



Saint Paul Fire Department
645 Randolph Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55102
(651) 224-7811

Investigation Report

Case

Case Details

SPFD221004045298	Tweed, Joshua	Closed	22-185-533
Case Number	Lead Investigator	Status	Name
Confidential	Incendiary	Incendiary (Intentional)	
Confidentiality	Disposition	Fire Cause	
10/04/2022	09:23		
Start Date	Start Time	End Date	End Time
Saint Paul Fire Department		Saint Paul Police Department	
Primary Fire Department	Secondary Fire Department	Law Enforcement	

Case Narrative

The fire department was called to the report of a fire in a tuck under garage. Firefighters arrived and found a small one and a half-story single family wood framed dwelling with smoke and flames coming from the open service door and the overhead garage door opening. The overhead door was melted at the top and flames were venting. Firefighters evacuated the structure, extinguished the fire and conducted overhaul.

Investigation and interviews on the scene revealed one of the occupants had recently taken out some trash twenty minutes prior to the fire starting. He distinctly, remembers placing a brick at the base of the service door to the garage to hold it closed, as the door knob does not latch properly.

Twenty minutes later he smelled something burning, possibly plastic, and went outside to investigate. He saw that the brick was moved and looked inside the garage and saw flames in the middle of the garage.

He then went up inside the house, evacuated the occupants and called 911.

Motion-activated camera was located and an image of a woman was retrieved with a time stamp of 0916, at or around the time of the fire.

Police were called to the scene and conducted interviews and collected the image.

A vehicle in the driveway, at the time of the fire, sustained heat damage also.

Case Background

Case Synopsis

This report is based on presently known and available facts, data, and information.

Investigation Comments

Fire

Ignition Sequence

Incendiary (Intentional)	Vehicle storage area; garage, carport		
Fire Cause	Area of Origin	Equipment Power Source	Equipment Portability
Area of Origin Comments			
Flame/torch used for lighting		Multiple types of material	
Heat Source		Material Ignited	
Equipment Involved In Ignition	Equipment Make	Equipment Model	Equipment Serial Number

Fire and Smoke Spread Information

Confined to building of origin	
Fire Spread Material	Fire Spread Avenue
Smoke Spread Material	Smoke Spread Avenue
Fire Comments	

Weather

		6	Southeast
Visibility	Relative Humidity (%)	Wind Speed (Mph)	Wind Direction
62.0	0	No	
Temperature (Fahrenheit)	Precipitation	Lightning	Information Obtained From Weather
Clear skies.			
Weather Comments			

Property Details (1 of 2)

Property

Name

621 Bidwell Street

Address

Apt/Suite/Room

Saint Paul

Ramsey County

Minnesota

55107

City

County

State

Postal Code

\$166,900.00

\$11,000.00

\$62,000.00

Pre Fire Value

Content Loss Value

Structure Loss Value

Property Description

Area

Structure

Urban

Area Type

Area Description

Area Quality

Structure

1 or 2 family dwelling		Occupied		
Property Use		Structure Occupancy		
	Yes	Operating Properly		
Alarm Type	Smoke Detector Present	Smoke Detector Performance		
None				
Sprinkler Standpipes		Sprinkler Standpipes Performance		
62		49	1	
Structure Length (Ft)	Structure Height (Ft)	Structure Width (Ft)	Number Of Stories	Number Of Units
Wood Frame	Type V	StructureMaterial_Wood		
Construction Type		Structure Type		Structure Material
Basement	Vinyl	Pitched	Asphalt	
Foundation	Exterior Covering	Roof Type	Roof Material	

Interior examination began in the basement. Light smoke conditions were present. The appliances were noted to be in working order with no damage. No fire, heat or smoke damage was observed in the basement area.

The kitchen area of the first floor was examined with no fire, heat or smoke damage. The stove was not damaged and no indication of the cooking at the time of fire. Control knobs for the stove and oven were in the 'off' position. All appliance were undamaged and working properly. Carbon Monoxide detector was located on the wall of the kitchen. Unknown if this was alarming at the time of the fire. A smoke detector was also located on the ceiling. Unknown if this was the detector witnesses state they heard alarming.

The bathroom located off the kitchen showed no signs of fire, heat or smoke damage.

Moving to the first floor bedroom, light haze of smoke was observed with no fire, heat or smoke damage to the walls or ceiling.

