

Fires Leave Two Dead and 11 Hurt

Source: [New York Times, 2004-01-12](#)

Author: ANDREA ELLIOTT

Intro:

cigarette smoldered on a **sofa**, igniting a fire yesterday morning that took the life of a 76-year-old woman and injured nine others at a Harlem building . . .

An unattended cigarette also caused a third fire yesterday, at 798 New Lots Avenue in Brooklyn, injuring two people,

Source: [\(Long Island, NY\) Newsday, 2004-05-23](#)

Author: JOHN DOYLE AND WIL CRUZ Staff Writers

Intro:

Fire marshals believe the blaze Friday night that killed four members of a Brooklyn family -- an infant, an 8-year-old girl and their grandparents -- started when one of the children in the apartment was playing with matches, and a crevice between two couches caught fire.

A Fire Department spokeswoman Saturday said that although a definitive cause had not been determined, the lead theory in the investigation at the Williamsburg building where the victims lived and died was that one of the children in the apartment at the time -- it was not clear which -- accidentally sparked an abutment in the living room furniture. The blaze spread to the couches.

Source: [WXYZ-TV/Channel 7 \(Southfield, MI\), 2004-05-14](#)

Author: Bill Proctor Web produced by Christine Lasek May 14, 2004

Intro:

A house fire in Ferndale killed the home's two occupants Friday morning. Fire officials say the home had no working smoke detectors. . . .

But even though the fire was small, it was still enough to kill 62-year-old James Jackson and his 85-year-old mother Alice. . . . the mattress in Alice Jackson's bedroom mostly likely smoldered for quite some time. There was also a pile of cigarettes, which may indicate a source for the fire.

Woman dies in early morning house fire

Source: [WZVN ABC7 \(Fort Myers, FL\), 2004-05-07](#)

Author: Reported by Kristen Nastasia Posted on: Friday, May 07, 2004

Intro:

Neighbors say the victim used to sit in her living room all the time smoking and having drinks.

Early Friday morning the habit likely killed her. Investigators believe a cigarette caught the **couch** on fire while she was on it.

"There's no evidence the victim tried to escape from the house," said McEvoy. "It's reported 30% of fire deaths are caused by cigarette smoking materials."

Discarded cigarette blamed in May blaze that killed three

Source: Dayton (OH) Daily News, 2004-03-17

Author: From staff and wire reports

Intro:

BOWLING GREEN * A discarded cigarette likely started a fire that swept through an apartment and killed three people, including a two-week-old baby, investigators said.

The fire in May appeared to be accidental and started in a **couch** in Mary Lou Wesley's second-floor apartment, . . .

The most probable cause was a cigarette fell into the cushion of the **couch**, inspector Keith Lorenzo said.

Careless use of smoking materials kills two men

Source: Beaver Dam (WI) Daily Citizen, 2004-02-23

Author: CITIZEN STAFF

Intro:

Two men died in a smoky house fire Saturday night, that according to fire officials may have started when a cigarette ignited a **couch**.

Fredrick Herman, 57, and Scott Roebuck, 45, died after the fire started in Herman's home at 119 Makenick St. Roebuck was staying with Herman, Sheriff Todd Nehls said.

Fire wakes residents at Midlands apartment complex

Source: WIS TV NBC (Columbia, SC), 2004-02-22

Intro:

A fire at a Midlands apartment complex woke up some residents early Sunday morning. . . .

One man was treated on the scene for burn wounds.

Officials say the fire was sparked by a resident who was smoking on his **couch**.

Smoking, oxygen cause of Wood River fire

Source: AP, 2004-02-20

Intro:

The fire that claimed the lives of two volunteer firefighters and an elderly woman started in a living room **couch**, a report from the state's fire marshal said.

It was a combination of smoking in the oxygen-rich house that started the fire, said state Deputy Fire Marshal Raymond Nance. . .

"The **couch** became wedged in the doorway, and he was unable to get back into the residence where his wife was," the report said.

Anna Carrig, 73, was killed in the fire. . . .

Fire Capts. Kenny Woitalewicz and Bobby Heminger also died of injuries they received while trying to rescue the woman from the burning home.

House Fire Burns Man, 73

Investigators: Smoking Materials Cause Fire

Source: KPRC-TV (Houston, TX), 2004-02-16

Intro:

A 73-year-old man received burns over 70 percent of his body when his house caught fire, officials said.

