



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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West Monroe Fire Leaves Family of Four Clinging to Life

West Monroe, LA – State Fire Marshal investigators continue to string together the circumstances surrounding a Sunday morning fire that critically injured four members of a family, leaving them clinging to life, including a pregnant mother.

Investigators were summoned to the scene after West Monroe firefighters responded to a structure fire at approximately 7:30 a.m. Sunday morning, located at 201 Coleman Street in West Monroe. The structure, an older home converted into a duplex, housed two (2) families at the time of the fire.

During suppression efforts, firefighters located 26-year-old Jeremiah Owujori, his wife, Ashley, 24, and their 5 year-old and 7-month-old sons, in the single bedroom of one of the duplex portions of the structure.

The victims were removed from the home where resuscitation efforts were initiated. Jeremiah Owujori and his 7-month-old son were transported to an area hospital where they remain on life support. Mother Ashley Owujori and their 5 year-old son were transported to LSU Medical Center in Shreveport where they remain in critical condition.

The occupants of the other portion of the duplex, which escaped unharmed, informed investigators that the structure lost electrical power at approximately 3:30 a.m. Investigators also learned that Jeremiah Owujori had notified a duplex maintenance worker at approximately 6:30 a.m. concerning the loss of electricity. It is unknown whether the family returned to sleep before being discovered by firefighters.

During the examination of the structure, investigators located three (3) electrical junction boxes in the attic where a decades-old wiring system, known as "knob and tube," had been connected to more modern

Romex wiring. Investigators have determined that the fire originated in close proximity to the junction boxes and it is suspected that faulty wiring led to the fire.

There were no smoke alarms installed in either of the two units.

The investigation into this tragic fire remains active.

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News Release – Addendum (West Monroe Fire; 1/24/16)



Photo courtesy of the Office of Louisiana State Fire Marshal