

# GARAGE FIRE ON TUSCARORA LN (DRW) 6-13-23 (PHOTO)

News Release from **Bend Fire & Rescue**

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Downloadable file: [Credit Bend Fire](#)

Bend Fire Department was called to a garage fire in Deschutes River Woods early this morning. The occupants on Tuscarora Ln woke up to the smell of smoke in the home and found the lights not working. They immediately called 911 when a fire was found in the garage. Fire crews were able to quickly stop the fire upon arrival before it had a chance to spread to the rest of the home. All occupants safely evacuated to the neighbor's house with all their pets.

The fire was determined to be spontaneous combustion of oily rags from a commercial kitchen. The rags were laundered at home and once they finished drying, put into a laundry basket without folding them. Spontaneous combustion of oily rags occurs when rag or cloth is slowly heated to its ignition point through oxidation. A substance will begin to release heat as it oxidizes. If this heat has no way to escape, like in a pile, the temperature will rise to a level high enough to ignite the oil and ignite the rag or cloth. In this case, drying the rags started the heating process. Washing the oil-soaked cloth doesn't always remove all the oil and can still pose a threat after drying. The act of folding the linens is usually enough to cool them down below the ignition temperature.

These types of fires are more common in commercial kitchens where the abundance of cooking oils and grease is greater than at home. In this case, the occupants brought rags home from a commercial kitchen in town to launder before returning to work the next day. Most household kitchen rags don't get the amount of oil soaked into them as would be found in a restaurant. This link has national and local references to fires caused by similar cooking oil soaked rags:

<https://societyinsurance.com/blog/handling-greasy-rags-to-prevent-spontaneous-combustion/>

The fire did approximately \$30,000 in damages to the home and contents. The owners are working with their insurance company to begin repairs as soon as possible. The smoke alarms did not activate in this case as most of the smoke was limited to the garage and laundry room, areas where smoke alarms are not normally found.

