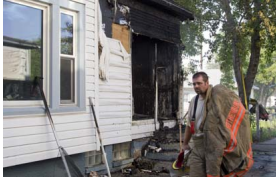


Elderly couple loses home to fire

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 28 June 2012 14:20 -



Pet dog perishes of smoke inhalation.

Called out on the hottest day of the summer so far, Gothenburg Volunteer fire fighters donned heavy gear to fight a house fire Wednesday.

Temperatures were well above 100 degrees when the crew arrived at the home of Harvey and Betty Wing, 218 Ninth St., about 6 p.m.

“The fire was already exposed (outside) of the back and the side of the house when we got there,” Ballmer said. “It got air and was going good.”

Before their arrival, the fire chief said neighbors had called in the fire and helped 80-year-old Harvey out of the home. His wife, Betty, and a younger relative also escaped unharmed. However a pet dog, later found near the front door, died of smoke inhalation, he said.

Ballmer described the house as totalled because of extensive heat and smoke damage throughout the house.

He attributed old wiring, that was overloaded, as the cause of the fire.

“There was too much demand than what the electrical system was set up for,” Ballmer said.

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FIREWORK SAFETY CRUCIAL

Fire fighters were called to two grass fires Wednesday—both caused by fireworks. "Vegetation is parched and conditions are ripe for fires," said fire chief Mark Ballmer. One of the blazes was west of Lake Helen while the other was in a residential area on 22nd Street, he said.

Ballmer said fireworks should be lit in a safe place, on concrete and under the supervision of parents. "And make sure they're out when you discard them," he said. He added that there were five fires Wednesday in an area served by the American Red Cross which includes Goshenboro.

Ballmer said firefighters took the elderly couple to a local motel to stay for a few days until more