



# NEWS RELEASE

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

*Dan Wurl  
Fire Chief*

**DATE:** *January 5, 2011*  
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## **Early Morning Blaze Claims Life**

**Date/Time:** **January 5, 2011, 6:20 a.m.**  
**Location:** **8200 block of Skyline Drive, Pinon Hills**  
**Incident:** **Structure Fire with fatality**

**Summary:** Firefighters responded to a reported structure fire in Pinon Hills. Upon their arrival, firefighters found fire coming from the windows and roof of the back bedroom. Not knowing whether there were occupants inside the residence, firefighters entered the smoke filled home to conduct a search and were unable to locate anyone. Firefighters attempted to extinguish the fire; however the fire had already moved into the attic and was quickly spreading throughout the home. Due to safety concerns, firefighters had to go into defensive mode and exit the home.

Shortly after, it was believed there may have been two adults and three children still inside the burning home. Firefighters quickly made their way back inside the home to conduct another search. While doing so, the roof collapsed, injuring two firefighters. Due to the heavy smoke and intensity of the fire, Firefighters were unable to locate any occupants. They did however locate a small Chihuahua dog and rescued it from the burning home.

Once the fire was extinguished, firefighters located a 35 year old female deceased inside the master bedroom where the fire is believed to have started.

It was later discovered that the male occupant was able to get his three children, ages ranging from 2 to 12 years, out of the home prior to firefighter arrival. After exiting the home with the children and realizing his wife was not behind him, he re-entered the home to try and locate her. Due to the intensity of the fire, he was forced to exit the home.

Both firefighters received moderate injuries and are expected to make a full recovery. The San Bernardino County Coroner's Office will determine the cause of death. The home was completely destroyed with damage estimates over \$300,000.

San Bernardino County Fire Investigators along with the Sheriff's Arson Bomb Unit are conducting the investigation. Although the investigation is ongoing, it is believed the cause of the fire was a portable space heater. Space heaters should always have a 3 foot clearance on all sides. Do not use old heaters and always check for frayed wiring.

Smoke detectors saved the lives of these three children and their father when they were awoken this morning by their smoke detector alarm. San Bernardino County Fire reminds citizens to have working smoke detectors in their home and test them routinely. Eighty-two percent of all fire deaths occur in the home and a working smoke alarm can reduce one's chances of dying in a fire by nearly a half. To learn more about fire alarms and escape route planning, visit our website at [www.sbcfire.org](http://www.sbcfire.org).

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