Moving to the living room area located above the garage and facing East, smoke damage was observed on the North, South and West walls, beginning at approximately 5 1/2 feet and progressing upwards to the ceiling. Smoke damage to the ceiling was apparent. Smoke damage to the East wall above the bay window. Window and casement were removed by fire personnel.

Window air conditioner was located on the North wall. The unit was plugged into a nearby outlet. No damage was observed to the air conditioner nor the plug.

The second floor bedroom was examined next. No smoke, fire or heat damage was observed. The small access door to the attic space was removed by fire department personnel.

The attic space above the living room was examined next. Light smoke conditions were observed. No damage was observed to the rafters, collar beam nor roof sheathing.

Moving to the garage area, this is where the most significant damage occurred to the structure and the area of origin. Fire began in the center of the garage floor area and traveled upward and outward. A heavy fuel load was observed in the garage area including: multiple wooden pallets and bags of clothing and consumables. VOC detector was used to monitor for accelerants. Elevated levels were recorded above normal atmospheric conditions. No collectable material samples were observed due to the possible consumption by the heat of the fire.

Heat and smoke damage was observed on the concrete block walls of the garage. The electrical panel was located in the Southwest corner of the garage and heat damage was observed to the connections. Insulation to the electrical wires entering the panel were consumed and bare wire was observed. Electrical outlet beneath panel suffered heat damage. No appliances were connected to any of the outlets in the garage area. The main power to the panel was switched to the 'off' position by fire personnel. Number 4, 10 and 12 breakers appeared to have been in the 'tripped'

position.

Fire damage was observed to the floor joist directly above the fires origin approximately 15 feet from the back wall of the garage.

Fire and heat damage to the header above the garage door opening.

Interior Exam

The structure is a one-story single family, wood framed home with a two-car tucked under garage. The front of the address faces East and runs East to West. The home has vinyl siding.

Examination of the West facing elevation showed no sign of fire, heat or smoke damage.

Moving to the South facing elevation, the electrical meter was located and appears in working order with no damage noted. Smoke damage was observed at the top of the East end of the siding with smoke damage three feet in length on the soffit starting from the East end and moving towards the West, decreasing in intensity.

The North facing elevation has two exterior entrance doors. The first enters the living room area on the East side of the first floor. The second enters into the kitchen area. The second exterior door to the West, was forced open during firefighting operations. The gas meter was located on this side of the exterior with no damage noted and it appeared in working order. Gas meter was secured by fire department and left in the 'off' position. Light smoke was visible venting out the eaves. Smoke damage was observed on the soffits and facia, with more damage being seen to the East. Fire damage was evident on the North side near the top of the East corner, melting the vinyl siding and charring the wooden wallboard.

Moving to the East facing elevation where the most significant damage to the exterior took place, the fire moved from the garage interior to the exterior by venting out the open service door. Deep charring to the service door frame was observed on the upper two thirds. Fire damage to the vinyl siding on the entire East side with dropdown observed. The metal garage door failed due to heat and flame impingement. The door failed at the top and folded down on itself allowing flame spread to the exterior siding. Melting of the awning to the bay window was observed. The window were not compromised prior to the fire departments arrival. Fire and heat damage to the soffits and facia with mass loss. Charring of the wallboard concentrated directly above the garage door opening.

Smoke was seen venting out the attic vents.

I portable fire pit was located in the yard on the North facing elevation. No signs of recent fire activity.

Exterior Exam

Alarm and Security Services

None

Yes

Sprinkler Standpipes

Smoke Detectors Present

Smoke Detector Locations

Fire Suppression

Closed And Unlocked

Closed And Locked

Doors

Windows

Other Entrances

Alarm Protection/Security Comments

Utilities

Electrical Status		Electrical Entrance	
	Natural	Xcel Energy	
Fuel Status	Fuel Type	Fuel Company	
		City of Saint Paul Municipal Water	
Water Status		Water Company	
Telephone Status			
Utility Comments			

Insurance Information (1 of 1)

Progressive		
Company	Claim Number	Policy Number
Effective Date	Expiration Date	
Maximum Coverage For Structure Loss	Maximum Coverage For Content Loss	
Insurance Comments		

Property Details (2 of 2)

