

FD# 2403529
Case# 24-002278
Cad# 2023208661

On 03/17/2024 at 07:01 hours Columbia Fire Department was dispatched to 406 S Ninth St. (Noodle and Company) for a commercial structure fire.

The Incident Commander (IC) requested the duty marshal. I, Steve Riggs, Marshal 4 (M4), arrived on scene and made contact with the IC. The IC advised the fire had been extinguished and ventilation was being performed.

I began my investigation by photographing the exterior of the structure in a counterclockwise direction beginning with the front side (street side) of the structure.

I observed an area at the NE corner, outside of the structure where a warming fire had previously been used. A small metal barrel had burned debris and ash inside. The drum was approximately one foot from the side of the building. Between the drum and the building was a pile of burned debris. The burned debris was against the structure.

The IC advised the structure was safe to enter. I entered the structure through the front door. I photographed the inside of the structure in a counterclockwise direction.

I observed significant fire damage to the NE corner of the structure. I observed significant heat, smoke, and water damage throughout the entire structure.

I observed four electrical panels in the kitchen. The main breaker was in the off position. In the electrical panel P1, breakers 22,24,26,and 36 were tripped. In the electrical panel P2, breakers 18,20,22, and 24 were tripped. In the electrical panel P3, breakers 36,38,and 40 were tripped.

The burn patterns on the exterior of the NE corner of the structure and burn patterns on the inside of the structure determined the area of origin to be in the NE corner of the structure.

I interviewed Dave Haney (Quint 4 Captain). Captain Haney advised while he and his fire company were leaving a previous call in the area, they smelled smoke and decided to investigate the area. Captain Haney stated while investigating they found a structure on fire. Captain Haney stated he saw an area on the back of the structure, he thought it looked like an area someone may have been using to sleep. Captain Haney also advised he removed the cover to the electrical panel and turned off the main breaker.

I interviewed [REDACTED] Madelin stated on 03/16/2024 the restaurant closed at 22:00 hours and employees are gone by 23:30 hours. She stated she was aware of people living behind the building and she does not approve of them living there. Madelin stated she received a security alert text at 07:00 hours the morning of the fire, but ignored it because it happens frequently.

In conclusion, based on the evidence found at the scene, the fire started outside of the building at NE corner. A subject negligently started a warming fire too close to the structure. The fire spread to the exterior of the structure. The fire then burned its way to the interior of the structure causing significant fire damage. The fire is classified as incendiary.