

August 21, 2018

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**Fire destroys home in south end of Campbell River**

A fire displaced a family of four on Sunday, Aug. 19 and damaged a second home next door.

Shortly after 12:30 p.m. Aug 19<sup>th</sup>, the City of Campbell River Fire Department responded to a report of house on fire on Joanne Drive in the Willow Point area.

*“On arrival, crews were met with extreme fire conditions from the two-storey residential home. The home was fully involved in fire when the initial fire crew of four firefighters from the downtown fire station arrived,”* says fire chief Thomas Doherty. *“Firefighters quickly focused on containing the fire from spreading to neighbouring homes. One neighbour’s home did suffer damage from the radiant heat from the fire, however firefighters were able to stop the spread of fire to the second home.”*

Two occupants were in the home at the time of the fire and were able to escape uninjured. However, a family kitten is missing.

*“Newer, modern construction materials burn faster, which has changed fire dynamics,”* Doherty explains. *“Evidence-based data show that where it used to take between eight and 14 minutes for a fire to grow and reach the point of flashover and igniting other material, we are now seeing rapid fire growth and flashover, in as little as two to three minutes from ignition. This fire was an example of the changing fire dynamics of newer home construction materials and the importance of early detection, early notification to the fire department and a quick response time from the fire department.”*

Multiple 911 calls were received in the Fire Dispatch Centre, which is located in the No. 1 Fire Hall. Smoke could be seen across the city and as far away as Quadra Island.

*“The highly visible fire created traffic challenges along Joanne Drive as many curious onlookers were attempting to drive through the area to catch a glimpse of the fire,”* Doherty adds. *“There was a significant amount of traffic and vehicles parking on both sides of the street, which created additional challenges for emergency crews.”*

Emergency Support Services were called to the scene to assist the displaced occupants and provide support for the next 72 hours.

The cause of the fire is under investigation, but does not appear suspicious. Damage estimate is not yet available.

Firefighters would like to thank RCMP and BC Ambulance Service for their assistance as well as the neighbourhood community for the support provided to those affected by the fire.

*“I cannot stress enough the importance for people to have working smoke alarms in their home,”* Doherty emphasizes. *“The early detection from a smoke alarm may save your life when seconds count.”*

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