



# BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT

357 FORDING ISLAND ROAD  
OKATIE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29909



---

## NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Stephen Combs, Public Information Officer  
Phone: (843) 949-4255 | Social: @BlufftonFire  
[pio@BlufftonFD.com](mailto:pio@BlufftonFD.com)

### Firefighters save Okatie home, several pets lost in fire

**Okatie, SC** (August 7, 2023, 12:00 p.m. EDT) – An early Sunday morning fire on Ashepoo Drive in the Rivers End subdivision, in Okatie, left two residents displaced and several pets lost. The fire broke out at approximately 3:30 a.m. The Fire District’s Senior Inspector determined the cause was an electrical outlet in the garage that ignited some materials stored next to it.

The residents were home at the time the fire broke out and safely evacuated while calling 911. When firefighters arrived, flames and heavy smoke were seen coming from the garage. Firefighters were able to rescue four dogs and one cat from inside the residence. Three other pets were found deceased and later interred by firefighters at the owner’s request. No additional injuries occurred. The American Red Cross is assisting the family with their recovery.

Fire Chief, Paul Boulware, on the scene of the fire said, “I am very proud of the work our men and women did here this morning, not only saving the living area of this home, but also rescuing as many of family’s pets as they could.” He continued, “Pets are like family members for many of us. I am saddened by the homeowner’s loss, but grateful we were able compassionately help them in this difficult situation.”

Smoke alarms were present in three-quarters (74 percent) of reported home fires in 2014–2018, the most recent period for which the National Fire Protection Association provides statistics. Residents are reminded to check smoke alarms at least once per month and replace batteries at a minimum of once each year. Smoke alarms older than ten years should be replaced.

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](http://www.blufftonfd.com). You can also follow @BlufftonFire on social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor.

-END-

*The Bluffton Township Fire District, established in 1978, has 178 employees. One hundred forty-seven firefighters work from 9 stations on 3 shifts. Led by Chief Paul Boulware, the department serves a 246 square-mile area in southern Beaufort County, SC and responds to an average of 8,685 calls per year.*