

Building 103 Fire, 3220 Wellington Road
Resolution Worksheet

Date: January 21, 2026

Suggested Motion:

“I move to self-insure the damage repairs in Units 3220 Wellington & 3222 Wellington as a result of the fire that occurred on December 11, 2025.”

2nd:

Vote:

	In Favor	Opposed	Abstained	Absent
Scott Buchanan				
Dave Bush				
Caitlin Counihan				
Robin Davis				
Lucille Eddy				
Elaine Lawler				
Jeff Lisanick				
Scott Mulrooney				
Jim Wicker				

3220 Wellington Fire

On December 11, 2025, a fire broke occurred in 3220 Wellington Road and caused damage to the originating unit and the unit below, 3222 Wellington. The City of Alexandria Fire Marshall's Office issued their Investigation Report on December 15, 2025, and a copy has been attached to this memo for your review.

Management has spoken to the insurance companies for both units. The estimate cost of repairs to unit 3222 Wellington is \$6,800 and the estimated cost of repairs to unit 3220 Wellington is between \$200K - \$250K.

Management has been working with Minkoff and ServiceMaster to get additional proposals for the restoration to the two units. While firm numbers have not be provided, the companies agree with the estimate

Management spoke with Jim Pates, of Preferred Insurance, the Parkfairfax insurance broker, about this incident and the potential of filing a claim for repairs. Mr. Pates stated it is ultimately up to the Board of Directors to decide to file a claim, but wanted to ensure the following factors were considered when making the decision:

1. There have been 3 fires in the last 4 years at Parkfairfax
2. The last insurance claim was filed less than 2 years ago
3. All insurance policies (excluding the workman's comp policy) renew on April 1, 2026. While we do not have hard numbers yet for renewal rates, we should expect around a 10-12% increase without a claim and at least a 20% increase if a claim is filed now.
4. Parkfairfax just got out of the Secondary Insurance Marketplace
5. There is always the possibility of a future incident in the next year, that is much larger and costly, where a claim would, without a doubt, need to be filed.

The Board of Directors needs to determine whether to file a claim against the master policy or self-insure this work.



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE INVESTIGATION REPORT

Date: December 15, 2025

Subject: Residential Building Fire Narrative Report

Address: 3220 Wellington Road

Incident #: 25-029615

Incident Time: December 11, 2025, 18:20

AFD Incident #: 25-029615

APD Incident #: N/A

Investigator: D. GARBER

On Thursday, December 11, 2025 I was dispatched to 3220 Wellington Road for a report of a residential building fire. The initial dispatch indicated calls from multiple callers of a fire at the address. Arriving suppression units reported an odor of smoke upon arrival at 18:25 hours, but no visible smoke or fire on the exterior of the building. Upon entering the address, suppression units reported a haze on the first floor and heavy smoke on the second floor, but were unable to locate a fire. At 18:38 hours suppression units reported locating a smoldering fire in the larger bedroom on the second floor, which had nearly self-extinguished. The fire was fully extinguished, and a fire marshal was requested.

I arrived on scene at 18:59 hours. Overhaul and smoke removal from the unit were still ongoing upon my arrival. I was advised by the EMS supervisor that the unit resident, Ms. Holly BARNES, had relocated to a friend's home at 3224 Gunston Road to get out of the cold weather. I went to that location to speak with Ms. BARNES.

Ms. BARNES told me that before the fire occurred, she had gotten home and entered the bedroom to drop off some items. She uses the bedroom as a home office and a dressing room. She said she turned on two lamps when she entered the room. She then exited the room, started a load of laundry at the washing machine in the upstairs hallway, and went downstairs.

Ms. BARNES was sitting in a reading chair in the living room downstairs when she heard a "pop" noise from upstairs. She was unsure what the noise was, but since she had just started a load of laundry, she thought it might be related to that. A few minutes later she heard a loud crash, which she described as sounding like either lights exploding or glass falling. She went upstairs and saw that the bedroom was on fire. She grabbed a fire extinguisher from the first floor and attempted to use it in the bedroom, but said she was blown back by the fire and could not enter the bedroom.



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

INVESTIGATION REPORT

I asked Ms. BARNES for more information on what is in the room and what was turned on. She said there was a printer and a computer along the west wall. She said there were some Christmas lights in the room that were always on. She said there were two lamps in the room, one by the computer and one by the door. She said there was a portable heater in the room that had been in use for a couple of weeks, and she believed it was on. She said there were two power strips in the room, one along each side of the west wall which were both full. I asked if she had been experiencing any recent problems of circuits tripping and she said no.

