

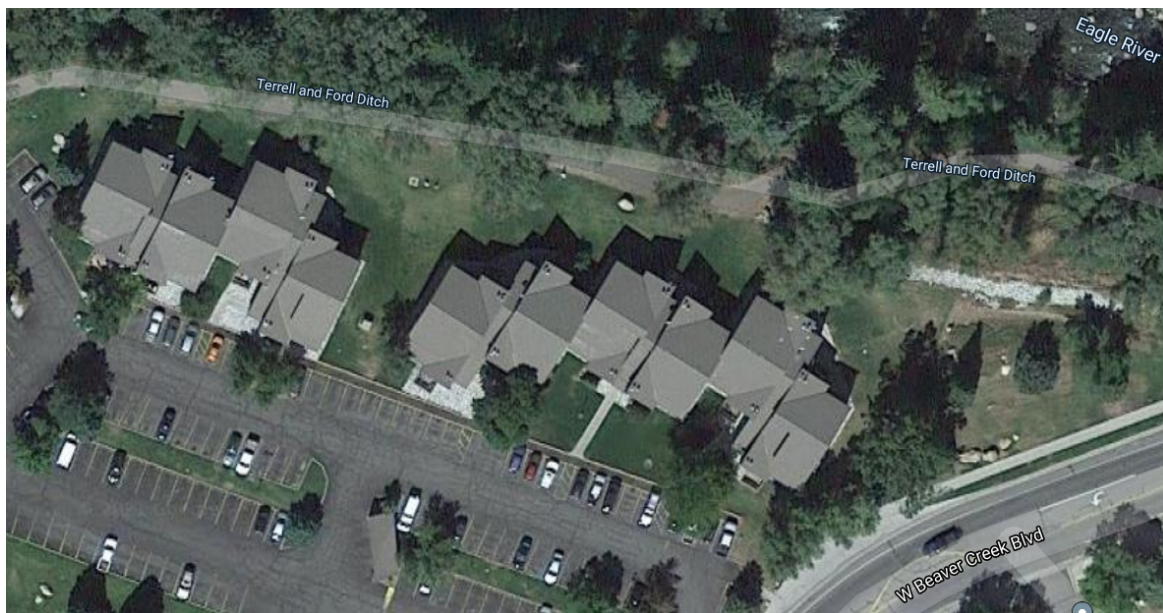


Incident #: 2021-2100718

Case #: APD 2021-000208 Avon Police Department
Officer Hernandez 970-748-4040

Date: April 11, 2021, 1354 hours

Address: 1061 West Beaver Creek Blvd., Avon, Eagle County, CO 81632



Investigator:

Michael Woodworth, Fire Marshal, Eagle River Fire Protection District
Fire Department ID: 0019

Report Date:

Started: April 11, 2021

Last touched: May 12, 2021



Table of Contents

- A. Synopsis
- B. Assignment, Preliminary Information, and Narrative
- C. Building Description
 - 1) Geographical Information
 - 2) Construction Features
 - 3) Occupancy Use
 - 4) Utilities
 - 5) Life Safety Systems
- D. Weather Data
- E. Interviews
- F. Scene Examination
 - 1) Exterior Survey
 - 2) Interior Survey
 - 3) Area of Origin
- G. Conclusion
- H. Attachments
 - Fire Department Report
 - Photos available by drop box



A. Synopsis

This report is about a structure fire that occurred at 1061 West Beaver Creek Blvd., Avon Colorado, Eagle County, 81620. The fire occurred at approximately 1354 hours. The fire originated on the second-floor deck of unit G 201. The fire extended to the third floor of building G and to building H exterior siding. All occupants were removed from building and fire suppression began. Suppression began from the outside of the building and then internal at units G 101, G201, and G 302. During suppression, fire crews investigated exposed units for smoke, gases, and fire. The fire was brought under control and systematically suppressed until fire was called out. Fire investigation began during suppression with Avon Police Department interviewing tenants and witnesses, while fire department began with O and C investigation. Investigation found the probable origination was on the deck of unit G 201 and the probable cause smoldering ash in flower pots. 17 apartment units were involved, 14 units were tagged enter but do not occupy due to containing smoke and/or other hazardous gases and 3 units were tagged not occupiable and dangerous to enter due to environment and structure integrity. The fire marshal released custody of the building to the property management company of Sunridge II.

