



City of Madison Fire Department

News Release

Date: March 12, 2009

Released By: Lori Wirth – Public Information Officer
(608) 266-5947 or (608) 575-4943

Occupants Escape Monroe St. House Fire ***House is Total Loss - No Alarms Sounded***

The house at 2021 Monroe St. has been declared a total loss. The house was valued at \$256,000. That estimate does not include the contents.

Four occupants of the house escaped from the burning structure early this morning. They reported hearing no smoke alarm.

Investigators have determined that a smoke alarm in the front hallway was disengaged from the ceiling bracket and not functional prior to the blaze.

City of Madison Firefighters were called to the address at 2:06 a.m. Firefighters arrived to see flames rolling along the front porch from the first floor windows. Flames soon moved up into the attic, where firefighters battled the blaze for two hours.

One occupant was briefly trapped in a second-floor bedroom. She was helped to safety from a window by a second occupant. She received minor burns, her housemate suffered a cut to his had.

A cat suffered burns and smoke inhalation. Paramedics gave the cat oxygen, but she died later at a veterinary clinic.

All occupants were out of the house when firefighters arrived. Monroe St. was closed to traffic for more than 4 hours while firefighters worked to control the fire.

The road was re-opened, but icy spots remained and drivers were cautioned to take special care in that area.

The City Streets Department was called to lay sand to make the roadway safer.

Knockdown took place at 4 a.m., but some hot spots remained. Engine Companies 4 and 9 maintained firewatch shifts earlier today.

Fire investigators believe the fire started at the rear of the house in the kitchen, but the exact cause remains under investigation.

The occupants reported they have no insurance. The American Red Cross - Badger Chapter is assisting them.

The City of Madison Fire Department reminds residents that fires in the home account for 82% of all civilian fire deaths and the following recommendations are driven by this fact:

- Every home should have a working smoke alarm in each bedroom and on every level of the home.
- Every family should have a home escape plan and conduct home fire drills.

The City of Madison Fire Department also strongly recommends renters' insurance to for all renters.

--END--