

Renters Must Now Start Over in Dead of Winter



Salt Lake City firefighters extend a truck's ladder over the east side of the Roosevelt Apartments to battle a blaze that

began shortly before midnight Wednesday. A second roof built over an original covering trapped fire in the building.

3-Alarm Blaze Robs Many Of Worldly Belongings

By Chris Jorgensen
Tribune Staff Writer

Thirty-seven residents of the burned-out Roosevelt apartments were put up in the posh Clarion Hotel by the Red Cross Thursday morning.

The other residents of the building at 256 E. 300 South found housing with family or friends after a three-alarm blaze swept through the low-income apartments just after midnight Thursday morning.

Although there were no injuries, the fire caused about \$1 million damage and left 80 people homeless, said Salt Lake City Fire Battalion Chief Gordon Nicholl.

Fire officials also fear the blaze may have been started by an arsonist, acknowledged arson investigator Jeff Long.

"Right now we're just saying it's suspicious," he responded. "We're looking at a couple of people."

Roosevelt manager Ron Page said fire investigators were looking at three suspects, two of them residents of the building. He said at least four arson fires have been started in the building in the last several months.

"I kind of expected a bad one eventually," said Mr. Page.

Residents of the building, some of them dressed in pajamas and slippers, mingled in the lobby of the Clarion Hotel, 999 S. Main, early Thursday as Red Cross volunteers scrambled to find them food and temporary housing.

"I didn't save a thing from the fire," said 72-year-old Donald Thomas, who had lived in the building for 17 years. "I didn't even get out of there with my clothes."

Mr. Thomas said he and other residents walked a half a block from the building and watched it burn.

"I didn't like that," said Mr. Thomas. "I guess I'll start over. I'm getting real tired of that."

As many as 75 Salt Lake City firefighters battled the blaze for more than six hours Thursday morning and continued to spray hot spots in the building until about 3 p.m.

"We didn't have a single injury," said Chief Nicholl. "We didn't even

See B-2, Column 1



—Tribune Staff Photo by Paul Fraughton

Evacuee D.H. Cook sits in the Clarion Hotel with a cup of coffee after the blaze.

I-215 Probe May Take 2 Weeks To Clear After Crash in Fog

By Christopher Smart
Tribune Staff Writer

It could take investigators as long as two weeks to piece together events that led to three fatalities in four multi-vehicle accidents on fog shrouded I-215 near the Davis/Salt Lake County line Wednesday.

Whether or not criminal negligence charges are filed, civil law suits stemming from the massive pileup could be in the courts for years, one official said.

The accidents, involving about 50 vehicles, happened within minutes of each other between 9:45 and 10 a.m. in the eastbound lanes between Redwood Road and I-15 in Davis County.

Three accident victims remained in critical condition at area hospitals Thursday.

William Alan Boes, 49, Salt Lake City, remained in very critical and unstable condition at LDS Hospital. And Bob Higley, 48, West Valley City, remained in critical but stable condition at LDS Hospital, a spokesman said.

David Vigil, 24, Bountiful, was listed in critical condition following surgery at Lakeview Hospital, a spokeswoman said.

Utah Highway Patrol investigators said the accident was caused by motorists driving too fast for existing conditions in the dense fog in incorporated North Salt Lake. A number of accidents also occurred on Redwood Road in the same vicinity at the same time.

Lt. Ken Bryan, UHP, said it could take up to two weeks to piece together events of the accident.

"It is still under investigation. But if we can find a

clear violation of the law, yes we will hold them accountable," Lt. Bryant said.

But Davis County Attorney Mel Wilson said it would be difficult to show negligence when untangling evidence from the pileup.

"This accident is going to be a nightmare to reconstruct," Mr. Wilson said. "I would doubt that they will come up with the evidence that will allow us to prove negligence unless alcohol was involved."

Investigators took blood samples from drivers following the pileup. However results of those tests were not available Thursday.

Mr. Wilson explained that demonstrating negligent homicide in the accident would require proving "willful and wanton disregard for persons and property."

