



News Release

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections
Public Safety Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DeRidder Fire Claims Life of Homeowner

Smoking Habits May Have Played Role in Fire

DeRidder, LA – State Fire Marshal investigators continue to examine the facts surrounding a residential fire that killed a homeowner in DeRidder early Tuesday morning.

Firefighters responded to the fire shortly after 1:00 a.m., finding the blaze confined to the master bedroom of the home. After entering the residence, firefighters located the lifeless body of homeowner Paul Ashworth, 52, on the floor adjacent to the bed.

After being notified of Ashworth's death, State Fire Marshal investigators arrived on the scene and determined that the fire began on the bed before spreading throughout the room. Investigators were informed by family members of the victim that Ashworth was a heavy smoker who habitually smoked while in bed.

Within the area of the bedroom where the fire originated, investigators noted the presence of smoking materials and a disposable butane lighter. While the investigation continues into the cause of this deadly fire, investigators suspect that unsafe smoking practices played a role in the man's death.

After being examined by investigators, Ashworth's body was released to the Calcasieu Parish Coroner's Office for autopsy.

The status of this investigation is active.

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News Release – Addendum (DeRidder Fatal Fire; 8/11/15)



Photograph provided by the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office