



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Man Dies in Converse House Fire

SABINE PARISH- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding a house fire in Converse that claimed the life of a male occupant.

Around 8 p.m. on August 6, the Sabine North Fire District responded to the 15000 block of Highway 174 in Converse for a report of a house fire. When firefighters arrived, they discovered the 60-year-old, physically disabled male homeowner deceased.

The official cause of death and identification are pending an autopsy by the Sabine Parish Coroner's Office.

During the investigation, SFM deputies learned the bed-bound victim was utilizing an oxygen machine while smoking. Preliminary autopsy results and evidence gathered from the scene indicate the fire originated with the oxygen machine near the victim, then fire quickly spread throughout the structure. The victim's wife attempted to rescue him, but was driven away by flames and smoke.

This is the third fatal fire in the Central and North Louisiana areas in as many days. On August 4th, an elderly woman died in a house fire in Campti. The fire is believed to have started in the bedroom the woman was discovered in, but the cause remains undetermined. No smoke alarms were found in the home.

On August 5, a man in his 60s died in a house fire in Oak Grove. The cause remains undetermined at this time. Then this fire occurred in Converse on August 6.

State Fire Marshal H. "Butch" Browning wants to ask residents to be vigilant of the fire hazards in their homes.

"Some of the most common fire causes we see in our investigations are smoking-related and cooking-related, both totally preventable," said Browning, "We urge residents to consider basic safety steps like remaining in the kitchen when cooking and conducting any smoking activities outside of the home in an environment that is free from flammable materials."

"Fires *can* be avoided and lives saved by following these simple safety tips," he said.

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