

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief John R. Batiste



Office of the State Fire Marshal *Michael G. Matlick, State Fire Marshal*

Captain Jeff DeVere
Government and Media Relations
(360)596-4011 – office
(360)596-4015 – fax
<http://www.wsp.wa.gov>

*****For Immediate Release*****

September 4, 2009

Contact: Deputy State Fire Marshal Karen Jones
Office (360) 596-3916, Cell (360) 951-5827

Fire Sprinklers Save Lives

On August 28, 2009, at approximately 3:13 a.m. a fire occurred at Regency at the Park Nursing Home in College Place, Washington. The fire occurred under a roof extension from the main building that formed a patio area in the enclosed courtyard of the facility. The origin of the fire was in a plastic trash can which was adjacent to a supporting column for the roof.

The fire was initially reported to 911 dispatchers by nursing home staff. Within seconds the sprinkler head went off and the alarm system was activated. Due to the quick action of the staff, the fire department was on its way.

A single sprinkler head activated and contained the fire until the arrival of College Place Fire Department who then completed extinguishment with the use of a portable fire extinguisher. There was minimal damage thanks to the sprinkler head containing the fire. The administrator for the facility advised that repair cost to the post was less than \$100.00. The probable cause was discarded smoking materials. The facility is a non-smoking facility and has a smoking policy that permits smoking only in designated areas outside the building.

State Fire Marshal Michael Matlick reports “Smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths in Washington State. Fires can double in size in just minutes. Had this fire gone undetected or if the area had not been protected by a sprinkler system it may have spread causing a greater potential for loss of life and much more damage to the building. Fortunately, the quick action of the staff and the activation of the fire sprinkler and alarm systems notified emergency responders without delay.”

For additional fire safety tips visit the Washington State Patrol – Office of the State Fire Marshal web page at www.wsp.wa.gov or contact your local fire department.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington State's firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.

PREVENT FIRES
IT'S YOUR JOB!

###