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## **NEWS RELEASE - 2021-14**

**For Immediate Release: December 19, 2021**

**For Further Information, contact Chief Howard Rice, Jr. at 207-781-2610**

### **Falmouth Fire-EMS Responds to House Fire on Route 1**

On Saturday evening at 8:45 p.m. Falmouth Fire-EMS was dispatched to a report of flames coming from a wall inside a residence at 7 U.S. Route 1. Engine 2 and Ambulance 2 both responded immediately from Central Station with the on-duty crews while Engine 1, Tower 2, and Engine 4 were dispatched to the scene with call company crews. Engine 2 and Ambulance 2 both arrived on scene in under 6 minutes. The house was evacuated. The firefighters on Engine 2 entered the residence and found a small fire coming from the wall on the first floor, while the firefighters from Ambulance 2 checked the outside of the house and found fire coming out the outside wall adjacent to the chimney. The on-duty shift Lieutenant on Engine 2 upgraded the response to a Working Fire response, which brings all of Falmouth's units to the scene as well as a ladder company from Portland, a Rapid Intervention Team from Yarmouth, and mutual aid station coverage. Chief Howard Rice, Jr. arrived on scene three minutes after Engine 2 and took over command of the incident. Crews pulled a hose line to the side of the house and, using a ladder, were able to open up the side of the house with a saw and hand tools and extinguish the bulk of the fire coming out of the building. Meanwhile, the crews inside opened up the wall around the fireplace and used a water can to knock down the visible fire. Smoke was now building up around the walls and the fireplace and the hose line was brought inside the house and used to knock down more fire that was found.

Engine 1 arrived on scene at 8:59 p.m. and dropped a supply line from the nearest hydrant on Route 1 to Engine 2. Tower 2 arrived a minute later, but because of power lines it could not use the aerial ladder to elevate crews to the roof. Tower 2's crew went to the second floor to check for fire extension. Engine 4 was the next truck to arrive 5 minute later and hooked up to the hydrant and stood by to supply the water to Engine 2 if needed. Engine 4's crew assisted the crews on the second floor, using saws to open up the flooring to get to the fire that had burned up from the first floor.

Portland Ladder 4 then arrived on scene and replaced the Engine 2 and Ambulance 2 firefighters who needed to come out and change their air bottles. Ladder 4's crew continued to open up the walls to check for fire extension on the first floor. Tower 2's crew then used ground ladders to access the roof to check for any fire remaining in the chimney. The roof had approximately 3 inches of fresh snow as the crews made their way across the 2-story roof to inspect the inside of the chimney. The fire in the chimney was confirmed to be out and the crews safely returned to the ground.

The fire appeared to have started in the area above the fireplace. It extended up through the floor to a 2<sup>nd</sup> story bedroom and also extended through the outside wall. Quick actions by the first-arriving crews kept the fire from extending past the flooring on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and to other rooms on the first floor. Crews cut away flooring and walls to overhaul the fire area both inside and outside the house to ensure all fire was extinguished.

The house was occupied at the time of the fire. There were no injuries and a cat inside escaped injury. The fire was kept to one side of the house but there was damage to the inside and outside walls around the chimney.

Falmouth Police closed a section of Route 1 for the duration of the incident as hose lines were run across the road to the closest hydrant which was on the opposite side of Route 1 from the residence. Yarmouth Engine

82 responded to the scene to provide a Rapid Intervention Team and an engine company from Westbrook covered the Winn Road Fire Station while an engine company from Cumberland covered Central Station on Bucknam Road.

All units cleared the scene by 11:15 p.m.

End of release.

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