



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **(Portable Heater Causes Weekend House Fire)**

Fire investigators have concluded that the most probable cause of a house fire last Saturday afternoon at 9140 SW Arrowwood Drive in Portland was a portable electric heater placed too close to a couch.

The fire was called to 9-1-1 by a neighbor, reporting flames on the backside of the home. First-arriving firefighters from TVF&R's Progress and Beaverton fire stations found flames through the front windows; flames showing above the roof on the back side of the home due to the fully involved deck; and smoke coming from the eaves.

Firefighters made entry into the home and quickly extinguished the main body of fire on the first floor of the home, while at the same time searching for possible victims. They soon confirmed that the sole resident, Joseph Liptak, was not home. He later told firefighters that he had left the home at 11:30 am that day.

The home--reported to be over 50 years old--sustained heavy fire and smoke damage throughout the entire first floor of the north end of the home and smoke damage to the south end of the home.

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue reminds individuals that *space heaters need space*. Many portable heaters have exposed surfaces that become very hot and can ignite combustibles. To ensure your safety keep portable heaters at least three feet away from items that can burn. In addition, ensure that your portable heater has a tip-over switch (automatically shuts-off if knocked over) and turn off all heaters before leaving the house or going to bed. For maximum protection in case of fire, maintain working smoke alarms throughout your home and having a home fire escape plan.

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