



Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Department News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Electrical Failure Causes House Fire and Claims Woman's Life

December 9, 2008, 9:30 p.m. (ROANOKE COUNTY) – The Fire Marshal's office has determined that a failure of electrical wiring in the basement is the cause of a house fire that occurred this afternoon in southwest Roanoke County.

Roanoke County Fire and Rescue was dispatched to the 3400 block of Bunker Hill Drive about 2:15 p.m. for a reported structure fire. When fire crews arrived they found heavy smoke coming from a single story home. Initial reports from neighbors indicated an elderly couple might live in the home, but it was later determined that an older woman lived here alone.

Firefighters were unable to access the home through the front door because the floor was collapsing in the foyer area. Crews gained access through a side door and found a woman lying on the kitchen floor unconscious with moderate burns. CPR was performed on the woman and she was transported to a local hospital where she later died. The woman has been identified as 65 year old Hilda Patterson and her cause of death has been determined to be a result of smoke inhalation.

Crews were able to mark the fire under control in about a half hour. Most of the fire damage was caused to the floor joists between the basement and first floor where the fire started. There was also significant smoke damage to the entire home including a finished attic. Damage estimates are \$70,000 including the house and its contents.

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