



Investigation Continues Into Fire That Claimed The Life of Firefighter Brice Trossbach

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MD (June 29, 2023) - Investigators have cleared the scene of the house fire that tragically killed Naval District Washington Firefighter Brice Trossbach. While the on-site examination is complete, the investigation is ongoing and will continue as evidence is pieced together.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal, supported by their federal partners in fire investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), along with personnel from Prince Georges and Anne Arundel counties, continue to examine the cause following the devastating two-alarm fire early Tuesday morning.

Just after 4:00 a.m., Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department and surrounding departments, including Naval Air Station Patuxent River, were called to a house fire at 20521 Deer Wood Park Drive. Firefighters arrived and discovered heavy fire throughout the two-story, 2,500-square-foot home. As firefighters conducted an interior attack, the first floor collapsed into the home's basement, trapping Trossbach. A "mayday" was issued, and fellow firefighters rescued Trossbach. Despite resuscitation efforts, Trossbach died as a result of his injuries.

A team of Deputy State Fire Marshals and K9 teams from around the state, along with Certified Fire Investigators, electrical engineers with the ATF, and investigators with neighboring counties, were assisted by heavy machinery which moved several layers of fire debris from the home's interior.

Careful excavation of the debris was conducted, and nearly 100 interviews were conducted to determine the cause. Those critical pieces of information, combined with weather data, video footage, forensic examination of wiring and piping, and trace evidence that has been collected, will require extensive analysis. While the owners and neighbors heard a loud sound consistent with a lightning strike, investigators must examine every possible cause before they reach a final conclusion.

The deadly fire injured two other firefighters. A Leonardtown firefighter suffered burns to his ears and knees. He was taken to the Burn Center at MedStar Washington Hospital Center. And a firefighter from Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department sustained an ankle injury and was taken to MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. Both were treated and released.

"The loss of Firefighter Brice Trossbach is devastating to St. Mary's County, the State of Maryland, and this nation," said State Fire Marshal Brian S. Geraci. ***"Colonel Butler, my team and I within the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the entire Department of State Police family are heartbroken. Every resource we have will be used to determine how and why this tragedy occurred."***