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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:
Structure Fire	Wednesday, 12 October 2016 at 0210 hours
INCIDENT NUMBER:	LOCATION:
NFIRS# 16-0005955	1850 North Avenue, Burlington, VT 05408
AUTHOR:	CONTACT #:
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NARRATIVE:

On Wednesday, 12 October 2016 at approximately 0210 hours, the Burlington Emergency Communications Center received multiple 9-1-1 phone calls reporting a structure fire at 1850 North Avenue, in the New North End of the City. The Burlington Fire Department was dispatched and arrived on scene within minutes, initially from Fire Station #4 at North Avenue and Staniford Road (less than 3/4 of a mile away). First arriving crews reported heavy fire and smoke on arrival and requested a "working fire" assignment which brought all 20 on-duty personnel and apparatus from five stations and all off-duty members of the command staff to the scene.

Crews worked for the next three hours to bring this incident to a conclusion, although the main body of fire was extinguished quickly with larger 2-1/2 inch hose lines and multiple 1-3/4 inch attack lines. In addition, crews were assigned to initial search and rescue, ventilation of the roof to release smoke and superheated fire gases from the structure using the truck mounted aerial of Engine #2 and ground ladders, to conduct overhaul operations to locate and extinguish hidden fire, and to conduct salvage operations for protection of property within the structure.

On-scene emergency medical coverage was provided by the University of Vermont Rescue Squad and station coverage was provided by the South Burlington, Malletts Bay, and Winooski Fire Departments. Scene and traffic control was provided by the Burlington Police Department. Also responding to the scene were the Burlington Electric Department, Vermont Gas, and the American Red Cross who provided recovery assistance to the four displaced occupants of the structure following the fire.

No civilians or firefighters were injured during the course of this incident, however five cats belonging to the owner-occupants of the home died as a result of suspected smoke inhalation during the fire.

Preliminary loss and damage estimates (property and contents) are between \$225,000 - \$300,000 for this incident. The property is owned and occupied by Bradford and Karen Hardy with an accessory rental apartment occupied by long-term residents.

This incident was investigated by the Burlington Fire Marshal's Office with the assistance of the Vermont State Police Fire Investigation Unit for technical analysis of evidence. No suspicious circumstances were involved in this incident. While the exact cause of this fire is undetermined, it is believed that an operating ceiling mounted light within the outdoor breezeway between the house and the apartment failed, causing heating and ignition of combustible materials at the ceiling level and later ignition of combustible materials stored in the area and comprising the breezeway construction.

As this is Fire Prevention Week, the Burlington Fire Department reminds the public of the importance of having working photoelectric smoke and carbon monoxide alarms hard-wired, interconnected, and with battery back-up in all homes, apartments, and condominiums. In addition, families should develop and practice home escape plans involving second means of escape and remember to call 9-1-1 immediately report emergencies should they occur.

END