

Wood stove ashes spark blaze in Bend home

by Cheryl McDermott

Although the fire was extinguished within a few minutes, over \$10,000 in damage was done to a house and vehicle in northwest Bend when improperly discarded ashes from a wood stove ignited, fire officials reported.

Over a dozen firefighters with Bend Fire responded to 236 NW St. Helens Place, a home owned by Matt Calanchini and occupied by Rachelle Templin, about 12:20 a.m. on Sunday morning. They found the rear of the home ablaze and quickly extinguished the fire.

An alert neighbor had already spotted the fire and alerted the occupant, who safely evacuated prior to the arrival of the fire crews. There were no injuries reported.

According to Battalion Chief Dave Howe, there was about \$10,000 in damage to the exterior of the home that is valued at \$225,000. Howe also estimated \$500 in damage to contents, and \$3,500 in damage to a pickup truck.

Investigators determined that the fire was caused by wood stove ashes that were placed in a trash bag next to the house. The chief reminded all residents of safety precautions when dealing with ashes. "Place wood stove ashes in a non-combustible container and leave them outside, away from anything that can burn, for a week," he said.

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