

# Residents evacuate after apartment blaze

By Sara Samora The Herald-Zeitung May 16, 2019

Caution tape lines a door outside a Braunfels Haus apartment building following a fire on Wednesday, May 15, 2019.

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A fire early Wednesday morning sent some residents of Braunfels Haus Apartments scrambling to evacuate.

At 12:57 a.m. the New Braunfels Fire Department and the New Braunfels Police Department were dispatched to 1008 Mission Drive.

After arriving, officers knocked on doors of four apartments advising residents to get out because of a fire danger in an upstairs unit.

NBFD Battalion Chief Garrick Herbert said they brought a line upstairs and extinguished the fire, then entered the apartment to look for the cause.

“At this time we got all the utilities disconnected to this building because we don’t know exactly what caused it,” Herbert said. “So this will be pretty much off limits.”

Herbert said the apartments would need to be cleared and checked before residents would be allowed to return.

NBPD placed those evacuated at a local hotel after fire crews escorted people into the building to grab items they needed to take with them.

The last Nbfd unit cleared at 3:44 a.m. and those affected were reached out to by the local Red Cross.

Nbfd Fire Marshal Captain Anthony Pitzer said the investigation is still ongoing.

“It has been determined that the cause was accidental, but we are getting to the point of what exactly happened,” Pitzer said.

He said the unit where the flames started left smoke and fire damage, while the remaining three units suffered smoke damage.

“There’s going to be a lot of repairs before anybody can move back,” Pitzer said. “And it depends on the insurance company and building owner on how quickly they get stuff done.”

Damages to property is an estimated \$100,000, and the damage to contents are an estimated \$25,000.

Jackie Avila, Braunfels Haus apartment manager, said once they get the report from the Nbfd fire marshal, they will place residents in other units if needed.