

Woods End Lane blaze in Weston: Occupants, pets all safely accounted for

Written by Kimberly Donnelly
Wednesday, 04 April 2012 10:53



Fire destroyed much of an unoccupied house in Weston last week. There were no injuries.

Weston firefighters, assisted by Wilton and Georgetown crews, battled the house fire Wednesday, March 28, at 6 Woods End Lane, off Godfrey Road East near the transfer station. Godfrey Road East was closed to through traffic from about 1:30 until 4:15 p.m.

Weston Fire Chief John Pokorny said the Weston Volunteer Fire Department responded to the scene at about 1:30, after receiving a call from workers at the transfer station, who reported seeing a large plume of smoke in the area.

Chief Pokorny said as the firefighters were on their way, dispatch received a call from an alarm company that a panic alarm had gone off at 6 Woods End. The house did not have an automatic fire alarm, but the flames likely shorted out a wire in the burglar alarm, said Chief Pokorny, who is also the town's fire marshal.

The house, which is owned by John and Jane Horner, was a four-bedroom, two-story, 4,000-square-foot Colonial, built in 1995.

When firefighters arrived, one wing of the house was fully involved with flames, and heavy smoke and fire was issuing from the roof, mainly over the garage area.

Rescue operation

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Chief Pokorny said a neighbor was on the scene, who reported that an elderly couple lived in the house and was usually home at that time of day. There were two cars in the garage, and so based on that information, the firefighters assumed they would need to conduct a rescue, Chief Pokorny said.



At that point — before firefighters had even entered the house — Chief Pokorny said the roof on the garage side of the house was already burned through. There was a breakfast nook, kitchen, upstairs master bedroom, sunroom and bath that were badly damaged.

“We started on that side of the house [on the outside] to keep the fire under control,” Chief Pokorny said. Meanwhile, another crew forced the front door open to try to get into the unburned part of the house.

“When we went in the front door, there were flames coming toward the stairs from the garage side of the house, just a mass of flames, but the stairs were not burned yet. But more flames were starting to come across the top of the stairs,” Chief Pokorny said.

Thinking there might be people upstairs, the firefighters began “protecting the stairs,” the chief said.

But just then, a keyholder to the house showed up and reported that the occupants were out of town and both were accounted for.

“That helped, because we could relax the search — slightly — from there probably being someone in the house, to just the possibility that maybe someone else might be in the house,” Chief Pokorny said.

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Two cats, the only pets at the house, were also quickly accounted for safe and sound, he said.

There were a total of 39 Weston firefighters on the scene, who were aided by five from Wilton and two from Georgetown; the neighboring departments each brought a tanker truck to help with the water supply.



Chief Pokorny said they used the tankers initially while a crew ran hoses to the dry hydrant in front of the transfer station, about 1,000 feet away.

“I wanted as much water on the scene as possible,” especially since he originally thought there might be people trapped in the house, the chief said.

“Water was not an issue. We had plenty,” he said.

The fire was brought under control within an hour of the fire department’s arrival. There was heavy smoke and fire damage to about one-half to two-thirds of the house; some areas that were not burned were damaged just from proximity to the intense heat, the chief said. Firefighters were able to keep the fire from spreading to some parts of the house, though.

Chief Pokorny, acting in his capacity as fire marshal, called the state fire marshal’s office to help investigate the cause. “They sent four guys, and we were there until about 4 a.m.,” Chief Pokorny said.

While the worst damage was in the kitchen area and the upstairs master bedroom area, he said the fire’s origin and cause is still under investigation.

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“We have some ideas, but we’re still working on it,” Chief Pokorny said. He expects there will be some answers by the end of this week.