

December 15, 2017

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### **Campbell River firefighters save multi-family townhouse complex**

A fire displaced a family of three and sent one person to hospital for smoke inhalation treatment.

Shortly after 1 p.m. Dec. 13, Campbell River Fire Department responded to a report of smoke coming from a unit at 678-7<sup>th</sup>Ave.

*“On arrival, crews confirmed heavy black smoke and fire coming from a unit in a multi-family two-storey townhouse complex,”* says deputy fire chief Thomas Doherty. *“The quick response by fire crews, who arrived on scene in less than four minutes from the initial 911 call, minimized the damage and prevented the fire from spreading to the other nine units.”*

Doherty adds *“this a prime example of the importance of a working smoke alarm, which greatly increases the chance of escaping from a fire, and a quick response from the fire department to stop the fire in its early stages of growth. In this case, the activated smoke alarm alerted the person in the home to trouble, allowing him to escape. Even with that early warning, the person was transported to hospital by BC Ambulance Service for smoke inhalation.”*

Emergency Support Services were called to the scene to assist the displaced occupants.

Fire crews contained the fire to the living room area where the fire originated. Investigators determined the fire was caused by smoking material that ignited living room furniture.

*“Newer modern construction materials and home furnishing ignite and burn faster, which has changed fire dynamics,”* Doherty says. *“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 makes it all the more important for people to have working smoke alarms in their home, and to call 9-1-1 immediately so crews can respond as quickly as possible to a fire,”* Doherty adds.

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