



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FIRE CHIEF

4410 Cathedral Oaks Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93110

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- Fire Cause Determined -

Santa Barbara, Ca. December 11, 2013 – The Santa Barbara County Fire Department investigators have determined that the cause of the structure fire that occurred at 3884 Cherry Hill Road in Santa Maria today was a result of an overloaded electrical circuit.

The investigation traced the cause of the blaze to a space heater that had been plugged into an outlet, overloading the electrical circuit. This was the second fire in four days attributed to the use of space heaters. People should use caution and be careful when using these devices.

For your safety, follow these space heater safety tips:

- Only purchase newer model heaters that have all of the current safety features. Make sure the heater carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label.
- Choose a thermostatically controlled heater, because they avoid the energy waste of overheating a room.
- Select a heater of the proper size for the room you wish to heat. Do not purchase oversized heaters. Most heaters come with a general sizing table.
- Locate the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic. Be especially careful to keep children and pets away from the heater.
- Electric heaters should be plugged directly into the wall outlet. If an extension cord is necessary, use the shortest possible heavy duty gauge cord. Always check and follow any manufacturer's instructions pertaining to the use of extension cords.
- Buy a unit with a tip-over safety switch, which automatically shuts off the heater if the unit is tipped over.

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