



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

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NEWS RELEASE

For Release:
Tsiothohrkó:wa / January 30, 2014

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Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police Release Preliminary Investigation of Fatal House Fire

Akwesasne N.Y. - On January 26, 2014 at 10:21 a.m. the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police were notified of a structural fire at 184 St. Regis Rd, Akwesasne N.Y. All units were dispatched to the residence, which was fully engulfed in flames upon arrival. Several community members initially stopped to assist, including the first responding unit, an Akwesasne Mohawk Police Constable passing by. The Hogansburg-Akwesasne Volunteer Fire Department (HAVFD) and Bombay Fire Department were dispatched to the scene. Mutual aid assistance notification was sent to surrounding Fire Departments. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Ambulance, Bombay Ambulance, Massena Rescue and Seaway Valley Ambulance were notified and promptly arrived at the scene. Franklin County Emergency Services, Franklin County Cause and Origin, New York State Police BCI, and the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control were also utilized for assistance. The preliminary investigation report released today from the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police states the following information about the fire: "The majority of the structure was ultimately consumed by fire, and tragically three occupants who were trapped inside the home were unable to be rescued. The bodies of the three victims were recovered from the scene and autopsy reports show cause of death being smoke inhalation. Preliminary reports indicate the likely cause of the fire being electrical failure. The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police expect the final fire report to be released by the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control in the coming weeks." Until this final fire report is released, no further information will be available.

The community of Akwesasne mourns the loss of the family. Funeral arrangements will be handled by Donaldson's Funeral Home in Massena, NY and the Carter Funeral Home in Syracuse, NY. The visitation will be held at the Akwesasne Homemakers at 1126 River Road, Akwesasne, QC, beginning on Thursday, January 30, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. until Friday, January 31, 2014 at 4:00 pm. A memorial service will be held in Syracuse, N.Y. on Saturday, February 1, 2014 for Jarius, Javin and Hunter Chrisjohn.

The magnitude of the heartache the family is experiencing has been felt throughout Akwesasne. The devastation felt by the David, Chrisjohn and Bigtree families is incomprehensible. Our community members intend to help in any way possible. A spaghetti luncheon benefit is being held at the Kateri Hall in Akwesasne on Friday, January 31, 2014.

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.

Helping Build A Better Tomorrow

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