



CITY OF HARRISONBURG  
**FIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT**

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For Immediate Release:  
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## Structure Fire Displaces Family of Eight

HARRISONBURG, Va. – A city family has been displaced after a residential structure fire. Just after 7:00 pm on Friday April 26, 2024, Harrisonburg firefighters were called to the 700 block of Jefferson Street and found heavy smoke coming from a multiple family dwelling. Firefighters entered the structure, ensured all occupants had safely evacuated, and extinguished a fire in an upstairs bedroom. The home was occupied at the time of the fire by seven adults and one child who were able to safely escape along with a family pet. There were no injuries to civilians or firefighters, however the home did not have functioning smoke alarms. The HFD was assisted by units from Rockingham County Fire Rescue and the Harrisonburg Rescue Squad.



*Photo Credit: Courtesy of Harrisonburg Fire Department*

“The prompt discovery of the fire and calls to 9-1-1 avoided even more serious damage in this case,” said Fire Chief Matthew Tobia. “Functioning smoke alarms are critical in giving people time to escape when a fire is discovered. This could have easily been a much more serious incident if it had occurred during sleeping hours.”

Investigators have determined the fire to be accidental with the cause identified as an electrical malfunction due to an overloaded circuit and improper wiring. Preliminary damage has been set at \$25,000.00. The residents were offered assistance by the Red Cross but were able to temporarily relocate with other family. The Red Cross will continue to assist in finding long-term housing. The fire was placed under control within 30 minutes of dispatch.

Any resident needing assistance in evaluating their home for risks of fire can contact the HFD during normal business hours or stop by any city fire station. The HFD also provides and installs free smoke and carbon monoxide alarms for any city resident who needs them.

**The Harrisonburg Fire Department** is an ISO-Class II All-Hazards agency providing essential emergency and non-emergency life safety services to the public who live, work and travel in Harrisonburg. More information about the Fire Department is available on-line at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/fire](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/fire) or on Facebook®, Twitter® and Instagram®.

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to almost 56,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



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