

Burlington Fire Department
Office of the City Fire Marshal

132 North Avenue. Burlington, Vermont 05401

Fire Alarm/Sprinkler/Plan Review
Inspection Services
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For Immediate Release

Accidental Fire in Burlington's Hill Section Caused by Smoking Materials

The Burlington Fire Department responded to a report of a structure fire at 16-18 Loomis Street on Friday night, March 8, 2013 at 5:35 pm. Initial crews arrived on scene two minutes later to find a moderate smoke condition originating from the first floor porch of apartment #5. Firefighters found a small fire which had bored its way down through the wood porch and into the siding of the building, and quickly extinguished this fire with a pressurized water extinguisher and one hose line. Additional crews checked for fire extension and the presence of smoke throughout the building and overhauled the area adjacent to the entry door of apartment #5. Light smoke conditions were found in the basement and attic of the building and were ventilated. 15 Burlington Firefighters responded to this incident, and were assisted by the Burlington Electric Department. No firefighters or civilians were injured. The building was occupied at the time of this incident and was equipped with working smoke alarms inside the building, which activated in the basement due to smoke spread from the outside of the structure.

This building is a two-story, wood framed, seven (7) unit apartment building owned by Priscilla Toomey of New York, and under management by Wheeler Property Management, LLC. The building is valued at \$500,800 according to Burlington tax records. Damage is estimated at \$1,500. The tenants of apartment #5 will be relocated for the night due to damage to the porch serving the single entry/egress door to the apartment.

The cause of this fire was determined to be accidental due to careless disposal of smoking materials into a plastic can filled with discarded cigarette butts located on the wood porch of apartment #5. Firefighters also noted that multiple smoke detectors were removed from their bases and inoperable in another uninvolved apartment in the building. This incident was investigated by the Burlington Fire Marshal's Office.

The public is reminded to be diligent in their disposal of smoking materials. Smoking outside of a building, "Field-stripping" of cigarettes and extinguishment of the remnants in water, outside of any structure, is the best method to ensure that potentially hot cigarette butts do not ignite additional combustible materials. Residents are also reminded that working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors save lives, and must be installed correctly and tested regularly. Tampering with smoke alarms, to include removal and disabling of the device is considered a civil offense under Burlington Code of Ordinances chapter 13 and may be subject to fines.

END

Date and Time of Release:

8 March 2013 @ 2030 hours

Incident:

13-0001231

Date and Time of Incident:

8 March 2013 @ 1735 hours

Contact:

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Phone:

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