

Alicia Ebaugh
Staff Writer

Wednesday, October 07, 2009

MICHIGAN CITY - Smoke billowed from the open door of the trailer as firefighters from Michigan City Engine Company 2 hustled inside.

The heat and flames made it look like a house fire, but it wasn't.

For the first time, the Michigan City Fire Department had access to a mobile live-fire trailer, supplied by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. Jeff Santana, Michigan City fire public-information officer, said the trailer will be used here in training exercises for three days before traveling to other fire departments.

"They're able to go through a simulation of a kitchen fire and a bedroom fire," Santana said. "It's all in a controlled environment, but the flames and smoke are real."

The trailer is made of steel, and tanks of propane shoot jets of orange fire across the ceiling and up a set of stairs. An instructor holds a remote that controls when and where the fire will erupt.

"Our firefighters have to know how to quickly extinguish these fires for their own safety," Santana said. "They need to keep the fire in front of them and stay alert at all times."

While it's here, the trailer will be open for use by other area fire departments, including Coolspring, Elkhart and South Bend, Santana said. The exercises are taking place on the grounds of the Michigan City Fire Department's training tower on Hitchcock Street.

Michigan City firefighters do training exercises about once a week for fire, medical and inspection-related issues, Santana said.

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THR | Investigation begins into Randolph County plane crash



Investigation begins into Randolph County plane crash

Posted: Oct 01, 2009 12:50 PM EDT Updated: Oct 01, 2009 3:34 PM EDT



[Kevin Rader](#)/Eyewitness News

Randolph County - Investigators are still trying to determine what led to a single engine plane crash Wednesday. The crash killed the pilot, 43-year-old David Eyde. Experts believe he lost consciousness while flying the plane.

Eyde's single engine plane crashed into a cornfield in rural Randolph County just east of Fairview, Indiana around 1:45 pm Wednesday afternoon. Eyde, who departed from Grand Rapids, Michigan, flew north then doubled back toward Grand Rapids when it lost communication, eventually crashing in Indiana. The pilot was viewed slumping over the controls at 25,000 feet.

Investigators are looking into the cause of the crash, including any medical condition Eyde may have had. Officials have speculated that he was suffering from hypoxia, a lack of oxygen to the brain that pilots can experience at high altitudes.

While Indiana's Homeland Security was closely monitoring the flight any final decision as to what those F16's should do with that plane is ultimately up to the U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command and the White House.

"We got involved around 11:45am yesterday and we were involved in an informational call with the National Department of Homeland Security, the White House and the FBI. A lot of other players involved and other good partners who had information on the pilot, the plane and what was happening with that situation," said John Erickson, Indiana Dept. Of Homeland Security.

NORAD won't say how close F-16s came to shooting down the plane, but says that's always an option in such cases.

F-16s were scrambled to intercept the flight Wednesday after it overshot Grand Rapids, Mich., and headed south into northeast Indiana. Authorities activated a communications network for airspace emergencies formed after 9/11 that includes NORAD, the Federal Aviation Administration and the FBI.

NORAD spokesman Michael Kucharek says the decision to shoot down a wayward plane is made at the highest levels - and would likely include the president. It wasn't clear whether President Barack Obama was consulted Wednesday.

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