

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**City of Duluth - Fire Department**

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*For more information contact Kate Van Daele,  
Public Information Officer at 218-730-5309*

**DATE:** 11/21/2020

**SUBJECT:** Structure fire

**BY:** Assistant Chief Brent Consie

**NATURE OF INCIDENT:** Structure fire

**CASE NO.:**

**INCIDENT DATE:** 11/21/2020

**INCIDENT TIME:** 09:31 AM

**INCIDENT LOCATION:** 118 E 1st St

This morning at 9:31 AM, the Duluth Fire Department responded to the report of smoke coming from a building located at 118 East 1st Street. While en route to the call, dispatch informed units responding that witnesses reported fire coming from the building while other reports were that smoke was visible from Canal Park.

Duluth Fire arrived on scene and quickly began an offensive fire attack in an attempt to get ahead of the rapidly spreading flames. The building appeared unoccupied but units assigned to the rear of the building were ordered in to the basement level (after noted as the first level) accessed off of the alley, to search for potential victims. They reported the first level all clear and were then assigned to begin searching for a stairwell to the upper floors.

Number 1 Engine began extinguishing the flames on the street level of the building (after noted as the second level) off of First Street. 1 Tower was assigned to access the roof to cut holes in an attempt to ventilate the heat from the building so other units could begin a fire attack on the third level. One company was assigned to assess damage to the adjacent building located to the west of the fire building. No fire was reported in that building.

1 Tower cut a hole in the roof on the first street side of the building and then began working on a second hole toward the rear of the building. Due to a number of roofing layers, their advance was limited and they could not make a hole large enough to effectively vent the heat from the building. They were driven off of the roof due to rapidly deteriorating conditions and all interior units were withdrawn from the building.

Firefighters then switched to a defensive attack and ensured that fire would not spread to the adjacent building. Efforts were begun to then use aerial water streams to control the fire. Much of the roof eventually collapsed due to advanced fire conditions and limitations to access the spaces necessary to extinguish the flames.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. Any inquires about this incident should be directed to the Duluth Fire Department Fire Marshal's Office.

Damage estimates are set at \$1,000,000 for the building and contents.

Fire Companies from Headquarters, UMD, Lakeside and West Duluth responded to the scene. Mayo Clinic Ambulance, the Duluth Police Department, Duluth Public Works, Duluth Comfort Systems and Minnesota Power provided support as needed during the incident.

