



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

101 NORTH MAIN STREET  
HARRISONBURG, VA 22802  
OFFICE (540) 432-7703

For Immediate Release – March 7, 2026

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540-432-7703

## Smoke Alarm, Child Save Family of Five in House Fire

HARRISONBURG, Va. – A family of five was able to safely evacuate from their home this morning after a young family member alerted others to a fire.

Harrisonburg firefighters were dispatched to the 900 block of Virginia Ave at 4:30 a.m. Saturday, March 7, for a reported dwelling fire. Units found a single-family dwelling with large volumes of smoke coming from the basement windows and door, and firefighters were able to quickly locate and extinguish a serious fire in the basement.



*(Above) HFD responded to a house fire in the 900 block of Virginia Avenue this morning. No one was hurt in the fire.*

The home was occupied by two adults and three children at the time. A 12-year-old girl heard the single functioning smoke alarm sounding and awakened the rest of her family, allowing all of them, and several pets, to escape.

“This little girl saved her family this morning,” HFD Fire Chief Matthew Tobia said. “Coupled with a functioning smoke alarm, the life safety education programs that our Community Risk Reduction team delivers in our schools is critical. This incident highlights the indispensable role that our CRR team plays in saving lives.”

The Harrisonburg Fire Marshal office has determined the cause of the fire to be unintentional with the area of origin in a basement bedroom. Due to the extensive damage, they were not able to determine the exact cause of the fire, though two space heaters were located in the room of origin and a large quantity of combustible materials were also in the room. Preliminary damage estimates have been set at approximately \$75,000 to the home and contents.

The Harrisonburg Fire Department was assisted by personnel from the Harrisonburg Police Department, Rockingham County Fire Rescue and the Harrisonburg Rescue Squad. A total of 26 firefighters responded to the call.

Harrisonburg community members can contact HFD for a free home fire safety evaluation by calling (540) 432-7703 during business hours. HFD firefighters are available to install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms for free to anyone in the city and can be contacted via phone, social media or by visiting any City fire station.

**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 online at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/fire](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/fire).

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 56,879 people. Find more information about the City of Harrisonburg at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).

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