

News Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Office of the State Fire Marshal investigation of January 25 Pratt fire closes with official classification as undetermined

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February 12, 2018 (TOPEKA) – The Kansas Office of the State Fire Marshal’s (OSFM) Investigation Division has closed its investigation of the fatal fire on Jan. 25, 2018, at 211 Austin, in Pratt, KS. The fire, which resulted in the deaths of five individuals, has been officially classified as undetermined.

The OSFM investigative team, which consisted of five certified fire investigators, worked closely with the Pratt Fire Department and detectives from the Pratt Police Department, as well as a certified fire investigator, an electrical engineer and a fire protection engineer from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Investigators spent three days on scene, interviewing witnesses, examining the scene, sifting debris and examining evidence. After being unable to eliminate careless smoking or a child playing with a lighter as the cause of the fire, the investigative team classified it as undetermined. The origin of the fire was in the basement of the residence in the central living area of the basement. There were no smoke alarms found in the residence.

CASE NO: 2018-461