"There would have to be pretty good proof that not only were they driving too fast for existing conditions but that they were driving faster than the posted speed, which was 55 mph," Mr. Wilson said.

But some of the vehicles involved in the accidents may have been driving at freeway speeds, said Utah Highway Patrol spokesman Gary Whitney.

"When you get right down to it, people were just driving too fast in the fog. We had some reports that people were driving at freeway speeds in the fog. And we may not have the evidence but chances are they were driving that fast," Mr. Whitney said.

Eastbound freeway traffic on I-215 apparently drove into a fog bank at about Redwood Road, Mr. Whitney said. Drivers who slowed down were struck by those who

See B-2, Column 4



Hoses and sheets of ice cover 300 South Thursday morning as firefighters battle

frozen hydrants and near-zero temperatures in handling the apartment blaze.

Smog Can Be Hazardous To Health

By Mike Gorrell
Tribune Staff Writer

Air pollution posed health risks Thursday along the Wasatch Front as an inversion trapped thick accumulations of smoke and heavy fog along valley floors.

The state Department of Health categorized air quality as hazardous in residential areas of Utah County and very unhealthy in downtown Salt Lake City because of high concentrations of two types of pollution.

Health Department monitoring systems in Salt Lake City and Lindon, Utah County, detected excessive concentrations of fine particulates, known technically as PM10 because they are less than 10 microns in diameter, that are potentially damaging to respiratory systems. The levels in Salt Lake City were greater than those in Lindon, which is an unusual development.

Sulfur-dioxide concentrations also exceeded health standards in Salt Lake City, Magna and Bountiful, according to the monitors.

In addition, carbon-monoxide levels in Provo were rated only moderate, as was overall air quality in residential areas of Salt Lake and Davis counties.

Burnell Cordner, director of the health department's Bureau of Air Quality, said the pollution readings were disturbing.

He noted that some scientists believe health problems are compounded when excessive concentrations of two pollutants, such as fine particulates and sulfur dioxide, are present concurrently.

Nina Dougherty, a Salt Lake County Clean Air Coalition spokeswoman, said the high pollution figures "point up the need to do some-

See B-2, Column 4

ACLU to Investigate Use of Utah Schools' Timeout Rooms

By Anne Wilson
Tribune Staff Writer

The American Civil Liberties Union called Thursday for an investigation of how Utah school districts use "timeout" rooms, including what students they place in isolation.

The ACLU's interest in schools' use of timeout rooms stems from a "half dozen or a dozen" complaints and inquiries the organization has received from parents and teachers. Some of the calls reported alleged abuses: One mother, for example, said her child was placed in a closet-sized enclosure for half the school

day. Other calls were from parents who wanted to make sure their schools were using isolation booths properly. At least one parent complained to the organization that she felt pressured to sign a consent form allowing the school to isolate her child if necessary.

Schools named by the complainants included Hawthorne and Dilworth elementary in the Salt Lake City School District; Westland Elementary in Jordan district; and Hillview Elementary in Granite.

"We are not opposing the concept of timeout per se," ACLU executive

director Michelle Parish-Pixler said in a meeting with reporters at ACLU offices in the Boston Building. "We are concerned about the reports of use and misuse."

ACLU lawyer Lincoln Hobbs, chairman of the organization's juvenile rights project, said he has asked Salt Lake, Granite and Jordan school districts to provide him with copies of any policies or guidelines in use regarding timeout rooms or isolation booths. The Utah Office of Education and the state Division of Family Services have been asked for any relevant policies they may enforce.

Timeout is a widely-used method for dealing with children who have behavioral problems. The practice is intended to give youngsters who have lost control a chance to compose themselves in a place where they can't hurt themselves or others. But professionals who use the procedure say some guidelines should be followed — the room should be well-lit, with an opening that allows the child to be observed. The timeout period should be short, with the child given an opportunity to rejoin the group as soon as possible.

Dr. Kristina Hindert, director of

the Children's Center, a treatment facility for emotionally disturbed youngsters, says timeout should be used in a "very specific, time limited way" to help a child change his behavior. As with any form of punishment, timeout can be used too much, too little or for the wrong reasons, said Dr. Hindert. Parents are often the worst offenders.

