

Cigarette ashes spark garage fire in NE Bend home

by Cheryl McDermott

Improperly discarded cigarette ashes dumped into a garbage can in the garage of a northeast Bend home Saturday night was likely the cause of a blaze that caused \$20,000 in damage, fire officials reported.

A dozen firefighters responded to the two-story home of Lawrence Asplind at 20770 Amber Way about 8:20 p.m. May 5, said Bend Fire Battalion Chief Bob Madden.

Upon arrival, heavy smoke was coming from an attached garage, and a car and motorcycle sustained smoke and heat damage. The blaze, contained to the garage, caused heavy heat and smoke damage in the garage area and minor smoke damage to the home's interior, Madden said.

The investigation determined that improperly discarded cigarette ashes ignited the fire.

The battalion chief estimated \$10,000 in damage to the \$200,000 structure, an additional \$8,000 damage to the home's contents, and \$2,000 damage to the vehicles.

The home's three occupants safely evacuated the home, although the owner suffered from mild smoke inhalation. His condition was evaluated at the scene and hospitalization was not required.

Madden reminded smokers to exercise caution when making sure ashes are cold before emptying ashtrays.

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