The Cy-Fair Fire Department was called to a blaze in the 8300 block of Wind Veil Drive in northwest Harris County around 11 p.m. Sunday. . . .

Fire officials said the blaze originated on the living room **couch**, probably by smoking materials.

Lack of smoke detectors blamed for Amity fire deaths

Source: KGW Northwest NewsChannel 8, 2004-02-05

Author: JIM PARKER, kgw.com Staff

Intro:

AMITY, Ore. -- The lack of smoke detectors is blamed for the deaths of a mother and son in a fire that swept through the Amity-area home they were visiting, fire officials said Wednesday. . . .

Authorities identified the victims of Tuesday morning's fire as 36-year old Lisa Thompson and her 2-year old son, Israel. . . .

Investigators with the Oregon State Police and the State Fire Marshall's Office believe the fire probably ignited in a living room **couch**. Ashtrays were found near the **couch** and authorities said careless smoking was a possibility.

Woman dies in fire

Blaze destroys apartment on Chestnut Street

Source: Coshocton (OH) Tribune, 2004-01-31

Author: CARY ASHBY Staff Writer

Intro:

Brenda Chatman, 37, was found in the kitchen when firefighters searched the building, said Coshocton City Fire Chief Michael Layton. . . .

An investigation by the Coshocton City Fire Department and Ohio State Fire Marshall's Office determined the fire started with discarded smoking material in the living room **couch** and spread to the rest of the apartment.

Smoke Inhalation Identified as Cause of Death For Sykesville Man

Source: [WJLA-TV Ch. 7 \(Washington, DC\), 2004-01-12](#)

Intro:

Fire officials say an autopsy reveals that a Sykesville man killed in his home Sunday died of smoke inhalation.

The State Marshal's Office says 59 year old Richard Goldsborough apparently nodded off while smoking, and a cigarette ignited his **couch**.

Woman trapped in fire dies

Source: [Pawtucket \(RI\) Times, 2003-12-30](#)

Author: Kevin P. O'Connor

Intro:

PAWTUCKET -- In the moments before she was fatally injured, Marcelle Taylor struggled to escape the 1,000-degree air trapped in her home.

She almost made it to her door before collapsing.

Firefighters found her there, barely alive. Though they rescued her, it was only a temporary reprieve. Taylor died of injuries received Saturday inside her home at Fogarty Manor, 214 Roosevelt Ave. She died early Sunday, her 83rd birthday. . . .

"It appears smoking material ignited the **couch**," McLaughlin said. "She may have fallen asleep with a cigarette."

Lawsuit blames fire death on lack of smoke alarms

Source: [Sharon \(PA\) Herald, 2003-12-13](#)

Author: Sherris Moreira-Byers / Herald Staff Writer

Intro:

A lawsuit filed almost a year after a Grove City man died in a house fire blames the death on his apartment not meeting the safety code, including smoke alarms and a fire escape.

A state police fire marshal ruled in January that the fire was accidentally caused by the mother of the victim, 21-year-old Jason Gladd.

The blaze occurred early Dec. 30 at 635 S. Center St. when Theresa Donahey, 52, was lighting a cigarette. The tube to her oxygen machine caught fire, igniting a **couch**, according to fire marshal Kurt Kurtyka.

Woman dies in West Austin fire

Source: [Austin \(TX\) American-Statesman, 2003-07-29](#)

Author: Tony Plohetski AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Intro:

An Austin woman whose home firefighters visited Sunday to distribute information about the importance of working smoke detectors was killed early today when her home caught fire. . .

Investigators have determined that improperly discarded smoking materials, such as cigarettes, in a **couch** started the fire.

Victim of apartment fire dies

Source: North Adams (MA) Transcript, 2003-05-29

Author: Donna Roberts, North Adams Transcript

Intro:

The 83-year-old woman severely burned in a Tuesday night fire at the Ashland Street Apartments died Wednesday morning after being taken to the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. . .

The fire department, after investigating the scene, determined it was a burning cigarette that caused the **couch** and the walls surrounding it to go up in flames.

"They knew she smoked -- there were ash trays all over," said Acting Fire Lt. David Kennedy. "They ruled everything else out. What else could cause a **couch** to go up like that?"

