

By Jan Schultz

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An early morning call Tuesday summoned members of the Imperial Volunteer Fire Department to Sunrise Apartments on East 11th St., where smoke had been reported.

Firemen responded shortly before 6 a.m. to the southwest building in the Sunrise complex. The Marsie Vetter family had evacuated after reporting smoke in the upstairs apartment.

Fire Chief Nick Schultz said firemen entered the apartment equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus, and used the thermal imaging camera to locate the source, a hamper in the bathroom.

Schultz said the plastic hamper had been pushed up against the electric wall heater in the bathroom and had started to smolder. The entire apartment was filled with smoke when firefighters entered.

The melted hamper was removed, and the department's positive pressure fan system was set up to remove the smoke.

Although the wall was discolored, an examination determined there was no fire inside, Schultz said.

The apartment will likely need professional cleaning due to the smoke, he said.

For precaution, another family in the same complex was evacuated from the lower level. One other apartment was vacant and there was no response inside the fourth apartment, according to the report.