"The main point of timeout is that it removes a child from a situation. It doesn't teach a child an alternative method for dealing with a situation," she said. "Parents often use it as a punishment rather than as a way of calming a child enough to learn a new way of dealing with a situation."

In an interview, Ms. Parish-Pixler said the complaints received by the ACLU are "quite alarming." She was skeptical that public schools are educating children with behavioral problems severe enough to require social isolation.

"I would think that in a public school system when you have theoretically normal kids you would not have very many instances where kids are a danger to themselves or others," she said.

But Tom Burchett, director of special education for the Salt Lake City School District, said public schools are required to educate youngsters with severe behavior problems. Most of the time, such students are in control. But at times they can become "extremely violent, self-abusive or aggressive," he said.

According to Mr. Burchett, Salt Lake district has a "very well-laid out set of procedures" regarding use of isolation. He said time out is only one strategy used on youngsters with behavior problems.

Mr. Burchett said he's never had any complaints from parents about the use of timeout and that he's "confident that our teachers follow the procedures correctly."

Guidelines Mr. Burchett said are

See B-2, Column 6

'May Be Too Early to Judge'

Few Complaints Follow Utah Cable-Rate Increases

By John Keahey
Tribune Staff Writer

Rate increases by two of Utah's largest cable-television companies have not caused an unusual level of complaints from customers, an industry official said Thursday.

However, "It may be too early to judge" what customer reaction to the 85-cent, Feb. 1 increase announced last week by TCI Cablevision, which has 80 percent of the Utah cable-TV market, said David J. Spatafore, a spokesman for the Utah Cable Television Association.

The companies announcing rate increases are TCI Cablevision and Insight Communications, which serves 23,000 customers in Sandy, West Jordan and from Orem northward.

TCI charges different rates for basic service or extended basic service, depending on the area it serves. Beginning Feb. 1, TCI's basic-service rate throughout its areas of Salt Lake County increased from \$16.95 a month to \$17.80, and from 40 cents to \$1.45 a month for expanded basic service.

Insight Communications announced in November a 6 percent monthly increase to \$19.45 in its basic rate, which went into effect Dec. 1.

During December, Insight Communications

received 350 customer complaints ranging from price to quality of service, the spokesman said. A breakdown of how many are price related was not available. He said Insight traditionally logs a complaint rate between 1 1/4 and 1 1/2 percent, or 287 to 345 complaints monthly.

TCI Cablevision, as of Thursday, — the second day following a long holiday season — received two complaints about the rate increase that was referred to Mr. Spatafore's office by the state Public Service Commission, he said. Customer complaints made directly to TCI during December also haven't been broken down by category, but the spokesman said the company logged 155 calls during the month.

TCI's monthly complaint rate averages less than one-tenth of 1 percent of subscribers, he said.

"I believe people are more understanding these days of the necessity to increase prices," Mr. Spatafore said. "Increased costs, unfortunately, are becoming more accepted."

"And people have a choice," he said. "If they believe the cost is too excessive, they have the ability to cancel their subscription."

In a letter to their customers, both TCI and

Insight Communications blamed increased operating expenses and programming fees charged by cable networks for the rate increases.

Mr. Spatafore said he is working with the state PSC in resolving complaints because cable customers sometimes call the commission about cable issues, even though the agency has no authority over the industry.

The commission asked the 1990 Legislature to give it authority over cable television service, but the measure failed. Currently, city and county governments have service authority over local cable companies.

Local and state authority over cable-TV rates is forbidden by the Federal Communications Commission, but that may change this year, Mr. Spatafore said. The FCC has issued proposed rules that allow local governments to have more regulatory control over local cable companies.

Mr. Spatafore said because of the PSC's concern with the issue, he worked out an arrangement with PSC Chairman Ted Stewart and commission Secretary Steve Hewlett to refer all cable complaints to his office. Since last April, he said, the PSC has forwarded eight calls to the UCTA spokesman.