Woman critically burned when cigarette sets **couch on fire**

Source: Long Beach (CA) Press-Telegram, 2003-04-29

Author: Paul Young, Staff writer

Intro:

Fire officials this morning were searching for the family of a woman who was critically burned when a cigarette apparently set her **couch** on fire.

Long Beach Fire Department Battalion Chief Steve Lewis said investigators have spoken with Pamela Mac Rae's neighbors in the 200 block of Neece Street, but have had no luck in finding her family. He described the woman as Caucasian with gray hair and a slight build. She is about 78 years old and approximately 5 feet, 6 inches tall.

Westminster fire kills 35-year-old

Source: AP, 2003-03-13

Author: The Associated Press

Intro:

Fire crews responded to the blaze around 3:30 a.m. and found the man in the doorway.

The 35-year-old man was rushed to a hospital but later died.

Authorities say early indications point to careless smoking as the reason for the blaze. Careless Smoking May Be Cause Of Deadly July 4 Blaze

Fire Killed Three Girls, Three Firefighters

Source: NBC 10 (Philadelphia, PA), 2003-03-11

Intro:

A father's careless smoking likely caused a fire that killed his three daughters and three firefighters trying to rescue them, but there isn't enough evidence to prove it, a prosecutor said Monday.

Camden County Prosecutor Vincent J. Sarubbi said that even if authorities could find enough evidence to prove their theory, no charges would be filed because the state doesn't have a negligent homicide law.

After an eight-month investigation, Sarubbi said investigators believe Frank Slack was smoking and dropped his cigarette into a couch that smoldered slowly for about 30 minutes before igniting and starting the July 4 fire.

Investigators say they believe the man may have fallen asleep on the couch while smoking.

Investigators: Smoking materials ignited couch, caused fatal fire

Source: AP, 2003-02-20

Author: The Associated Press

Intro:

GREENVILLE, N.C. -- An apartment fire that killed a couple attending East Carolina University was started by smoking material igniting a couch, investigators said.

Caroline Virginia Allen, 18, a freshman from Raleigh, and her boyfriend, Owen Francis Carr IV, 24, a sophomore from Fair Haven, Md., were found dead in Carr's apartment about 2:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Smoking materials may be to blame for fatal fire

Source: Chicago (IL) Daily Herald, 2003-02-18

Author: Marni Pyke Daily Herald Staff Writer

Intro:

Careless use of smoking materials probably triggered a fire that killed a 92-year-old Lisle woman and forced the evacuation of one floor of a senior housing complex, authorities said Monday.

The fire started on a couch in Dorothy Patterson's assisted-living apartment Saturday at The Devonshire, 1700 Robin Lane, Lisle-Woodridge Fire District officials said Monday.

Shelby resident badly injured in house fire

Source: Macomb (MI) Daily, 2003-01-16

Author: Jameson Cook, Macomb Daily Staff Writer

Intro:

A Shelby Township woman suffered burns and smoke inhalation in a Wednesday morning fire that severely damaged the interior of the home.

The woman, who fire officials would not identify, was in "grave condition" Wednesday afternoon after being flown by helicopter from William Beaumont Hospital in Troy to Detroit Receiving Hospital, said Fire Marshal Tom Alcini. . .

Although the investigation has not concluded, Alcini said it appears careless smoking or the use of candles caused the fire to ignite in a bottom-level bedroom, used as a "sitting" or "reading" room, Alcini said. A couch in the room was badly burned.

"She's a smoker, and there were several different varieties of candles in there," Alcini said.

Cigarette likely cause of fire that killed three

Source: Hoosier Times, 2003-01-15

Author: Associated Press

Intro:

TERRE HAUTE-- A weekend fire that killed three people was likely started by a cigarette, investigators say.

Firefighters found the bodies of twin 68-year-old sisters Mary Lou Busiere and Marian "Sue" Chrisman, along with Chrisman's 34-year-old son, William, after the fire Sunday night on the city's south side.

The fire apparently began in the arm of a **couch** on which Sue Chrisman's body was found, officials said.

Preliminary autopsy results indicated the woman apparently died of a heart attack before the fire started

Wheelchair-Bound Man Dies In Mobile Home Fire

Source: WESH NewsChannel 2 (Orlando, FL), 2002-12-18

Intro:

It happened at the Halifax Mobile Home Park off Ridgewood Avenue, in Port Orange. . . Firefighters quickly extinguished the blaze, but it was too late to save 47-year-old Roy Edward Davis. . .

