

Injured firefighter recovers; Atchison house fire investigated

(KAIR)--As an Atchison firefighter, injured after responding to a residential fire Tuesday, continues to recover, investigators continue their work to find what sparked the fire at the two-story Laramie Street home that displaced the occupants who had escaped prior to firefighter arrival.

The firefighter, whose name is not made public, was injured after a 35-foot ladder fell on top of him while taking it down in the icy conditions of Tuesday afternoon. Transported to Mosaic Life Care by Atchison County EMS, Fire Chief Patrick Weishaar, on Wednesday, said the firefighter was released from the hospital Tuesday night and is recovering from a concussion, and other minor injuries, at home.

As for the cause of the 1026 Laramie Street fire, Weishaar, in a release, says that remains undetermined despite the efforts of investigators who, on Wednesday, interviewed the occupants of the fire ravaged home following the on-scene investigation that wrapped up Tuesday.

The problem, Weishaar says, is the lack of physical evidence that could be recovered for evaluation due to the extreme nature of the fire that was ultimately extinguished Tuesday, with crews remaining on the scene hours after the fire was reported around 12:35 that afternoon.

Weishaar, in the release, points out that, at the scene of the fire Tuesday, "it was reported...that space heaters were in use in the home in the location where the fire appears to have started." Adding that he doesn't know if that will be determined as the cause, Weishaar says the time is right to remind residents of the dangers of improper use of space heaters, which he says must be used in exact accordance with the manufacturer.

The displaced occupants of Tuesday's fire are being assisted by the Atchison Salvation Army.

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