

News Release

Date: December 17, 2009

Contact: Dawn Johnson, Public Information Officer

Water Pipe Catches Fire

A drained plastic water pipe and a technique to prevent that pipe from freezing led to a house fire just before 8:00 a.m. today. Clark County Fire District 6 crews were called to the home on NW Bassel Road at 7:57am. District 6 sent 3 engines, an air rig and the rehab bus to the fire. Vancouver Fire Department also responded with an engine. When crews arrived they could see flames and smoke. All of the people inside the home had been evacuated and were uninjured.

An investigator with the Clark County Fire Marshall's Office says the source of the fire was heat tape that was being used to prevent the pipe from freezing. The home's residents had drained the pipe the night before because it was leaking but then neglected to unplug the heat tape. Without the water to keep the flexible plastic material cool, the pipe overheated and eventually caught fire. Most of the fire damage was in the crawl space beneath the home and on its exterior. The total damage to the home and its contents is estimated at \$15,000. Red Cross was called to the home for assistance but they were cancelled per the family's request.

If you plan on putting heat tape on your pipes please make sure that it is properly installed and that there is water in the pipe.

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