



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections • Public Safety Services
8181 Independence Blvd. • Baton Rouge, LA 70806

www.lasfm.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ashley Rodrigue
Public Affairs Director

DATE: 1/18/22

PHONE: 225-620-5115
ashley.rodrigue@la.gov

Man Dies Following Columbia House Fire

CALDWELL PARISH- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies continue investigating the circumstances surrounding a house fire in Columbia that claimed the life of a male resident.

Around 10 p.m. on Thursday, January 13, the Hebert Fire Department responded to a report of a residential fire located in the 1600 block of Highway 848 in Columbia. Firefighters later located a man in a wheelchair in the doorway of a bedroom.

While official identification and cause of death are pending with the Coroner's Office, the victim is believed to be the 63-year-old, disabled homeowner.

Following an assessment of the scene, deputies determined the fire began in the sunroom and/or laundry room area of the home. While the official cause of this fire remains undetermined at this time, SFM investigators are unable to rule out the possibility of an electrical malfunction or some type of heating-related contributing factor due to a fireplace being located in the area of origin.

As our state faces another blast of cold air in the coming days, the SFM is asking Louisianans to prioritize safe home heating practices. Please plug space heaters directly into wall outlets as opposed to extension cords or power strips and keep the devices 3-5 feet away from combustible objects like blankets, bedding and curtains. Never leave a space heater, or open flame like a candle, unattended. In addition, do not use stoves or ovens as heat sources and do not leave fireplaces and oil-burning or wood-burning ovens unattended or overloaded with too much wood.

In addition, deputies were unable to locate working smoke alarms in the home. Smoke alarms are a proven tool to alert residents to a fire danger in order to escape safely. If you need assistance obtaining smoke alarms for your home, Operations Save-A-Life can help. The program partners with local fire departments to install smoke alarms for free. To learn more about Operation Save-A-Life, visit our website at lasfm.org.

-END-END-END-END-