



NEWS RELEASE

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Residents Escape House Fire in Beaverton Due to the Warning of a Neighbor

At 1:47 am today, TVF&R was called to a reported house fire at 530 SW 139TH Avenue in Beaverton. As crews were en route, 9-1-1 dispatchers advised them that they were receiving multiple calls from neighbors - some a block away - reporting fire. When the crew from Station 61 arrived within four minutes of the 9-1-1 call, they found fire actively burning in approximately one-third of the home and smoke puffing out from under the eaves of the roof. Crews were told that the family of four was outside thanks to a next door neighbor who had knocked on their door and awakened them. The neighbor told fire officials that she had just come home and noticed that it appeared "foggy" around their home. Upon closer inspection, she noticed light smoke and charring around the home's roofline and thought to warn the family.

Public Information Officer Karen Eubanks states, "When we arrived there was significant fire involvement. Not only did we have a full-on structure fire, but we also had to contend with fire spreading to two cars in the driveway, a fence, and a shed with propane tanks." In addition, crews faced the hazard of a live downed power line in the backyard.

Multiple crews waged an aggressive interior attack for approximately 15-20 minutes until the roof appeared to begin sagging. At that point, concerned about firefighter safety, commanders pulled crews out to continue fighting fire from the exterior. The bulk of the fire was extinguished within 30 minutes. However, it took crews approximately an hour to extinguish fire in the home's attic due to it being filled with more than thousand of paperback books, holiday decorations and other combustible miscellaneous. Approximately 40 firefighters were utilized to battle the fire.

The fire is under investigation at this hour. While the cause remains undetermined, it is believed that the fire may have begun in the garage area and spread to the tremendous amount of combustible material in the attic space. It is unknown how long the fire may have burned undetected. The home's smoke alarms did not activate until the one of the home's owners, Mark McMullen, after being awakened, opened the back door to the garage and saw fire. He said it seemed after opening the door that the fire immediately erupted and they only had time to throw on jeans and bathrobes before escaping with his wife, Alice McMullen, and their two daughters, Melina (24) and Joyce (12). Damage is estimated to be at least \$200,000.

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