Property

2010 Chevrolet Malibu			
Name			
621 Bidwell Street (Vehicle Exposure)			
Address		Apt/Suite/Room	
Saint Paul	Ramsey County	Minnesota	55107
City	County	State	Postal Code
\$3,000.00	0	\$3,000.00	
Pre Fire Value	Content Loss Value	Structure Loss Value	
Property Description			

Area

Vehicle	Urban	
Area Type	Area Description	Area Quality

Structure

			Unoccupied	
Property Use			Structure Occupancy	
		N/A		
Alarm Type		Smoke Detector Present	Smoke Detector Performance	
None				
Sprinkler Standpipes		Sprinkler Standpipes Performance		
Structure Length (Ft)	Structure Height (Ft)	Structure Width (Ft)	Number Of Stories	Number Of Units
	Other (Add more in Comments)			
Construction Type		Structure Type	Structure Material	
Foundation	Exterior Covering	Roof Type	Roof Material	
Interior Exam				
Vehicle fire due to exposure of garage fire. Description of fire damage in Motor Vehicle property.				
Exterior Exam				

Alarm and Security Services

None	N/A		
Sprinkler Standpipes	Smoke Detectors Present	Smoke Detector Locations	Fire Suppression
Doors	Windows	Other Entrances	
Alarm Protection/Security Comments			

Utilities

Electrical Status		Electrical Entrance	
	Natural	Xcel Energy	
Fuel Status	Fuel Type	Fuel Company	
		City of Saint Paul Municipal Water	
Water Status		Water Company	
Telephone Status			
Utility Comments			

Insurance Information (1 of 1)

Progressive		
Company	Claim Number	Policy Number
Effective Date	Expiration Date	
Maximum Coverage For Structure Loss	Maximum Coverage For Content Loss	
Insurance Comments		

Motor Vehicle (1 of 1)

Vehicle Description

2010	Chevrolet	Malibu Lt	Gray
Year	Make	Model	Color
BSM 470	Minnesota	1G1ZC5E0XA4122520	
License Plate Number	License Plate State	Vin	

Owner

Jennifer Williams	(763)-443-7908		
Owner Name	Owner Phone		
621 Bidwell Street			
Owner Street 1	Owner Street 2		
Saint Paul	Minnesota	55107	
Owner City	Owner State	Owner Postal Code	

Operator

Operator Name	Operator Phone		
Operator Street 1	Operator Street 2		
Operator City	Operator State	Operator Postal Code	

Exterior

	Yes		
Exterior Prior Damage	Exterior Fire Damage	Tires / Wheels	Parts Missing

Fuel System

			Gasoline
Fuel System Type	Fuel System Prior Damage	Fuel System Fire Damage	Fuel Type
	Present		
Condition Of Tank	Filler Cap Condition	Fuel Line Condition	

Engine Compartment

		No	
Engine Prior Damage		Engine Fire Damage	
Fluid Level Oil	Fluid Level Transmission	Fluid Level Radiator	Fluid Level Other

Interior

	No		
Interior Prior Damage	Interior Fire Damage	Ignition System	Key In Ignition
No		130000	
Personal Contents Missing	Accessories Missing	Odometer Reading	Service Sticker Information

Security

	Yes	Open
Alarm Present	Doors / Trunk Locked	Window Position

Origin / Ignition Sequence

Vehicle storage area; garage, carport	Conducted heat from another fire	Plastic
Area of Origin	Heat Source	Material Ignited
Exposure fire		
Ignition Factor		

Motor Vehicle Comments

Examination of the exterior of the vehicle found that the fire and heat damage was most significant on the front bumper and grill area of the vehicle.

Flames from the garage fire impinged on the vehicle located in the driveway causing fire damage to the front bumper and grill.

Damage to the hood of the vehicle was observed.

Heat damage to the right and left front quarter panel was observed with the heaviest toward the front of the vehicle. Melting of the vehicles headlights was observed.

Smoke damage and staining of the exterior windshield.

Examination of the interior of the vehicle found no fire, heat or smoke damage.

Witness Statement

Porter	Michael	W.
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
Occupant		
Type	Employer	
Interviewed Date	Interviewed By	Interviewed By Other
621 Bidwell Street		
Street 1	Street 2	
Saint Paul	Minnesota	55107
City	State	PostalCode
White	12/13/1985	
Race	Date of Birth	Driver's Liscense Number

Q: Can you tell me how came to be aware of the fire today?

