



**THE CITY OF REDMOND
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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Press Release

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Fire Sprinkler saves Redmond housing project

The fire sprinkler system installed at a Redmond housing project activated tonight extinguishing a bathroom fire, protecting residents, and significantly limiting damage to the residence, adjacent units, and the complex.

At 7:26 p.m. on Sunday, February 20, 2005, the Eastside Communications Center received a call from a fire alarm company reporting the activation of an alarm system at The Village at Overlake Station, a King County Housing Authority multi-family project located atop a park and ride lot in the 2500 block of 152 AVE NE, Redmond. The alarm company operator advised the alarm system was indicating water flowing from the sprinkler system. A fire engine from the Redmond Fire Department and ladder truck from the Bellevue Fire Department were dispatched. The Dispatch center received additional calls from onsite as fire units were en route. The callers reported a bathroom fire on the first floor of the four story apartment building. Firefighters arrived, determined the fire was extinguished by the fire sprinkler system, shut off the sprinkler system and began water removal operations.

The resident advised she was asleep on the living room couch when she was awakened by the smoke detector in her apartment. She found a small fire in the bathroom consuming the garbage can adjacent to the bathroom cabinetry. As she attempted to throw water on the fire, the single fire sprinkler in the bathroom activated and extinguished the fire before it could cause significant damage. The resident indicated she had left a candle burning atop the toilet in the bathroom, which must have fallen and started the blaze. Fire investigators are onsite investigating the incident.

Damage to the apartment complex was limited to scorched paint on the bathroom wall, a burned wicker garbage can, and wet carpeting. Prior to fire department personnel leaving the premises, management had a restoration company removing the water from the carpeting, and a sprinkler technician en route to restore the fire sprinkler system to operation. The estimated loss to the unit and contents including all cleanup costs is \$1,100.00. This is significantly less than the damage resulting from a typical bathroom fire that must be extinguished by fire fighters using fire hoses. The resident of the unit with the bathroom fire will likely be displaced for the night as the carpeting is cleaned and dried in her residence. No other residents of the 308 apartments in the complex were displaced as a result of this incident. No civilians or fire fighters were injured. No adjacent living units were damaged by smoke or flame.

Fire codes in Redmond require the installation of fire sprinklers in all large multi-family residential buildings. This incident points to the value of fire sprinklers in protecting residents and limiting damage from hostile fires. The outcome of this evening's incident would have been significantly different, had this structure not been equipped with fire sprinklers. Fire doubles in size every minute and can quickly consume entire rooms or buildings. Lacking sprinklers and prompt notification from the alarm monitoring company, today's fire would have threatened the entire structure and hundreds of residents.

The Redmond Fire Department urges you to observe the following safety tips:

- Check to be sure you are protected by **working smoke detectors**. Change batteries annually.
 - Remember **Fire Sprinklers SAVE LIVES**, install them wherever possible.
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