



# **City of Madison Fire Department**

## ***News Release***

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### **Child With Lighter Caused Flower Lane Fire**

City of Madison Fire investigators have determined that yesterday's fire at 7101 Flower Lane was caused by a 5-year-old boy playing with a lighter.

The cause was determined through witness interviews and evidence at the scene. The child's family is cooperating fully with investigators.

Two adults and 3 children were in the apartment at the time of the fire. The 5-year-old was playing in his room and alerted the family to the fire. The father escaped with one child. A family friend who was visiting the apartment went back in and found another child and carried her to safety. In the confusion, the father also went back inside the apartment to search for the same child.

He became trapped in his bedroom and escaped through a window, suffering cuts that required transport to UW hospital, where he was treated and released. The children were treated at the scene and released to their grandmother.

Firefighters were called to the scene just before 2 p.m. On their arrival, they reported flames coming from a first floor window and spreading up the exterior of the building to the second floor.

Another family was assisted by a passerby who heard a man calling for help from a second-floor balcony. The eight apartments share a common hallway that filled with smoke as other occupants exited the building. The passerby stopped and caught three children lowered from the balcony before the adult male on the balcony jumped to safety.

Firefighters arrived at the scene at 2:01 and had the fire under control within minutes. All other occupants of the building were able to self-evacuate without injury.

The Red Cross assisted occupants at the scene. Early damage estimates are set at \$125,000.

- Children playing with fire cause hundreds of deaths and injuries each year.
- Preschoolers and kindergartners are most likely to start these fires, typically by playing with matches and lighters, and are most likely to die in them.

#### ***The City of Madison Fire Department reminds residents:***

- **Draw** a home escape plan and discuss it with everyone in your household.
- **Practice** the plan night and day with everyone in your home twice a year.
- **Know** at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- **Have** a meeting place (something permanent, like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- **Push** the smoke alarm button to start the practice drill.
- **Get** out fast.
- **Close** doors behind you as you leave.
- **Go** to your outside meeting place. Get out and stay out. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- **Get low and go** under the smoke to get out safely if you have to escape through smoke.
- **Feel** the knob and door before opening a door. If they are hot, use your second way out.

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