

Cigarettes caused downtown building fire; firefighters who rescued woman, child identified

By [Dustin Monke](#) on Sep 23, 2015 at 6:01 p.m.

Cigarettes started the fire that displaced the tenants of four apartments Tuesday night in a downtown Dickinson building.

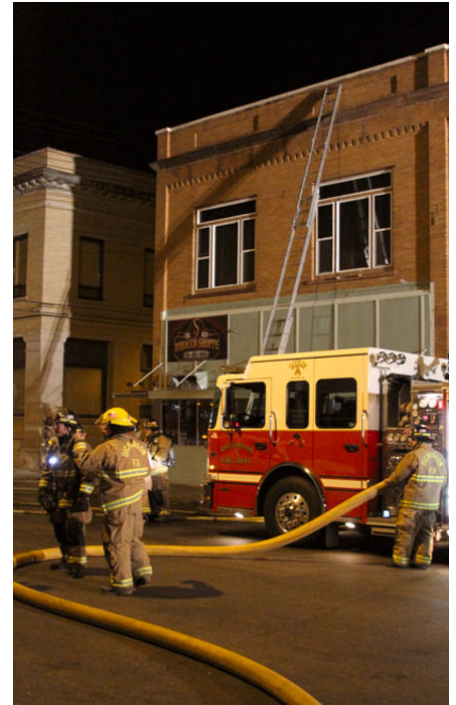
The fire originated from a plastic cigarette disposal container, Dickinson Fire Chief Bob Sivak said. The container, sitting a second-floor deck area on the north side of the Jessen Building on the corner of Villard Street and First Avenue West, somehow ignited and started a fire because of multiple combustible materials nearby.

"We're listing the cause of the fire as unintentional and related to smoking materials," Sivak said.

Sivak said two apartments and the building's roof were badly damaged by the fire, as was electrical wiring to the building.

None of the displaced tenants were able to return to their homes Wednesday, apartment manager and building co-owner Adam Metzker said. He added that it may be a while before the apartments are livable again.

The fire led three Dickinson firefighters to rescue a woman and her infant child from a second-floor window of the apartment they were living in after the woman determined she couldn't escape through her front door.



Dickinson Fire Department firefighters stand outside the downtown Dickinson building on Tuesday where four apartment tenants were displaced by a fire caused by a plastic cigarette disposal container. (Press Photo by Dustin Monke)

Sivak on Wednesday identified firefighter Kyle MacIntosh as the person who scaled a ground ladder and helped Heather Flaughter and her daughter, Fallynn, out of the window. He was assisted by firefighter Stephen Lawson and city Fire Marshal Deb Barros.

Sivak called rescue "excellent work."

"The crew did a great job of getting that lady and the baby out of the window," he said.

Metzker said the building's electricity would be turned back on Thursday, and that two businesses—Just Kutz and Badlands Comics and Games—were closed for the day.

John Nyman, part-owner of Badlands Comics and Games, said he and his family live in one of the second-floor apartments damaged in the fire and were staying in a hotel room provided by the American Red Cross.

He said they hadn't been able to return to their apartment to check on their belongings, nor was he able to get into the store.

"It was definitely a pretty intense fire for the size it was," he said.

Metzker said he's in the process of determining the best way to help the tenants.

"We're going to try to accommodate everyone with what we have," Metzker said.

"Those we won't be able to accommodate, they'll have to find other solution."

Nyman said he was concerned not only about his family's apartment, but also his business on the ground floor. He's "waiting on the insurance company" to tell him if smoke damage affected the hundreds of comic books and games the business sells.