B. Assignment, Preliminary Information and Narrative

On April 11, 2021, at approximately 1354 hours, Eagle River Fire Protection District was dispatched to a fire at 1061 West Beaver Creek Bldg., Building G, Avon, located in Eagle County, Colorado. The location is a large multifamily complex. The initial alarm was a first alarm which delivers 3 fire engines, a tower, and a Battalion Chief. On arrival, fire was located at G 201, on the second-floor south deck with flames lapping onto third floor and exposure building H. All units were cleared of occupants and suppression began. The fire entered G 201 through sliding doors on deck and bedroom window. The fire extended to the third floor exterior and into the eaves locate adjacent to third floor unit G 302. This exposed building H in the void and interstitial spaces of units H 303 and H 304. Building H exterior siding attained damage from flame impingement as well as radiant heat. Internally, several units were exposed to smoke and other by products of fire.

On April 11, 2021 at approximately 1415 hours, I, Michael Woodworth, Fire Marshal for Eagle River Fire Protection District, was requested, by Incident Command (IC), to respond to a structure fire for command overhead and investigation purposes. I arrived on scene at



approximately 1440 hours. I met face-to-face with incident command for update and assignment. Initial assignment was to access Knox Box key box for keys to access all units in fire building including mechanical rooms which are located on the lower levels of each building. Keys were located on building E; however, the keys only accessed the fire alarm panel. Each unit has proprietary keys.

My second assignment was to connect with Holy Cross Electric technicians and shut down power as required. Power was shut off at a main power switch located in the lower hallway of building G. This only turned off the power to building G, each building has its own power main. The main was locked out by Holy Cross Electric. All other buildings remain energized. I asked for Avon building official to respond to the location. Derek Place with the Town of Avon responded from his home 45 minutes away.

After the power was secured, I put on my fire bunker gear and SCBA to enter the fire area. I use an Apple iPad for video and photos during fire suppression and while wearing SCBA. Photos were taken from the fire side, the access stairwell, and into the fire units. Unit G201 was the heaviest fire damaged unit. During initial photo walk through, I found the sliding door was not in place and that heavy scorching and char was in the doorway between the living area and the deck. The furniture next to the doorway had heavier damage near the doorway and less damage away from the doorway, showing where the fire possibly entered the structure. When I reached the deck area, I found heavy damage to the soffit and attic area above the deck, heavy char on the deck structural members and all of the personal items on the deck had been burned leaving very little to salvage. Several flower pots were partially identifiable. I continued to photo the rest of the unit and found that the entire unit had heavy smoke damage where the main fire damage was contained to the living area and the attic area above the deck. I continued to investigate all units that had been compromised during the event. I was notified by a suppression crew that unit G 302 had a list of electrical issues listed on the refrigerator, all were minor and had been addressed by management.

After initial assessment, I met with Town of Avon Building official to develop a plan for occupying or denying entrance to apartments. Caution tape was placed around entrances to keep occupants out of structure during inspection by fire marshal and building official. We inspected the apartments that had smoke and/or other gases found first and followed with the fire apartments. Apartments H 103, 104, 203, 204, 303, and 304 were red tagged not occupiable due to environmental conditions (smoke and other respiratory hazards). Apartments G 103, 104, 203, 204, 303, 304 were red tagged not occupiable due to environmental conditions (smoke and other respiratory hazards).

After the inspections on the smoke and gas exposed only apartments, we inspected the fire apartments. Units G101, 102, 201, 202, 302 were red tagged structurally and environmentally hazardous. G 201 had obvious structural damage to the deck and attic area



above the deck, these areas were determined to be hazardous and not occupiable until inspected by structural engineer. G 201 also had fire damage in the western bedroom where the roofing structure meets the vertical wall of H building. The fire had burned through the exterior siding and the interior drywall into a void/interstitial space between buildings G and H. This area was located in H units 303 and 304. *During air monitoring in these unit during fire, hydrogen sulfide was indicated on fire department gas meters.

