

NORTH SHORE FIRE/RESCUE

Media Release

March 30, 2019

For Immediate Release:

Bayside, WI: North Shore Fire/Rescue and the Bayside Police Department were dispatched to a report of an apartment building fire at 9009 N. White Oak Lane at 12:15 AM on March 30, 2019. Initial 911 callers reported a significant fire in the building and it was rapidly growing. Bayside Police Officers on routine patrol arrived within four minutes of the call and reported a large body of fire on all three floors of the building and extending to the attic of the building.

9009 N. White Oak Lane is a 62-unit, 3 story apartment building that is part of a four-building complex that is set between N. Port Washington Rd and Interstate 43, just north of Brown Deer Road. The complex is set back approximately 1,200 feet from N. Port Washington Rd on a private drive.

Police Officers began evacuating the building, while firefighters who arrived shortly after the police, began a search and rescue operation in the building and started removing victims of the fire off of balconies on the second and third floors of the building. Initial reports from fire department responders indicate between fifteen and twenty occupants needed to be rescued from the balconies using ladders; and a large number of other occupants needed to be assisted in leaving the building by firefighters and police officers after being alerted to the fire because of smoke and fire conditions in the building.

Firefighter's efforts were mostly directed at removing occupants from the building in an effort to achieve our top priority as public safety providers: life safety. The incident commander upgraded the incident to a third-alarm rapidly to get additional resources to the scene.

Six occupants of the building were treated by firefighter/paramedics on scene for a variety of injuries. Two of those occupants were transported to area hospitals to be treated. One firefighter suffered a non-life-threatening injury while working on the fire scene and was transported to a local hospital and has since been treated and released.

The American Red Cross has established an emergency shelter for occupants at St. Eugene's Congregation and School located at 7600 N. Port Washington Rd in the Village of Fox Point. Red Cross is staffing the shelter twenty-four hours per day and expects to maintain the shelter for at least three to four days while they assist occupants in finding alternative housing.

Katz Properties, the building owner, is also assisting occupants in finding alternative housing and has already relocated several tenants to other buildings they own in the area.

North Shore Fire/Rescue and the Bayside Police Department requested assistance from the State of Wisconsin Division of Criminal Investigation-State Fire Marshal's Office to assist in determining the cause and origin of the fire. The Fire Marshal's Office has yet to determine a specific cause of the fire but does not believe the cause to be suspicious in nature.

A damage estimate is yet to be finalized, although damage to the building is significant.

The Department wishes to extend special appreciation to local businesses and residents that have offered donations and food for the displaced occupants and the emergency responders. All of these individuals and businesses definitely showed how strong and resilient the communities we serve are.

In addition, we would like to extend out sincere gratitude to three local fueling companies who answered the urgent call for assistance in the very early morning hours; and on a weekend. Their timely and customer-service focused responses kept our fire engines and trucks operating at the scene filled with fuel and ensured we were able to keep a very large and labor intensive water relay from hydrants on Port Washington Road in operation for nearly ten hours.

Likewise, we're grateful for the assistance of the Milwaukee Fire Bell Club who assisted with a large rehab operation and kept our emergency personnel fed and hydrated while they operated at this long duration event. Our appreciation also extends to the volunteers and staff of the American Red Cross for their Disaster Response efforts on the scene and at the shelter, the Milwaukee County transit team, who provided transportation of residents to the shelter, and the St. Eugene's community who opened their doors to provide shelter space.

North Shore Fire/Rescue was assisted on the scene and in responding to other calls for service that occurred simultaneously with this fire by fire departments from Milwaukee, West Allis, Wauwatosa, Mequon, Thiensville, Germantown, Menomonee Falls, Cedarburg, Grafton and Paratech Ambulance. The Milwaukee County Office of the Sheriff, and Fox Point, River Hills, Brown Deer and Glendale Police Departments assisted the Bayside Police on scene. Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management also assisted in procuring resources needed at the scene.

For more information regarding this release, please contact Captain Dan Tyk, the Public Information Officer for NSFR, at 414-357-0113 ext. 1513 or dtyk@nsfire.org.

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North Shore Fire/Rescue proudly serves the communities of: Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood and Whitefish Bay