

## Burning Steamship Authority bus damages cars in Falmouth parking lot



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### Firefighters responded to a bus fire in Falmouth on Saturday.

By John Hilliard

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JULY 07, 2018

A Steamship Authority bus on its way to pick up passengers in Falmouth burst into flames late Saturday morning, destroying the bus and damaging as many as 15 vehicles parked nearby.

No passengers were on board, the bus driver escaped unharmed, and there were no reports of injuries, according to statements from the Steamship Authority and the Falmouth Police Department.

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The cause of the fire is still under investigation, according to Sean Driscoll, a Steamship Authority spokesman.

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Around 11:40 a.m., the bus left the Steamship Authority's Palmer Avenue lot and was headed to the Thomas B. Landers Road lot to pick up passengers to take them to the ferry terminal, according to an agency statement Saturday afternoon.

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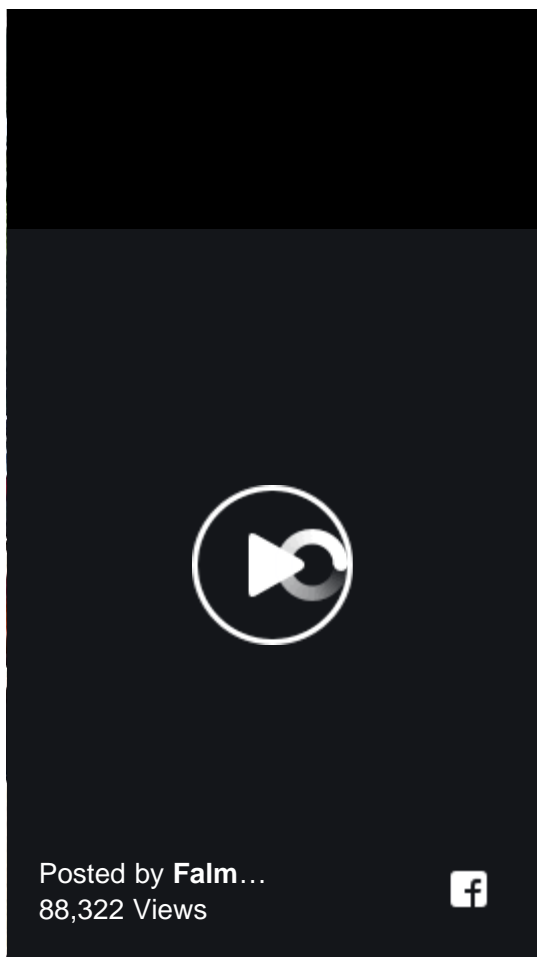
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During the trip, another Steamship Authority bus driver saw smoke coming from the back of the first vehicle and alerted its driver, who turned back to the Palmer Avenue lot.

Shortly after returning to the parking lot, the driver saw the fire start on the bus, the statement said.

Video of the fire, posted on Facebook by Falmouth police, showed the front of the vehicle totally engulfed in flames.

Flames could also be seen in the police video spreading onto the hood of a car parked next to the bus.



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The Falmouth Fire/Rescue Department reported it took 45 minutes to knock down the fire, according to the department's Facebook post. The fire is not considered suspicious, according to the post.

The bus involved in the fire was approximately two years old and seated 39 passengers, according to the Steamship Authority.

"The bus appears to be a total loss and as many as 15 vehicles exhibited varying degrees of damage. The Steamship Authority is working to make contact with the owners of those vehicles and will assist them as needed," the agency's statement said.

The Steamship Authority purchased the bus for about \$142,000 in 2016, and to replace it today would cost about \$177,000, Driscoll said.

The Steamship Authority, a semipublic agency, transported more than 3 million passengers to and from Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket last year, [according to the authority's statistics](#).



FALMOUTH FIRE

**A Steamship Authority bus was destroyed in a fire in Falmouth on Saturday.**

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The agency has 25 other shuttle buses in its fleet to maintain service, according to the agency. *Matt Rocheleau of the Globe staff contributed to this report. John Hilliard can be reached at [john.hilliard@globe.com](mailto:john.hilliard@globe.com).*

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