When inspection with building official and fire marshal was complete, the following was required:

- A construction fence was to be placed around the damaged area for safety and to keep people out of fire area;
- Damaged doors and windows were to be covered;
- Exposure units' occupants were allowed to enter and get important personal items escorted by fire or law: structural damaged units were not occupiable;
- 24-hour security until insurance investigator released fire property;
- 24-hour security keeping occupants out of apartments until mediation company tested for hazards to respiratory systems, i.e. asbestos, CO, hydrogen sulfide, etc.
- Electric off at main until licensed electrician inspected and approved all wiring to be reenergized.
- Gas was off, which only serviced fireplaces, and could only be turned on by gas supplier.
- Caution tape installed for all exposed apartments;
- All apartments secured, including door frames rebuilt;

I, Michael Woodworth, Fire Marshal have classified this fire as accidental. The fire originated on the deck of unit G 201 and with the statement from the occupant the probable



cause will be smoldering ash from cigarette in dry potting soil which was used and a cigarette ash tray.

Police department and insurance investigations may still be active.

C. Building Description



1. Geographical Information: Long and Lat:



2. Construction Features:

Size: H building 6 units 4800 feet. G building 11 units 8800 feet
 Type: Type V construction
 Const materials: Common

3. Occupancy Use:

Residential R2 Occupancy

4. Utilities:

Electric provided by Holy Cross, power off at main breaker building G by FM and Holy Cross
 Gas provided by Xcel energy. Gas shut off by ERFPD (gas only feeds fireplaces)
 Water and sewer provided by Eagle River Water and Sanitation.

5. Life Safety Systems

The building has common pull stations and common horn/strobes for occupant notification. Each unit has system smoke detectors for local notification. Smoke detectors were not initially noticed. Smoke detectors were not active during investigation. One CO detector was active during investigation, in unit G 202. Pull stations were activated during 911 call at direction of 911 and Battalion Chief.

D. Weather Data

<https://www.almanac.com/weather/history/CO/Minturn/2021-04-11>

Location: CO Date: 4-11-21

<p>Temperature Min Temperature: 24.8°F Mean Temperature: 31.8°F Max Temperature: 37.4°F</p>	<p>Pressure and Dew Point Mean Sea Level Pressure: No Data Mean Dew Point: 4.9°F</p>
<p>Precipitation Total Precipitation: 0.00 IN Visibility: 9.3 MI Snow Depth: No Data</p>	<p>Wind Speed and Gusts Mean Wind Speed: 15.54 MPH Max Sustained Wind Speed: 33.26 MPH Maximum Wind Gust: MPH</p>



E. Fire Department Report

Report from the fire department is included under the attachments.

F. Interview/s

Interviews conducted by Avon Police Department for law investigation prior top fire department investigation.

G. Scene Examination

Using a systematic approach and working from the area of least burned to most burned the following was noted:

1. Exterior Survey

The structure consists of three residential sections. Each section contains three levels with three or four apartments on each level. Access to apartments is an open stairway through the middle of each of the three building sections. (See site plan building F, G, and H.) The construction type is type 5, wood frame light weight with built up roof and wood siding.

The fire location on the deck of unit G 201 is located on the south side of the building. The deck is about six feet above grade with wood siding around deck area. Approaching the fire area, the ground had been scorched. The siding near the deck shows a V pattern above a first (garden) level window. However, the pattern does not show the origin of the fire. The roof area above the fire area had a cold roof installed over the original roof. The fire spread through the open areas in the cold roof. The siding above and right of the deck shows a true V Pattern from the deck, this points toward the area of origin.

The stairway did have signs of fire. Areas of drywall was removed by fire department. This is a tactic used to find fire extension. The doorways in the stairwell did not have fire but several of the doors were damaged during search. Vents in the ceiling had smoke stains.



