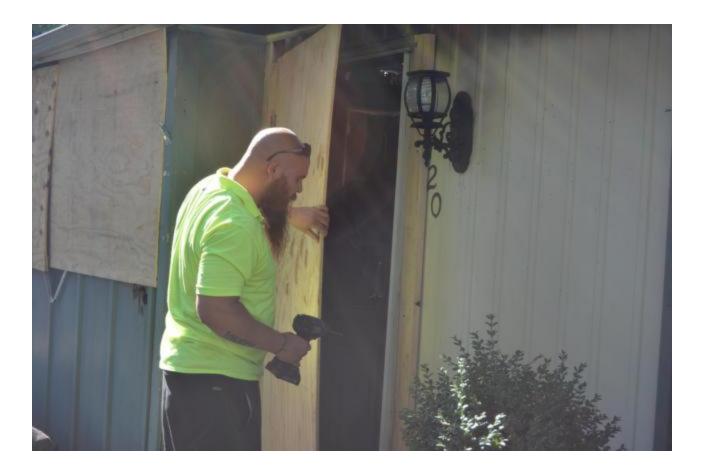# Bethalto Fire Department, other departments battle tragic blaze, find woman inside

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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BETHALTO – The Bethalto Fire Department and other mutual aid fire responders valiantly battled a fire with flames shooting through the roof when they arrived in the 700 block of Oakridge in Bethalto.

The Bethalto Fire Department shift commander told Fire Chief Alex Campbell when he arrived on Tuesday, there was fire shooting through the roof and heavy smoke throughout the residence. Bethalto received the 911 call at 6:59 p.m. and when fire crews arrived, they made the difficult decision there was no way to safely enter the structure because it was engulfed in flames.

Bethalto, with the help of Rosewood Heights, Cottage Hills and Meadowbrook in a mutual aid call, quickly extinguished the blaze, entered the home and discovered a woman had perished in the fire.

"The fire fighters did all they could do," said Bethalto Fire Chief Alex Campbell Wednesday morning. "They did a complete search of the location when the fire was extinguished and located a woman in the residence."

Campbell said this was the first fatal fire he had witnessed in his 11-year career and it was very difficult for him and the other fire fighters at the scene.

"We have a young department, but we are all close-knit men and women," he said. "The fatality was hard on every one at the scene. We feel very sorry for the family."

The fire chief said the home was smaller in size and when the fire ignited, it just "took off."

Campbell said the State Fire Marshal's Office is investigating the fire, but a cause of the fire is not yet known.