



CITY OF HARRISONBURG  
**FIRE  
DEPARTMENT**

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## Caution Urged After Deck Collapse in Harrisonburg Injures Several

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Harrisonburg officials are urging the community to be mindful of safety during social gatherings after a deck collapsed, injuring several, at a private residence Monday afternoon.

The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center began receiving calls at approximately 5:30 p.m. Aug. 18 concerning the collapse in the 300 block of Old South High Street. The Harrisonburg Fire Department and Harrisonburg Rescue Squad were immediately dispatched, with HFD Engine 4 arriving on location and confirming a deck collapse in the rear of a private residence with multiple people injured. The incident was upgraded to a mass-casualty incident due to the number of injuries, bringing additional ambulances and personnel from the city, Rockingham County and Augusta County to the scene.



*(Above)A deck connected to a Harrisonburg home collapsed on Monday afternoon, injuring several. Officials are urging community members to be mindful of safety when hosting events with large amounts of people attending.*

A total of five individuals were transported by ambulance to Sentara RMH with various non-life-threatening injuries. An unknown number of individuals who left the scene prior to HFD's arrival may have also been injured and sought treatment on their own. All patients who remained at the scene were identified, triaged and transported in under 30 minutes. A city building inspector reported to the scene and determined that the rest of the residential structure could be reoccupied.

“We are extremely relieved that there were no serious injuries at this incident,” HFD Chief Matthew Tobia said. “At the moment of collapse, the deck was unable to sustain the weight that was on it. Any time you are hosting a large amount of people in your home, or having guests on your deck, or placing people in or on any load-bearing structure, you need to be aware of the potential dangers of failure. Overcrowding areas should be avoided, and if individuals feel that they may be unsafe, they should leave.”

The Harrisonburg Fire Department was assisted by the Harrisonburg Rescue Squad, Rockingham County Fire Rescue, Augusta County Fire Rescue, the Harrisonburg Police Department, the James Madison University Police Department and the City of Harrisonburg Community Development Department's Building Official's Office.

**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) or on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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

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