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Burlington Fire Department Office of the City Fire Marshal

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MEDIA RELEASE

INCIDENT TYPE:	DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT:
2nd Alarm Structure Fire	Monday, 23 May 2016 at 1500 hours
INCIDENT NUMBER:	LOCATION:
NFIRS 16-0002756	191 College Street
AUTHOR:	CONTACT #:
BC Barry J. Simays, Fire Marshal	(802) 864-5577

On Monday, 23 May 2016 at approximately 1500 hours, smoke was observed by the City Fire Marshal while outside Fire Station #1 in the area of Mechanic's Lane or the roof of the former Burlington Free Press building at 185-195 College Street. Engine 1 was detailed to investigate the report, which was confirmed a short time later by the Fire Marshal to be a fire on the third floor roof of the structure under complete permitted renovation. A full assignment of three engine companies, the tower ladder, two ambulances, and the shift commander were dispatched to the confirmed fire, with resources arriving within one to two minutes.

A second alarm was struck by the incident commander within ten minutes, bringing an additional off-duty shift of BFD personnel and reserve apparatus, the Burlington Police Department, local utility representatives, and the South Burlington, Malletts Bay, and Winooski Fire Departments into the City for station coverage and response to additional emergency calls at the time of the fire.

Personnel evacuated all remaining construction workers from within the building and deployed hose lines from two ladder trucks at College St and Mechanic's Lane to the south roof of the building. A large volume of fire involving a roof top cupola that contained out-of-service elevator equipment was quickly extinguished with these multiple hose lines. Additional overhaul was conducted to locate and extinguish any signs of fire. Fire also damaged a portion of the third floor immediately below the main body of fire on the roof top and was also extinguished.

The building sprinkler system was active and fully functional throughout the building during construction on standing orders of the Burlington Fire Department for this construction project, but did not activate because this fire occurred on the roof above the level of the sprinkler system heads located within the building.

A preliminary damage estimate is \$20,000 for the building, with a listed property value of \$2,800,000 according to City of Burlington property database records. The property is owned by Great Cedars, LLC.

The Burlington Fire Marshal's Office conducted the origin and cause investigation for this incident, and determined that the fire originated on the exterior roof of the third floor at the south-east corner of the roof as accessed on the fourth floor. The cause of this fire was determined to be careless disposal of cigarettes on the roof surface.

This incident is the third multiple-alarm fire in the City of Burlington in the past month that has been attributed to the careless disposal of cigarettes and other smoking materials. Smoking of any type is strictly prohibited within construction sites under the requirements of NFPA 1 (The Fire Code) and NFPA 241 (Standard for Safeguarding Construction Operations). The Burlington Fire Marshals office in cooperation with City Trades Inspectors maintain high standards for safety within buildings under renovation or construction through the permitting and inspection process and maintaining functional fire alarm and sprinkler systems, but also reminds all residents, patrons, and workers to take extreme caution when disposing of any type of smoking material regardless of their location.

END