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Woman charged with starting fire in Brighton

Blaze trapped daughter, man

By Matt Rocheleau | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT AUGUST 05, 2013

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A Brighton woman was arrested on arson and attempted murder charges after she allegedly set a fire outside the door of her third-floor apartment early Sunday, trapping her 21-year-old daughter and a man inside, police and fire officials said.

Lisa Brown, 49, is scheduled to be arraigned Monday in Brighton District Court, said Officer James Kenneally, a Boston police spokesman.

Firefighters used a ladder to rescue Brown's daughter and the man, also 21, from the three-story brick building at 905 Jette Court, said Boston Fire Department spokesman Steve MacDonald. The building is part of a public housing complex owned and managed by the Boston Housing Authority, he said.

The two were treated at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center for smoke inhalation; a firefighter was treated for a neck injury, MacDonald said.

The fire broke out at about 4:20 a.m. Sunday in a hallway directly outside the front door of the apartment, MacDonald said. Heavy smoke filled the third and second floors of the building, but the blaze was contained by sprinklers before firefighters put it out.

Investigators quickly determined the fire was arson, according to MacDonald.

Brown was not there when fire officials first arrived. When they returned to investigate further, they found her and arrested her based on evidence collected from the scene and from interviews, including with her daughter and the man, MacDonald said.

He declined to comment on a motive or other circumstances around the fire, citing an ongoing investigation. He also said that investigators know how the fire started, but declined to release that information.

MacDonald said Brown and her daughter live in the unit. He did not know the man's relation to Brown or her daughter or whether he also lives there. But, he said the man is not a member of their family.

The fire caused an estimated \$25,000 in damage.

MacDonald said most other residents in the building were sleeping at the time and that alarms in the building notified firefighters of the blaze.

"This was a very dangerous situation," he said. "The fact that it was deliberately set is troubling."

The Suffolk district attorney's office declined to comment Sunday afternoon and officials at the Boston Housing Authority could not be reached.

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