

Cause of SLT house fire under investigation

Update: Feb. 20 5:49pm

No official cause has been determined in the Thursday night fire that destroyed a residence in South Lake Tahoe.

"We are curious" is how police Lt. Brian Williams put it to *Lake Tahoe News*. This is because police are "familiar" with the man who sustained severe burns to his face and hands. The name of the victim has not been released. He is being treated at UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento.

While the initial call came in as drug lab explosion, officers now do not believe that is the case.

Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News* that the occupant told first responders that he used the gas stove to light a cigarette, he walked away and something on or near the stove ignited.

Liberty Utilities did not find any leaks in the system or with the appliances, according to Meston.

The police department is in charge of the investigation of the fire at the two-story house on William Avenue that started about 9:30pm Feb. 19.

The six people who were living in the two-unit structure are not able to do so now because of the amount of damage. The upstairs is considered a total loss by the fire department, while the lower unit sustained considerable water damage. The property loss is estimated at \$350,000.

Also injured was a firefighter. He was treated for smoke inhalation.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*