

CHARLESTON

FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire Damages Apartment on North Avalon Circle

Contact: Community Educator Ryan Kunitzer

Phone: 843-958-6401

E-mail: kunitzerr@charleston-sc.gov

Charleston, SC (May 11, 2015): Units from the City of Charleston, Saint Andrews, and North Charleston Fire Departments, Charleston County EMS, and the Charleston Police Department responded to a possible structure fire at approximately 12:57 AM this morning in the 1500 block of North Avalon Circle. The first arriving fire department unit encountered heavy fire venting from the front door of the middle apartment of the three apartment building.

Occupants of the apartment were sleeping when one occupant heard a loud noise in the kitchen, entered the kitchen and discovered a fire near the stove. The occupant alerted additional residents of the apartment to exit the structure and then alerted the residents of one of the adjoining units. The occupant of the other adjoining unit smelled smoke and safely exited. The occupant re-entered the apartment multiple times to attempt to extinguish the growing fire. Upon the arrival of the fire department units the fire had extended into the attic space and fire personnel commenced an exterior attack to contain the bulk of the fire. Fire personnel worked quickly to protect nearby homes and prevented further fire extension.

Fire and smoke heavily damaged all three apartment units of the triplex building. None of the occupants reported hearing a smoke alarm activate and the operational status of the alarms is unknown at this time. The American Red Cross was notified and is working to assist the 11 occupants who lived in the triplex unit. One firefighter suffered heat exhaustion and was transported and released from a local hospital. Two occupants of the middle apartment were transported and released from a local hospital due to smoke inhalation.

Members of the City of Charleston Fire Department Fire Marshal Division responded to investigate the cause of the fire. The cause of the fire is still under investigation at this time.

The Charleston Fire Department would like to take this opportunity to offer a few simple safety tips:

- 1) Never re-enter a burning building for any reason.
- 2) Install and maintain smoke alarms in all homes. Smoke alarms should be located on every level of your home and inside, and outside, of each bedroom.
- 3) Test smoke alarms monthly. Batteries in smoke alarms should be replaced annually.
- 4) Prepare for an emergency by making an escape plan with you and members of your household.

###