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EEO Report

Fire Forces Evacuation At Westin Hotel

Reported by: [Jay Warren](#)

Web produced by: [Neil Relyea](#)

Photographed by: [Gary Hughes](#)

First posted: 11/19/2006 11:58:12 PM

Fire investigators are trying to determine the cause of a fire that forced the evacuation of several floors of the Westin Hotel in downtown Cincinnati Sunday.

They say a Christmas tree on the third floor, near the hotel's conference rooms, caught fire and filled the entire atrium and surrounding areas with smoke.

The hotel's sprinkler system put the fire out and no one was hurt, but according to the district fire chief, the lights in question should not have caused a fire.

"When crews first arrived, the smoke in this atrium was far thicker," said District Chief Anson Turley, "but as you can see, there was a lot of it."

Fire officials evacuated three to five floors above the fire, as well as the restaurant downstairs.

All told, about 100 people were evacuated.

Responding to a large building like the Westin Hotel is always a challenge for fire fighters.

"The most important thing we do besides saving lives is we have to find where the fire is," the district chief told 9News.

"When you pull up on a house fire you generally have a good idea exactly where it's located," he said. "When you pull up on a building this size and all you see is smoke -- you've got to search send teams through the building just to find where the fire is --and once you locate it then you have to fight it."

With the sprinkler system taking care of the fire, the largest job for fire fighters was to clean up the water and clear out the smoke.

They should release a cause for the fire in a day or two.

Just last week a fire broke out in the Millennium Hotel downtown, also forcing the evacuation of both hotel guests and employees.

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Scene outside Westin Hotel
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