

# CHARLESTON

## FIRE DEPARTMENT



### Fire Damages Bar and Apartments on East Bay Street

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Charleston, SC (February 23, 2015): At approximately 5:59 AM, units with the City of Charleston Fire Department, James Island Fire Department, Charleston Police Department, and Charleston County EMS were dispatched to a reported structure fire at 251 East Bay Street. The first fire department units arrived on scene at 6:02 AM and reported heavy fire venting from the second floor windows of the two story bar/apartment structure.

A resident of an upstairs apartment awoke to the smell of smoke and began to investigate the source. The occupant noticed black smoke coming from an adjoining apartment and returned to his apartment to retrieve his cell phone and valuables. The occupant exited down a stairwell and dialed 9-1-1. Arriving fire department personnel commenced a defensive fire attack due to the progress of the fire on the second floor.

“First arriving crews quickly evaluated the situation and employed an action plan based on Standard Operating Procedures and initiated a defensive fire attack” said Deputy Chief of Operations John Tippett. “Crews exercised good judgment and performed as a well-practiced team.”

Fire personnel deemed the fire under control at 6:31 AM. Fire, smoke, and heat damaged the three upstairs apartments. Big John’s Tavern, a bar located on the first floor of the structure, sustained significant heat, smoke, and water damage.

Members of the Charleston Fire Department Fire Marshal’s Division responded to investigate the fire. The fire was determined to have originated in the front upstairs apartment. A tenant of the front apartment was not home at the time of the fire. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

The Charleston Fire Department would like to take remind citizens of these important tips:

- 1) Always maintain working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms should be placed on every level of a residence and near sleeping areas.
- 2) Smoke alarms should be tested monthly and batteries should be changed annually.
- 3) Report any unusual odors or visual smoke by calling 9-1-1.
- 4) Prepare for an emergency by making an escape plan with you and members of your household.

Please contact Community Educator Ryan Kunitzer at (843)958-6401 or by e-mail at [kunitzerr@charleston-sc.gov](mailto:kunitzerr@charleston-sc.gov) for additional information on smoke alarms.

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