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**South Dakota Department of  
Public Safety**

**OFFICE OF FIRE MARSHAL**

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July 6, 2015

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find a copy of the fire report that you requested.

Thank you,

SD State Fire Marshal's Office

# **SOUTH DAKOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S FIRE INVESTIGATION REPORT**

## **TITLE OF INVESTIGATION:**

Fire name: Quiett Fire  
Address: 102 Mannston Gettysburg  
Owner: Scott and Lisa Quiett  
Date: June 17, 2015 10:20 hours

## **DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:**

Investigate fire origin and determine cause

## **SYNOPSIS:**

On 06/17/2015 Mike Erickson, Deputy State Fire Marshal, conducted a fire scene investigation at 102 Mannston, Gettysburg South Dakota. The scene was examined under exigent circumstances. Information given on the initial report for an investigation was of a natural gas explosion.

## **NARRATIVE:**

1. On 06/17/2015 at approximately 08:32 hrs. Gettysburg VFD responded to a house explosion at 102 Mannston
2. The structure was occupied at the time of the explosion
3. A 24 week old infant was injured during the explosion

## **PARTICIPATING FIRE INVESTIGATORS:**

1. Steve Harford, Deputy State Fire Marshal, CFI

## **WITNESS STATEMENTS:**

1. FIRE DISCOVERY: Home owner Scott Quiett called 911 to report an explosion at their house at 08:28.
2. FIRE SUPPRESSION: Gettysburg Fire Department secured the scene to make sure everyone was out of the house. Once the scene was cleared they made entry into the structure through the front opening of the residence. They extinguished a small amount of fire on the main floor, in the attic area, and a few spots on the exterior of the house.
3. OWNER/OCCUPANT: The home owner Scott Quiett was questioned by Deputy Fire Marshal Erickson on the activities that had occurred in the morning before the explosion happened. Scott stated that he and his wife were up for the day and just got their toddler son some breakfast and had put their infant daughter in her baby swing. Lisa Quiett, Scott's wife had walked back into the bedroom to get dressed for the day made a statement to Scott that it was dark in the room and had turned the light on. Lisa was not on scene due to the infant being hurt during the explosion. Scott stated that Lisa told him about 3-5 seconds after she turned the light on the house exploded. Scott pushed Lisa in the closet to protect her and he

went to the floor, he did not remember how long before he got up to check on the other children in the house and called 911.

4. OTHERS: Employees from Montana Dakota Utilities (MDU) was on scene working the area around the house doing soil readings for natural gas. The Father of the owners was on scene and questioned about any information they would have to help in the investigation. Dale Robinson who is Lisa's dad has been doing work to the house. Dale was asked if anything had been done to the house in a while and he said the last couple days they were doing yard work trying to get some grass to grow in the areas that had been excavated last fall from basement work that had been done. Dale stated the Blackburn Basement Repair had worked to straighten exterior basement walls and had to dig in support rods. Dale also stated that he had been working on putting new windows in the house last week. I asked Dale if he had ever noticed the smell of natural gas in or around the house and he told me no, he has not. Dale was also asked if he knew what natural gas smelled like and he said rotten eggs. Duane Quiett; Scott's father was on scene briefly and I asked if he had any information that would help. Duane stated that they live just around the corner and they stop over to visit and help out around the house and he had not noticed anything different.

#### **BUILDING CONSTRUCTION:**

1. The structure is a single story ranch style house with a full basement and a single attached garage. The year built was 1972
2. The structure is serviced by the electrical utility via an overhead service and Natural gas
3. The structure is equipped with smoke alarms and heat detectors.
4. The structure is located in Gettysburg SD

#### **SCENE PROCESSING:**

1. On 06/17/2015, DSFM Mike Erickson and Steve Harford conducted the fire scene examination. Photographs were taken by Mike Erickson. No Samples were taken and no items were removed from the scene by the fire investigator(s).
2. On the exterior examination, the exterior of the house had significant damage from the explosion. Photos were taken. The wall facing east, south of the front entrance was pushed out along with the front door that was lying on the ground in front of the house. The north wall of the garage was pushed off the foundation. There were multiple areas of movement between the house framing and the block foundation. There were locations around the house at the foundation level where fire had extended to the outside of structure.
3. On the interior examination, the owners bedroom and infants room showed signs of fire with the owner's room being fully involved with fire. Portions of the house had separation in the corners where the ceiling and walls meet due to the explosion. The main level and basement showed signs of heat damage and sooting. Some of the damage on the interior was from fire department activities involved with fire extinguishment.
4. The electrical line suppling power to the house was removed by MDU. The fire department had turned the natural gas off at the house meter.

**FIRE PROGRESSION TO OTHER STRUCTURES:**

1. The fire was contained to the structure of origin and did not extend to any other area.

**CONCLUSION:**

After examination of the fire scene, observing physical evidence present, and considering witness observations, it is my opinion that the area of origin for the fire was located in the owner's bedroom. The cause and product of the explosion that was stated as happening a few seconds after a light was turned on in the owner's bedroom is undetermined. The house has a natural gas service provided by MDU. An investigation is ongoing to the cause of natural gas levels detected outside of the structure.

**NUMBER OF FATALITIES AND/OR INJURIES:**

1. There was one injury reported with this fire.

**ESTIMATED VALUE OF LOSS:**

1. The loss is estimated at \$280,000.00 this is an estimate made by on scene investigators and may not be completely accurate. To obtain an accurate loss amount, one should view the final loss report completed by a professional adjuster.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

1. Weather conditions at the time of the fire were not a factor.

DATE THIS 29<sup>th</sup> DAY OF June, 2015

BY: Mike Erickson

6-29-15

*Mike Erickson*

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL