

UPDATED: New Bedford Fire Department battles blaze with trapped residents on Chestnut Street

UPDATED April 22 at 8:53am:

"A second victim has died of injuries sustained during yesterday's fire on Chestnut Street, said New Bedford Fire Chief Scott Kruger, New Bedford Police Chief Paul J. Oliveira, State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey, and Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn, III.

District Attorney Quinn's office identified the victims as Radames Lopez Mendrez, 78, and Eneida Gonzalez Mangual, 79."

UPDATED April 20 at 5:58pm:

"A fire at a New Bedford home today claimed one person's life and injured three others, said New Bedford Fire Chief Scott Kruger, New Bedford Police Chief Paul J. Oliveira, State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey, and Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn, III.

"This is a devastating tragedy for a whole family," said Chief Kruger. "Our thoughts are with them and their loved ones right now."

The New Bedford Fire Department responded to a single-family home at 260 Chestnut St. following 9-1-1 calls at about 1:40 pm. On arrival, they encountered heavy fire showing from the upper story. Firefighters used ground ladders to make entry through windows and up an interior stairway. They rescued one man and one woman, both of whom were older adults. Both

victims were transported to a hospital for medical care; the man was pronounced deceased while the woman is in critical condition.

Two other adults were able to escape the building and were also transported for medical care. The home had working smoke alarms, which may have helped prevent an even greater tragedy.

“We don’t yet know exactly how this fire started, but we do know that most fire deaths take place at home,” said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey. “In addition to working smoke alarms, every household should have a home escape plan. Create a plan that includes two ways out, and practice both of them so you know what to do and where to go in an emergency. Remember that older adults face the greatest risk of death or serious injury in a fire and may need assistance getting out quickly.”

The fire does not appear suspicious but the exact origin and cause are under investigation by the New Bedford Fire Department, New Bedford Police Department, the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office, and State Police assigned to the Bristol County District Attorney’s office.” -Mass.gov.

Original article:

“This afternoon at 1:40pm, multiple 911 calls were received reporting a structure fire at 260 Chestnut Street. While apparatus was responding, reports were received that at least two residents were trapped on the second floor. The residence is a two-story, one family wood-frame dwelling.

Command Unit 2, District Chief Steven Medeiros directed crews from Engines 1, 7, 8, along with Ladders 1 and 4 to conduct simultaneous interior fire attack and rescue operations. This included vent, enter, isolate, search (VEIS) tactics. Crews

from Ladders 1, 4, and Engine 8 conducted rescue operations while Engines 1 & 7 performed interior fire attack. Crews were able to rescue two adults from a second floor bedroom. Four other occupants were able to escape prior to arrival of the Fire Department.

Even with the presence of solar panels, ladder crews were able to locate a safe location for vertical ventilation.

Care was transferred to NBEMS Paramedics who transported both victims to St. Luke's Hospital Trauma Center along with two other adults who escaped under their own power. One adult was pronounced deceased at St. Luke's Hospital, two are in critical condition, and one was being evaluated.

The residents were alerted of the fire by a properly functioning fire alarm system. The cause of the fire is being investigated by the NBFD Fire Investigation Unit, NBPD Detectives, Massachusetts State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshals Office, and the Bristol County District Attorney's Office. The cause is currently under investigation. The American Red Cross of Massachusetts is assisting five displaced residents. NBEMA, the Special Signal Fire Association / Providence Canteen, NBEMS, and the City of New Bedford Police Department (Official) provided assistance on scene. No firefighters were injured."-NewBedford Fire Department.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.



New Bedford Fire Department photo.