A: I had just come out of my room, I walked in the living room and noticed a plastic burning smell. I looked around in the living room where she [Jennifer] was sitting at her desk, she wasn't aware of it. [the smell]

- I looked out at the fire pit. That wasn't burning.

- I ran out to the driveway, where I noticed smoke coming from the garage service door.

- I also noticed the brick, that I had placed there twenty-minutes ago, wasn't there.

Q: Was the overhead door closed at the time?

A: Yes.

- I walked up to the door and looked inside, and there were flames like, dead center in the garage where there were a couple of baby strollers. Those were on fire.

- I ran back inside and got everybody out of the house.

- I then called 911

Q: When was the last time that you were in the garage?

A: Literally, twenty minutes prior to that.

- I brought out a bag of trash, I threw it at the end of the driveway.

- I picked some random things that were outside the garage and put them inside the garage. When I was finished, I shut the side door and I put a brick in front of it because, the doorknob is broken and doesn't latch shut.

Q: The door opens outward?

A: Yes.

- When I came back the brick was moved.

Q: When you came down the second time, was the door to the garage open at the time?

A: Yes.

Q: How long have you been living here?

A: About six months.

Q: You have a camera facing the garage, and a photo of an individual by the garage. Does this person look familiar?

A: Yes, she goes by the name of Passion.

Q: Do you know how old this person would be?

A: Between 20-25 years old.

Q: What nationality would you describe them as?

A: Black.

Q: How tall would you say she is?

A: About 5' tall, I'm 6' so about a foot shorter than me.

Witness Statement Comments

Witness Statement (2 of 3)

Witness Statement

Leighmaskry	Amanda	
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
Occupant		
Type	Employer	
Interviewed Date	Interviewed By	Interviewed By Other
621 Bidwell Street		
Street 1	Street 2	
Saint Paul	Minnesota	55107
City	State	PostalCode
White	09/27/1988	
Race	Date of Birth	Driver's Liscense Number

Q: Can you tell my how you were alerted of the fire today?

A: I was woken up by Jen. [Jennifer- Owner]

- She said the garage was on fire.

Q: When you came out, did you see the fire in the garage?

A: I came out and saw a lot of fire

Q: Was the overhead garage door open or shut?

A: It was shut.

Q: Did you see anyone around the area when you came out?

A: No, I did not.

Q: Did you hear any smoke detectors sounding in the house?

A: Yes.

Witness Statement Comments

Witness Statement

Williams	Jennifer	Lynnea
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
Owner		
Type	Employer	
Interviewed Date	Interviewed By	Interviewed By Other
621 Bidwell Street		
Street 1	Street 2	
Saint Paul	Minnesota	55107
City	State	PostalCode
White	07/23/1984	
Race	Date of Birth	Driver's Liscense Number

Q: How long have you lived at this home?

A: Since 2016.

Q: Can you tell me the name of your insurance provider?

A: Progressive.

Q: When was the last time that you were in the garage?

A: The day before yesterday.

Q: What do you store in the garage?

A: I have pallets in there for my crafting. A snow blower is in there.

Q: How were you alerted that there was a fire here today?

A: Mike alerted me. [Michael Porter]

Q: At the time was there smoke alarms sounding?

A: No. I was working at the time and he went outside.

Q: When you came outside, did you see anyone around?

A: I did not see anyone outside. Michael has a photo from the camera of the person who did this.

Q: Do you know of anyone who might have done this?

A: Passion [Galvin. Presumed last name remembered later]. She is not allowed on the property.

Q: Did she used to live here?

A: No, she is a friend of an old roommate.

Witness Statement Comments

Conclusion

Case Conclusion

After examination of the fire scene, observation of fire patterns of both movement and intensity, interviews conducted and surveillance footage, it is my opinion the fire began in the tuck-under garage. The area of origin was the middle of the garage floor. The first fuel/material ignited was most likely ordinary combustibles stored in the garage. The ignition source was most likely a piloted open flame. The oxidant was normal atmospheric air. The action that brought these items together was an intentional human act. The classification of fire cause is incendiary. This concludes my investigation and report.

Technical Review on 10-18-2022 by Interim Investigator Captain Ben Schenck

Signature

Tweed, Joshua

Lead Investigator

Signature

Date Submitted

Document Attachment List

Photo Log