



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 30, 2011

Case No. Portage Fire 11-255; Portage Police 11-1575

The Portage Fire Department, along with the Michigan State Police Fire Marshal, is investigating a fatal fire that occurred at the Timberwood Crossing apartment complex on Thomas Court. The fire was reported at 4:08 a.m. on Sunday, January 30. When Portage Fire and Police units arrived, a ground floor apartment in was fully engulfed. One occupant, 60-year-old Richard Olvitt of Portage, was pulled from the apartment by Portage Police Officer Eric Vesey. Both were transported to Bronson Hospital for smoke inhalation. Officer Vesey was treated and released, while Olvitt remained at Bronson.

The fire was quickly extinguished; however, a second occupant was found deceased in a bedroom. The deceased occupant's name is not being released until positive identification and notifications have been made. An autopsy is scheduled for Monday, January 31, 2011, at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing. The Portage Fire Department was assisted on scene by the Texas Township Fire Department and the Red Cross. The Red Cross and apartment management assisted with displaced residents. Currently one apartment was destroyed by the fire, and a loss estimate is still being evaluated.

The initial investigation at the scene indicated no signs of suspicious origin. The continuing fire investigation is being jointly handled by the Portage Fire Department, Michigan State Police Fire Marshal, and Portage Police Department.

UPDATE

February 1, 2011

The victim of the fatal fire is believed to be James Stephen Olvitt, 01/27/59. Olvitt had been staying with his brother at the apartment. A positive identification has not been confirmed.

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