



NEWS RELEASE

Date: August 29, 2009
Release: Immediately
Contact: Storm Smith, PIO, 503-615-6666 PIO pager



(Hillsboro Home Damaged by Fire – Second Time in Six Months)

A one-alarm fire damaged a Hillsboro home this morning, the second fire to hit this residence in six months. Today's alarm was turned into Washington County 9-1-1 dispatchers at 11:25 am. Firefighters from Hillsboro Fire and Rescue responded to the blaze at 737 SE Cedar Street. The first arriving unit, a Hillsboro chief officer, reported smoke coming from the top two front windows of the two-story wood-framed residence. One team of firefighters entered the residence and found heavy smoke down to about four feet from the floor and two television sets left on prompting fears that occupants might be still inside. Two teams of firefighters made separate searches and found no one inside. However, using thermal imaging cameras, firefighters located one cat hiding in the smoke-filled front living room. They brought the cat outside and administered oxygen to the animal. The cat was left in the care of a neighbor. A second cat was found safe outside. The homeowners were not at home.

Firefighters found the fire's origin in a pantry/storage room behind the kitchen. They quickly extinguished the blaze. Investigators examined evidence and determined the fire started with a mini refrigerator located in the pantry. The fire damage was confined to the pantry area. Heat damage and heavy smoke damage could be seen in the kitchen with smoke damage throughout the main and second floors. Damage estimate may exceed \$25,000. The same home suffered minor damage in March of this year when a dryer caught fire in a utility room attached to the rear of the home.

Hillsboro Fire and Rescue recommends that all refrigerators have adequate ventilation to allow for compressor cooling and proper heat exchange. Clean dust and debris from behind and under the refrigerator quarterly. For more fire and life safety information, visit: www.ci.hillsboro.or.us/fire or call 503-681-6166.

-END-

Photo Caption:

Hose break down 6777.jpg – Hillsboro Firefighters uncouple hoses after extinguishing a fire in a pantry at this home on SE Cedar Street.

Digging Scene 6797.jpg – Hillsboro Lieutenant Nathan Leek (l-r), Firefighter Robert Lloyd and Investigator Doug Nolan inspect the origin of a house fire at the rear of a mini refrigerator in the home's pantry.