



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two Die in St. Martinville House Fire

ST. MARTIN PARISH (December 7, 2020)- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies continue investigating a house fire in St. Martinville involving two deaths.

Just before 6:30 a.m. on December 7, the Catahoula Volunteer Fire Department responded to a call for a house fire located in the 1000 block of A Sam Road. Firefighters later located the bodies of a man and woman; one was located in the living room while the other was located in a bedroom.

While official identifications and causes of death are pending autopsies by the St. Martin Parish Coroner's Office, the victims are believed to be the 89-year-old homeowner and her 58-year-old son.

Following an assessment of the scene, deputies determined the fire originated in one of the home's bedrooms. While the official cause of this fire remains undetermined at this time, deputies cannot rule out the possibility of unsafe heating practices involving a space heater as a possible contributing factor.

The State Fire Marshal's Office would like to remind residents to practice safe home heating as cold temperatures make themselves a mainstay across our state. Some of the top safety tips are:

- Place space heaters 3-5 feet from combustible objects like blankets
- Plug all heating appliances directly into wall outlets, not power strips or extension cords
- Do not use stoves or ovens to heat homes
- Don't overfill fireplaces/wood burning stoves
- Do not leave candles/open flames (or space heaters) left unattended
- Have working smoke alarms in your home!

Unfortunately, deputies were unable to locate working smoke alarms in this home. The SFM's Operation Save-A-Life program partners with local fire departments and districts to provide FREE smoke alarm installations, at any time of the year, for families in need of assistance accessing the critical emergency-alert equipment.

In addition to having working smoke alarms, the SFM also emphasizes the importance of having planned and practiced escape routes for your home that include knowing two ways out of every room. To register for a free smoke alarm, or learn more about Operation Save-A-Life, visit lasfm.org.