Firefighters said they had been called to this home two weeks ago because Davis had fallen and couldn't get up. At the time, they said they noticed cigarette burns all over the home and warned Davis, who was a heavy smoker, to be careful with cigarettes.

Officials determined the cause of the fire was a cigarette, and the blaze started on a **couch**.

Man pleads guilty to 1988 fatal fire

Source: AP, 2002-12-07

Intro:

LOCKPORT, N.Y. (AP) _ A man who was playing with a cigarette lighter that started an apartment fire that killed a woman more than a decade ago has pleaded guilty to manslaughter. . .

Police said Talarico, DeCollibus and her boyfriend John Pyda had been drinking in a bar and in the apartment the night of the fire. When Pyda went to bed, DeCollibus remained with Talarico and eventually fell asleep. Talarico told police he was playing with a cigarette lighter when he set the **couch** on fire.

Cigarette likely ignited fire that killed 4 teens

Source: Chicago Sun-Times, 2002-10-15

Author: MAUREEN O'DONNELL / STAFF REPORTER

Intro:

Schaumburg's deadliest fire in 20 years started in a **couch**, possibly from smoking, and was an accident, village authorities said Monday. Four bodies, believed to be teenage boys from the northwest suburbs, were found in the rubble of the blaze Sunday at a home at 103 Staffire. . .

The youths, who perished from smoke inhalation and carbon monoxide poisoning, may have fallen asleep, as a cigarette smoldered in the **couch**, according to Schaumburg police Lt. Dennis Carroll and Deputy Fire Chief Terrence Simale.

caused by smoking destroys building in Coral Springs, several hurt

Source: (Ft. Lauderdale, FL) Sun-Sentinel, 2002-06-25

Author: Sallie James & Ray Lynch & Ardy Friedber

Intro:

Several people were injured early Tuesday morning after a fire blamed on smoking destroyed several apartments in a complex on the 11500 block of Northwest 44th Street, firefighters said.

The fire was called in at 1:56 a.m. By the time firefighters arrived four minutes later, the blaze was fully involved with heavy flame and thick smoke streaming from the building, said Fire Chief Donald Haupt Jr. . .

The cause of fire was blamed on smoking in a first-floor apartment. Haupt said a 74-year-old amputee was smoking a cigarette on a **couch**, then went to bed.

A smoke detector awoke him and three or four other people in the apartment a short time later, Haupt said. They discovered the **couch** on fire. They tried to put it out with ice water from the refrigerator in the kitchen.

Cigarettes blamed in blaze

Source: Biloxi (MS) Sun Herald, 2003-12-09

Author: MARY LOUISE MASON THE SUN HERALD

Intro:

OCEAN SPRINGS - A fire in the 13-story Villa Maria retirement home on Friday was caused by cigarettes, officials said.

According to Ocean Springs Fire Department reports, the apartment's occupant, Mary Greer, 84, was sleeping when a cigarette ignited an upholstered **sofa**.

3 Critically Burned In House Fire

Source: KSAT-12 (San Antonio, TX), 2003-03-11

Intro:

A man, a woman and a teenage boy were critically burned in a house fire Monday on the city's near Northwest Side. . . .

Fire officials said it appeared the fire started after a man who was smoking a cigarette on the **sofa** fell asleep.

Three Die In Arlington House Fire

Source: WJXT-Channel 4 (Jacksonville, FL), 2003-02-10

Intro:

Fire officials blame a cigarette that ignited a living room **sofa** for starting a blaze that killed three people in a home before dawn Sunday.

Killed in the blaze were Geneva Faye Dinkins and Jimmy Ray Dinkins, both 52, who had come over to watch a car race on television and spent the night, and Bobbie Wayne Harvey, 59. All died of smoke inhalation.

2-year-old injured in fire dies

Source: Kansas City (MO) Star, 2001-11-29

Author: KEVIN HOFFMANN - The Kansas City Star

Intro:

A 2-year-old Kansas City boy died Wednesday after he was taken off a life-support system that had kept him alive since he was pulled from a burning house.

