



Bradly J. Bone/JACKSON HOLE DAILY

Teton County firefighters break down their gear after mopping up a structure fire Friday morning, which began Thursday night in a condo unit in The Aspens. While several of the residential units sustained fire, smoke and water damage, no one was injured.

Aspens condo burns

By CARA FROEDGE
JACKSON HOLE DAILY

More than 50 fire and emergency workers responded to a fire Thursday night that consumed the roof and top floor of a condominium building in The Aspens.

Mike Moyer, battalion chief, said he didn't know what started the fire at 4450 Berry Drive. It likely erupted in a condo on the top floor of the north end of the building in the Berry Patch, he said. The structure, known as the Strawberry building, was comprised of eight condos.

The fire was first reported to Teton County Dispatch about 8:25 p.m.

Fire damaged about half the building while the remainder received considerable water damage, Moyer said.

Only one person, who witnesses said was a 16-year-old female, was inside any of the units. She ran downstairs from her

top-floor, end unit after fire personnel pounded on her door, Moyer said.

The initial attack involved more than 50 firefighters and emergency personnel from Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, the Teton Village Fire Department, Teton County Sheriff's Office and Wyoming Highway Patrol.

Sixteen vehicles were stationed at the scene.

Laura Lee, who lives in the Chokecherry building next door, said she ran outside before responders arrived. She said it smelled like someone burning wet wood but saw flames about 15 to 20 feet high.

By the time emergency personnel arrived 10 minutes later, the fire had engulfed the roof and upper floors of two condos. Lee said workers doused her building with water before turning their hoses on the burning building.

When Lee left at 10:30 p.m. for the evening, the flames were still raging, she

said.

Moyer said fire volunteers took shifts throughout the night battling the blaze. The building had a "cold roof" system, which gave the fire "more places to be," Moyer said.

At noon Friday the building was still smoking, and workers were putting out hot spots.

Seven vehicles remained on the scene, with puddles of water in the front of the building and bottom floors. Windows, in which mangled, melted shades were still hanging, had been blown out.

Moyer said he expected personnel to stay at the scene throughout Friday afternoon to ensure the fire was completely extinguished.

Leigh Hemphill, who owns a unit in the neighboring building, said the structures were constructed in the 1970s.

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HIGH

LOW

21

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"They're a fire trap," she said. "They're all wood, surrounded by pines."

The unit in which the fire is thought to have started was being renovated, witnesses said. The other

units, with the exception of the one that had to be evacuated, were all short-term rentals.

According to the Teton County clerk's geographic information system, the units are owned by people from Rock Springs, Teton Village and Jackson as well as California and Georgia.

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