



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Girl, 6, Dies in Jena Fire; Mother Charged in Death

Jena, LA – State Fire Marshal investigators have charged a mother in the death of her 6-year-old daughter who died in a fire early Wednesday in Jena.

Wendy Leian Blasingame, 29, was booked into the La Salle Parish Jail on one count of negligent homicide.

An investigation began into the circumstances surrounding the death after firefighters responded to a report of a camper trailer fire at 148 Segrest Road in Jena, just after 4:00 a.m. Wednesday. After extinguishing the fire, the body of Ayla Breeland was located within the burned remnants of the camper, which was destroyed by the fire.

After being examined by investigators, Breeland's body was released to the La Salle Parish Coroner where an autopsy was performed earlier today. Results are pending at this time.

Investigators determined that the fire originated within the camper trailer near a mattress that was positioned on the floor where the victim's body was found. In that area, investigators discovered a number of illegally energized electrical wires. Investigators also learned that an electric space heater had been connected to the wiring and was placed in close proximity to where the child slept.

When authorities first arrived, Blasingame was absent and did not return to the scene until hours after the fire was extinguished, at which time she was observed by investigators to be in a state of intoxication.

It is unclear how long the child had been left unattended.

The investigation is active and more arrests are possible.

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Louisiana Office of State Fire Marshal

NEWS RELEASE – ADDENDUM

Jena Fatal Fire; October 26, 2016



Photo courtesy of the Louisiana Office of State Fire Marshal

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Photo courtesy of the La Salle Parish Sheriff's Office

Wendy L. Blasingame