



Government of Yukon

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FOR RELEASE #11-042
March 16, 2011

Ross River fire was accidental

WHITEHORSE—The findings of a joint investigation into the fire at the recreation centre in Ross River were released today by the Yukon Fire Marshal's Office and the RCMP. Investigators do not believe the fire was deliberately set.

"The investigation determined the fire originated in the weight room on the first floor of the recreation centre, where investigators focused on electrical appliances as the possible source," Fire Marshal Dennis Barry said. "We were unable to determine the cause conclusively, but based on our findings we believe the fire was accidental."

Ross River RCMP is confident that a complete and thorough investigation has been done.

"While the loss of the recreation center has been a major blow to our community, its loss does not change our intentions of working with the community and youth to create opportunities and continue to build good relationships," Corporal Tom Howell of the Ross River RCMP said.

The Yukon Fire Marshal's Office says volunteer fire fighters who were called to the fire last week overcame -40 temperatures and a tremendous fire load in the building to protect nearby propane tanks, power lines and other exposures.

"The volunteer fire departments in Ross River and Faro did an incredible job containing the recreation centre fire," Community Services Minister Archie Lang said. "They should be commended."

The RCMP would like to express their thanks for the many calls and e-mails from across Canada in support of the community during this difficult time.

The Department of Community Services is now establishing a team to help Ross River begin planning next steps. Health & Social Services and the Department of Justice will also be engaged throughout the process.

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Contact:

Emily Younker
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7961
emily.younker@gov.yk.ca

David King
Communications, Community Services
867-456-3945
dave.king@gov.yk.ca

Don Rogers

Whitehorse RCMP
867-667-5599
donald.rogers@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

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