At approximately 19:30 hours I entered Ms. BARNES's home after it was declared safe to enter by the safety officer. I was advised by the suppression officer in charge that they still needed to open up the south wall in the room to ensure there was no fire extension into the wall, and he asked if I wanted to take some preliminary photos before they moved anything else in the room. I took the first set of photos on my phone to document the scene as best as possible before further overhaul was done.

Suppression crews on scene said they located a smoldering fire along the south wall of the room, on the floor, where some metal storage racks were placed along the wall. I focused my examination on this area after taking some preliminary overall photos of the room.

I observed the portable heater on the same side of the room near the racks. There was very little damage to the heater. I traced the power cord for the heater and observed that the heater was not plugged in. Ms. BARNES said the heater had been in use, but as the heater was discovered unplugged during my examination, the heater was eliminated as the ignition source for the fire.

I observed the west window in the room was broken, with soot on the interior side and the glass had fallen mostly inside the room. Suppression crews reported the window was not broken by them during suppression or overhaul. The window failed during the fire and was most likely the loud breaking glass noise heard by Ms. BARNES.

The storage racks were incrementally moved away from the wall. When I looked closer to the wall behind the heater, I observed a brown extension cord in the debris underneath a small side table. The extension cord had one black plug plugged into it, which led to a printer on a corner table. One of the other receptacles of the extension cord looked clean, like it may have had something else plugged into it during the fire.



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

INVESTIGATION REPORT

The extension cord led behind the storage racks. As I followed the cord behind the racks, I observed that the insulation was burned away and the wires became more brittle. I found a point where the extension cord had separated. I examined the ends of the cord and observed what appeared to be beading at the end of the break, indicating that the extension cord was most likely energized during the fire.

The storage racks were moved a bit further away from the wall. Upon moving the racks further, I saw the other end of a brown extension cord plugged into a wall outlet behind the racks. The wall receptacle where the cord was plugged in had some slight singe marks on its exterior, indicating heat during the fire, but there was no other damage to the exterior of the outlet. The racks were set down so I could trace the other end of the cord within the rack debris.

I followed the cord to the bottom of the storage rack, to an area where some shoes were stored on the rack. As I followed the cord, I found a spot where the plastic from the cord had melted and fused to the bottom of a shoe and the storage rack, underneath the shoe but on top of the metal storage rack. The insulation of the extension cord was intact between the fuse point and the wall outlet but burned away on the other side of the fuse point towards the other half of the extension cord. I was able to find the other half of the separated cord while tracing from this direction.

The separated area of the extension cord with the observed beading was in the same approximate location where suppression personnel reported finding the smoldering remains of the fire.

I exited the home at this point to allow suppression personnel to complete their overhaul work. I returned to 3224 Gunston Road to speak with Ms. BARNES further and tell her what I had observed.

Ms. BARNES said the extension cord was used for the printer and a lamp. I had observed the printer plugged into the extension cord, and it's possible the clean receptacle I observed was where the lamp was plugged in, and it came loose during overhaul operations. She said the portable heater was plugged into the power strip on the south side of the window. I was never able to locate a power strip on that side of the room, and the heater was found unplugged.

I returned to the fire scene on Wellington Road and took an additional set of photos. I placed a #3 condemnation placard on the front door. Maintenance from Parkfairfax responded and turned off the water to the unit. I collected some items for Ms. BARNES that she requested and had them brought to her at her friend's home on Gunston Road.



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

INVESTIGATION REPORT

Ms. BARNES was advised to leave the fire scene as intact as possible pending possible further investigations by other parties with an interest in the fire.

Based upon the information developed through the investigation, it is this investigator's opinion that the origin of this fire was at the extension cord along the south wall of the bedroom behind the storage racks and that the cause was accidental. It is not within the scope of this investigation to determine fault or specific failures for an accidental fire.

The above opinions are held to a reasonable degree of fire investigation certainty and are based on a site visit, evidence, collected data and interviews. Should additional information change our understanding of the evidence, we reserve the right to amend our opinions.

Respectfully Submitted,

D. GARBER

Investigator
Alexandria Fire Marshal's Office