



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two Children Die In Hodge House Fire

JACKSON PARISH- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies continue their investigation into a tragic late-night fire that claimed the lives of two young children.

Just after 10 p.m. on Saturday, September 7, the Hodge Fire Department responded to a house fire in the 1000 block of S. Elm Street. Upon arrival, firefighters learned there had been five children and one adult inside the home when the fire began, but two of the juveniles were unable to be rescued by the adult.

The bodies of the two children were located by firefighters in the home's master bedroom.

While official identification and causes of death are still pending with the Jackson Parish Coroner's Office, the victims are believed to be an almost 2-month-old girl and a 3-year-old boy who had a birthday this past week. The other children, an 8-year-old boy, 7-year-old girl, and 4-year-old boy, were examined at a local hospital and released.

SFM investigators learned from witness statements that one of the children accidentally caught a couch on fire while playing with a lighter. Upon discovery of the fire, the adult male home with the children evacuated the older children and attempted to extinguish the fire. Witness statements indicated when that effort became unsuccessful, the adult male made attempts to reach the two remaining children from both inside and outside of the structure, but was unable to.

"This is the second fire in as many weeks involving children having access to fire-producing objects and that access resulting in devastating consequences," said State Fire Marshal Butch Browning, "I cannot emphasize enough the importance of, first and foremost, keeping lighters and matches away from the reach of children, but secondly, teaching children about the dangers of playing with fire. This is a heartbreaking case that I hope motivates other families to take these two simple steps to prevent something similar from affecting their loved ones and properties."

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