



BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT

357 FORDING ISLAND ROAD
OKATIE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29909



NEWS RELEASE

Immediate Release

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Home struck by lightning in Berkeley Hall community saved by firefighters

Bluffton, SC – A lightning strike to the roof of a residence on Lancaster Boulevard in the Berkeley Hall community caused an attic fire on Saturday evening. Multiple fire stations from Bluffton Township Fire District (BTFD) were dispatched. Fire crews arrived at the home and observed smoke coming from the attic. The home’s residents had safely evacuated and taken pets with them prior to fire crews arriving. An investigator from the Fire Marshal’s office determined the fire was caused by the lightning strike. No injuries were reported.

The lightning strike occurred as thunderstorms moved through Beaufort County at approximately 7:40 p.m. Battalion Chiefs, four fire engines, a rescue truck, and ladder truck from BTFD Stations 30 (Old Town Bluffton), Station 34 (Sun City), Station 35 (Fording Island Rd.), and Station 38 (Hampton Parkway) responded. Beaufort County EMS, Palmetto Electric, and Berkeley Hall security also provided support.

Chief Paul Boulware was on scene for the incident and noted that, “When lightning strikes a house, roofs, framing, sidewalls, and electrical wires are the most common areas ignited. In this case, the lightning strike ignited part of the framing in the attic and our crews were able to quickly get it extinguished before the home was destroyed.” He continued, “A quick response and extensive training by our firefighters saved this house and I am extremely proud of our team.”

According to the US Fire Administration, lightning is the cause of an estimated 17,400 fires each year. Of those fires, 41% occur in structures. BTFD reminds residents to create and practice a family fire escape plan. Be sure to identify a safe meeting place away from the home like a neighbor’s house or at a mailbox. The family will gather there so firefighters know there is no one left inside when they arrive. Also, know at least two ways to get out of each room just in case the main access is blocked by fire or debris. Finally, make sure your home has smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Push the test button at least once a month to make sure each alarm is working.

For more information about home fire safety and resources to help prevent fires, please visit the Bluffton Township Fire District website at www.blufftonfd.com. You can also follow @BlufftonFire on social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor.

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