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Iron Works home destroyed by early morning fire

By ADAM DRAPCHO, THE LACONIA DAILY SUN
Jan 11, 2022



A home on Crystal Lake in Gilman Iron Works was destroyed by a fire in the early morning hours of Jan. 11. Two dogs died, the two adult residents escaped without serious injury. (Adam Drapcho/The Laconia Daily Sun photo)

GILMANTON IRON WORKS — A home was destroyed and two dogs died as the result of a fire in the early hours of Tuesday.

Fire Chief John Hempel III said the department was called out to the fire at 3:10 a.m. on Tuesday. The first firefighter to arrive saw that the front of the building was fully involved.

The two residents of the building, a woman and her adult son, had been able to self-evacuate, however, the man was transported to the hospital for concern of the minor injuries he suffered while trying to rescue their two dogs. Those efforts were unsuccessful, and the animals died in the fire.

Due to the adverse weather conditions, a second alarm was called at 3:48 a.m. Thirteen other fire departments, as well as the NH Electric Co-op, responded. The fire was under control by 5:09 a.m.



Hempel said the temperature registered seven degrees below zero, and described fighting a house fire in such circumstances in one word – "Terrible."

"Water and cold don't mix," Hempel said. Hoses and pumps can freeze, and the risk to firefighters is also elevated. Oddly, it's similar to managing a fire scene in very hot weather, in the following sense: "You need to double your resources so you can be sure that you have plenty of water and plenty of guys," he said.

Hempel said the cause of the fire remains under investigation, though he suspects it was accidental in nature.