DeMarco Bradley was at his home at 1601 E. 37th St. on Monday afternoon when the fire started. Jim Duddy, Kansas City's assistant fire marshal, said investigators traced the cause of the blaze to careless handling of smoking materials. The fire began in a **sofa** in the living room and quickly spread, Duddy said.

2 Die in Md. Fire, But Son Is Saved

Smoke Detectors Not Working

Source: The Washington Post, 2001-11-24

Author: Susan Levine / Washington Post Staff Writer; Page B01

Intro:

If Alex Santos hadn't decided late Thanksgiving night that he really was too tired for clubbing in the District, if he hadn't turned around and headed back to his parents' home to go to bed, the death toll on a modest street in Rockville yesterday might have been far worse.

Flames ignited by a cigarette in or near a couch spread through the basement recreation room on the other side of the duplex where Santos's family lives, officials said. Ronald Lee Mills Sr. and his wife, Tamala Sue Mills, sleeping in the basement, suffered severe smoke inhalation and could not be resuscitated. They are the fifth and sixth such fatalities in Montgomery County since August -- and not the first fire deaths in their extended family.

Still, nearly half a dozen other people also were in the one-story house when the **sofa** began burning sometime after midnight. Upstairs was Ronald Mills's son and father; next door, Santos's parents and a friend. Neither home apparently had a working smoke detector.

Man dies after fire destroys his home

N. Charleston man was probably asleep when blaze started, investigators say

Source: Charleston (SC) Post & Courier, 2001-07-01

Author: GLENN SMITH / (843) 937-5556 / gsmith@postandcourier.com.

Intro:

A 57-year-old man died Saturday after he was severely burned in a fire that destroyed his North Charleston home, authorities said.

Investigators suspect the man was asleep when the 11 a.m. fire started at his Alston Street home.

He managed to escape from the house, but he had been burned extensively, North Charleston Chief Fire Investigator Benjamin Norris said. . .

Investigators suspect Bradham fell asleep on a **sofa** in the living room with a lit cigarette, Norris said.

Cigarette lighter blamed in house fire

Source: [Tulsa World, 2000-08-06](#)

Author: AP Wire Service

Intro:

A **sofa** ignited with a cigarette lighter appears to have caused a house fire that killed a 5-year-old boy and his 2-year-old sister, authorities said Saturday.

Fraternity House Fire Victims Were Felled By Smoke

Source: [The Bergen \(NJ\) Record, 2000-04-10](#)

Author: The Associated Press

Intro:

Another Bloomsburg fraternity house fire killed five students on Oct. 21, 1994. A smoldering **sofa** was blamed for that blaze. Batteries had been taken out of smoke detectors in the Beta Sigma Delta house, a common practice during smoky parties. [THIS GRAPH ONLY]

Fire death victim identified

Source: [Cedartown \(GA\) Standard, 2004-04-22](#)

Author: LOWELL VICKERS, Standard Staff Writer

Intro:

Preliminary reports indicate Thursday's fatal residential fire in Rockmart was an accident, possibly caused by a cigarette.

The body of Patricia Ann Edgecomb, 52, was pulled from her burned apartment at 320 Hogue Ave. around 3:10 p.m. . .

Edgecomb was a smoker. Investigators believe a cigarette or "smoking materials," such a match or **lighter**, may have started the fire.

Boy, 5, severely burned in bed fire

*Albany-- Officials say youth set blaze while playing with a **lighter***

Source: [Albany \(NY\) Times-Union, 2004-04-20](#)

Author: BRUCE A. SCRUTON, Staff writer

Intro:

Five-year-old Lakeet Grady, whom neighbors described as a polite boy who liked to ride his bike, was listed in poor condition Monday at the Shriners' Hospital in Boston after being injured when a fire broke out in his Clinton Street home late Sunday, authorities said.

Grady was taken to the hospital with burns to his legs and feet, suffered when he set his mattress on fire while playing with a lighter, officials said.

Children Playing With Lighter Spark Deadly Apartment Fire

Investigators Say Bedding Ignited

Source: KHBS/KHOG (Fort Smith/Fayetteville, AR), 2004-02-24

Intro:

ROLAND, Okla. -- Children playing with a cigarette lighter resulted in the death of a 3-year-old girl early Monday afternoon in Roland, fire investigators said. . . .

Two children were playing with a cigarette lighter when bedding material was ignited.

A 3-year-old boy was rescued by adults, but flames hampered the rescue of the girl.
