

FOR THE JOURNAL | STEVE ZAHN

Two firefighters were sent to the hospital while fighting this Thursday morning blaze on Driftwood Court in Salem. Below is what firefighters faced when arriving at the two-story lakeside home in Keowee Falls South. The structure was completely destroyed.

Cliffs home leveled

Two firemen hurt in morning blaze

BY JESSICA SIBLEY
THE JOURNAL

SALEM — A home was destroyed and two firefighters injured Thursday morning as flames destroyed a two-story, lakeside home in The Cliffs at Keowee Falls South.

The home at 503 Driftwood Court, was vacant when the alarm sounded at 10:06 a.m. Flames were shooting through the roof by the time firefighters arrived on scene.

Within minutes of the alarm, neighbors were calling 911 to report smoke billowing from the residence.

No one was home at the time of the fire and according to officials, the owners live in Florida and use the location as a second home.

While the cause of the fire is still undetermined, Oconee County Fire Chief Charlie King said there was a construction crew working on the irrigation system, which could have led to the blaze.

"There was fire and smoke coming from the rear of the home and the roof," King said. "That part of the home was inaccessible from the

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BLAZE: destroys home

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street, so we called on The Cliffs Community's fire boat to help fight the blaze from the water."

King said the fire was under control within an hour and excessive damage to surrounding homes and properties was avoided.

"It had been about a year since we've used the fire boat, and in this instance, having it 50 feet away prevented a lot of extra damage and loss," King said. "There is no doubt about it."

The South Carolina Forestry Department was called in to control several wooded areas surrounding the residence, which also helped keep the fire contained.

While fighting the blaze, however, two firefighters were sent to the hospital. One is being kept overnight for observation at Oconee Medical Center with chest pains and another was treated for burns to his neck and shoulders.

According to Lance Yuda who had a crew of landscapers working nearby, there was fire near the back of the home before crews arrived. He said the house was engulfed quickly.

Units responded from Salem, Keowee, Corinth Station, Pickett Post, Vineyards (Pickens), West Union, Oconee EMS, Oconee County Emergency Services and Station 21.

The owners' names will not be released until they are able to come from Florida and determine the extent of the destruction to their property, King said.

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The Vineyards Fire Department in Pickens brought out its fire boat, which, according to Oconee County Fire Chief Charlie King, was crucial in preventing any flames from spreading to surrounding structures during the Keowee Falls South fire on Thursday.