2. Interior Survey

The interior of all units except the fire units had slight haze from the smoke. No other damage was found however, signs of hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) was found in two of the units, H 303 and 304. All units had been entered by firefighters, several doors were forced open damaging frames.

The fire units. G 101, the lower level had little if any fire damage interior. The damage in this unit was smoke and water. The water damage came through the floor from fire suppression. G 102 had smoke damage. G 202 had smoke and other gas damage. G 302 had exterior fire damage, small amount of interior damage in the west bedroom. 302 had heavy smoke damage, the contents were mostly kept away from direct fire impingement.

G 201, the fire unit interior was covered in black soot. Fire damage was located in the living area which is adjacent to the deck, all contents were fire damaged, smoke damaged or a combination of both. Fire damage was also found in the first bedroom next to living area, all contents were damaged. The west bedroom was covered in black soot, all contents damaged by fire, smoke, or a combination of both. The bathroom and kitchen areas were covered in black soot and all contents were damaged. All of the walls and ceiling were covered in black soot from smoke and/or fire. Floors were covered with soot, construction material, belongings, and water. The unit looked like it had flashover where everything combusts, but the contents that did not burn from impingement did not flash just were covered with soot and other byproducts of fire.



3. Area of Origin

The deck is located on the south side of the building, second level. The approximate size of the deck is 4 feet by 10 feet with a 4-foot safety railing/wall. On the east end of the deck is a small storage closet. The sliding door opening is on the north side of the deck, all of the siding on the north side had heavy fire damage. The south side has a retaining wall, the west end has railings both are 4 feet high. The contents of the deck had been burned. Most of the items are not recognizable. The sliding door was gone, and except for a few broken flower pots all was consumed by the fire. The roof above the deck was burned through and fire had entered the attic area. The deck had signs of damage in the structural members and on the decking. I contacted IC regarding the condition of the deck and had the deck declared unsafe, no entry. The area of origin was established due to the locations of V patterns, heaviest burn area, and information gathered in interviews.

Conclusion:

Within a reasonable degree of fire investigative certainty, the fire originated on the deck of unit G 201. The heaviest charring was located in the attic structure above the deck area, the sliding door from deck to living area and on the deck structure. The deck did not contain an open cooking device (BBQ grill) or have an electrical outlet. During suppression and initial investigation, several flower pots were found however they were damaged beyond repair. During PD interview, tenant of G201 said that he used the flower pots on the deck to extinguish his cigarettes.

The probable cause of the fire is smoldering cigarette butts in combustible potting soil. This event has been listed as accidental pending further investigation.

Based on education, experience and witness statements, there was no reason to suspect any criminal activity.

Once it has been determined that there is no reason to suspect criminal activity and the area of origin has been established, Eagle River Fire Protection District then turns the building over to the insurance investigators to complete the cause investigation.

These findings are based on the knowledge and information known at the time of this report. Eagle River Fire Protection District reserves the right to amend this report if additional information is made available that would lead to a different finding in this report or if the additional information lends to the findings in this report.

Definitions – 2017 Edition of NFPA 921



Flashover – “a transition phase in the development of a compartment fire in which surfaces exposed to thermal radiation reach ignition temperature more or less simultaneously and fire spreads rapidly throughout the space, resulting in full room involvement or total involvement of the compartment or enclosed space.”

Clean Burn – “a fire pattern on surfaces where soot has been burned away.”

Char – “Carbonaceous material that has been burned or pyrolyzed and has a blackened appearance.”

Oxidation – “A combination of oxygen with substances such as metals, rock or soil that is brought about by high temperatures. Deposition of smoke aerosols containing acidic components may lead to the oxidation of material surfaces and discernible fire patterns.”

Lines of demarcation – “Lines or areas of demarcation are the borders defining the differences in certain heat and smoke effects of the fire on various materials.”

Protected Area – “A protected area results from an object preventing the products of combustion from depositing on the material that the object protects or prevents the protected material from burning.”

Pyrolysis – “Decomposition brought about by high temperatures.”