

# Hazmat crews called to Bell Street fire

By **Jim Herr** - November 26, 2017



*Firefighters attend to a car fire and hazmat scare on Bell Street during the morning of November 26th. (Jim Herr/Cheektowaga Chronicle)*

CHEEKTOWAGA – The Erie County Hazardous Materials Team was requested to the scene of a fire after crews learned that hazardous materials could have been inside a home they were working in.

Firefighters responded to 30 Bell Street in the Pine Hill Fire District just before 7:30 am to investigate a pickup truck burning next to the building.

The fire was quickly extinguished, but while a crew was inside the home checking for fire, a resident informed Pine Hill Assistant Chief Daniel Malkowski that there were two 55-gallon drums with hazardous materials inside.

“We informed the crew inside, they found the drums and that’s when we evacuated everyone out of the house to investigate further,” said Asst. Chief Malkowski.

One drum was found in the garage and another was found in the attic of the house. The resident was not forthcoming about what was inside of them, and Erie County Emergency Services sent a hazmat crew to the scene.

A source tells Cheektowaga Chronicle that the container in the garage contained liquid and a bowl wrapped in cellophane. Inside the bowl was rotting chicken parts.

Asst. Chief Malkowski said the drums didn't contain any materials that could be a threat to the area and referred further questions to the Cheektowaga Police.

Damage from the fire was contained to the outside of the home. A wooden overhang at the side door stopped the bulk of the fire from spreading into the home's eaves.

A resident said the dwelling is being used as a rooming house and seven people live there. Asst. Chief Malkowski said five people were outside the house when firefighters arrived and that a referral was made to the town's building department. County tax records list the property as a one family dwelling with four bedrooms and one bathroom.

Attempts made by Cheektowaga Chronicle to reach the property owner by phone were unsuccessful.

