

August 21, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Update on investigation at sorority house

The Fire Department would like to clarify and update the incorrect information in a recent news release on the investigation into the two chemical overpressure devices that were found to have exploded at the rear entrance of the Gamma Phi Beta Sorority House at 1141 East Elm. A person found the remains of two plastic containers at the rear entrance and called 911. The Fire Department's Hazardous Materials team responded, but upon arrival determined that it was not a hazardous materials incident and requested a Fire Marshal to investigate. The Fire Marshal found what appeared to be two plastic containers that ruptured from over pressurization. One person sustained chemical burns to an arm having come into contact with the substance while attempting to clean up the bottles prior to the Fire Department's arrival. The individual was treated at the scene for minor injuries and declined transport. While there was minor damage to the exterior, no structural damage occurred to the building. It is unknown when the containers ruptured, but was most likely at least several hours before being noticed. The Fire Department will continue to investigate.

While these devices were not incendiary in nature and did not contain explosive material, they do pose a danger to individuals. The Fire Department did not intend to raise undue concern over this incident; however, it does want individuals considering using such a device thinking it is a harmless prank to know that it is considered a Class C Felony.

For more information, contact Assistant Fire Chief Randy Villines at 417-864-1527 or Cara Erwin at 417-619-7592 or cerwin@springfieldmo.gov.