



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire at Senior Living Facility Lake Morton Plaza

Lakeland, FL – At approximately 12:42 PM, the Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) received a call of a structure fire at Lake Morton Plaza, a senior living facility, located at 400 South Florida, Ave. Upon arriving, crews encountered heavy black smoke on the roof of the ten story building.

As crews battled the fire, residents were evacuated by other LFD firefighters, Lakeland Police, and employees of the Lake Morton Plaza. The fire was contained in approximately 15 to 20 minutes however the greater task was in evacuating the elderly residents of the facility. As smoke cooled and lowered to floors below, residents had to be evacuated, as smoke inhalation posed a greater threat.

All 128 residents and 30 employees of the Lake Morton Plaza were evacuated and accounted for. Two residents and two employees were transported to Lakeland Regional Health by Polk County Fire Rescue as a precaution but not life-threatening injuries were sustained. 90 residents were transported by bus to the RP Funding Center. At the time of this media release, they remain at the RP Funding Center until alternative accommodations are found by Lake Morton Plaza Management.

Each floor of the building has been checked and cleared by LFD. Smoke was ventilated and five-gas monitors were used to ensure air quality was safe for eventual re-entry. Due to the scale of the evacuation and another residential fire that occurred at the same time as this incident, mutual aid was provided by Polk County Fire Rescue and evacuation and traffic assistance was provided by the Lakeland Police Department.

Lakeland Fire Department Fire Investigators determined that the fire started in a roof-top electrical box and was accidental in nature.

Photos from the scene are available www.facebook.com/LakelandFD and <https://twitter.com/LakelandFD>.

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