



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mother, Son Die in Apartment Fire

RED RIVER PARISH- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding an apartment fire involving two deaths in Coushatta.

Around 10:45 p.m. on Wednesday, December 18, the Red River Parish Fire Department responded to a fire call in the 100 block of East Carroll Street. The structure was a former commercial building that had been converted into apartment units.

Firefighters later discovered the bodies of a woman and 7-year-old boy in the downstairs unit. The occupant of the upstairs unit woke to smoke in his apartment and was able to escape by jumping from the second floor. He was not injured during the escape.

Official identification and cause of death of the victims are pending an autopsy by the Red River Parish Coroner's Office.

While an exact cause of the fire remains undetermined, SFM investigators believe a heating device placed too close to combustible objects could be a contributing factor. Investigators also were not able to locate working smoke alarms in this home.

The SFM would like to implore all families to practice safe home heating by following these simple tips:

- Place space heaters 3-5 feet from combustible objects like blankets
- Plug all heating appliances directly into wall outlets, not power strips or extension cords
- Do not use stoves or ovens to heat homes
- Don't overfill fireplaces/wood burning stoves
- Do not leave candles/open flames (or space heaters) left unattended

The SFM would also like to remind all residents that smoke alarms make a significant difference in your chances of surviving a fire. Operation Save-A-Life partners with local fire departments and districts to install smoke alarms for families that need them. You can find more information on the program on our website lasfm.org.

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