



Cheektowaga fire likely due to kids playing with matches

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UPDATE: (3:00 PM Aug. 3) – Police say Shanley Street fire was caused by children playing with a lighter, no charges will be filed.

CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. (WIVB)- Investigators believe a two alarm fire in Cheektowaga was the result of kids playing with matches.

"It was the lady downstairs saying that 'oh my God the garage is on fire' and then after that it was just all chaos," recalled Michele Trala, who lives next door to the two-unit building on Shanley Street that caught fire Tuesday.

The blaze broke out just before five at the corner of Shanley and Richard in Cheektowaga, near the border with Buffalo.

"Just heard a lot of screaming and a lot of black smoke. And then it just went up in flames really fast," Trala said.

"They were getting pretty big. They were going around the whole garage and then it seemed like all of a sudden the wind shifted and it just jumped to the house."

The split-building was home to two families; 12 people were displaced due to the fire, most of them children.

By Wednesday morning, pieces of the home were still falling off; shards of glass from the windows cover the lawn.

Crews say the fire began in the garage behind the home.

Multiple fire companies responded to the blaze. Given the heat, crews needed all the manpower they could get.

"Some of our regulations for all of the members involved, they can go in only twice before they need a certain amount of delay time to recover. And on a day like today that time takes much longer," said Chief Don Szumigala with the Doyle Hose Company Tuesday.

No one was hurt in the fire.

News 4 has reached out to the Cheektowaga Police Department to see if charges are possible in this case.

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