

For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE UPDATE

June 11, 2018

Suspicious Fires at Apartment Complex

UPDATE:

On Monday, June 11, 2018 at 12:28 a.m., DeKalb Fire and Police personnel responded to 808 Ridge Drive for a report of a fire. A suspicious fire was located inside of a vacant apartment and extinguished by a resident of a building. Damage was minimal, no occupants were displaced, and no injuries occurred as a result of the fire. Police are investigating the possibility that the fire is related to the other recent incidents located at the same address. Police are urging residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity, regardless of how minor it appears. Anyone with information regarding this investigation is encouraged to contact the DeKalb Police Department at 815-748-8400, or Crime Stoppers at 815-895-3272. Crime Stoppers will pay a cash reward of up to \$1000 and you can remain anonymous.

On Wednesday, June 6, 2018 at 6:16 a.m., a fire in the residential apartment complex, located at 808 Ridge Drive, caused extensive damage. This fire left eight apartments uninhabitable due to fire and smoke damage, which remains under investigation and is also considered part of the following incident.

On the morning of Friday, June 8, 2018 at approximately 6:00 a.m., DeKalb Fire and Police personnel responded to the same building for a fire that was extinguished by a resident. No smoke, fire conditions, or evacuation were noted from the exterior by arriving fire units. The occupant stated the fire alarm sounded just before 6:00 a.m., and upon opening the door, witnessed a door mat on fire, extinguished the fire, and then called 911. Fire personnel inspected all areas of the building and identified multiple points of attempted ignition in other hallway locations.

While police and fire personnel were conducting their investigation into the fire on June 8, 2018, a second smoke alarm in another area of the building activated. The source of the alarm was another small fire with a point of origin in the hallway, which was promptly extinguished. The second fire is believed to have been ignited while police and fire personnel were present. The fire damage was limited to a hallway, there were no occupants displaced, and no injuries. A joint investigation is currently underway with DeKalb Fire, the State Fire Marshal, DeKalb Police, and the DeKalb County Major Case Squad.

To insure the safety of all rental property occupants, the City has worked proactively with many owners to support the installation of security camera systems to enhance the safety of their tenants. The

building at 808 Ridge is equipped with a security camera system, but the system has been inoperable since the property was acquired by Hunter Properties. For an extended period, the City has requested that Hunter Properties reactivate the on-site security cameras, as well as install cameras across their many residential properties in the City. Security camera systems are invaluable in preventing and solving crimes of this nature, as well as enhancing the safety of the residents. In the wake of these fires, Hunter's representatives will be working to implement security cameras at this building within the next several days. The City continues to advocate for the adoption of such cameras in all multi-unit residential buildings, for the safety of residents and members of the community.

Anyone with information regarding this investigation are encouraged to contact the DeKalb Police Department at 815-748-8400 or Crime Stoppers.

Contact: Deputy Chief John Petragallo
815.748.8421

The contents of this press release are based upon the best information available to the DeKalb Police Department. The statements regarding the conduct of any person identified above are allegations until affirmatively proven in court. All persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

