

The Investigation Into House Fire of Candidate for City Marshall of Monroe is Underway

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MONROE(KNOE 8)- A state fire marshal and a private detective returned to the scene of a house fire Thursday to look for the cause of the deliberately-set blaze.

The fire takes on added significance, since it damaged the home of candidate who had claimed his opponent harassed him.

As KNOE 8's Cynthia Milledge reports, Chris Handy and his family are living in a temporary home and moving ahead with his city marshal campaign.

On this July afternoon in the Cypress Point neighborhood, we find a state fire marshal and a private investigator at the home of the reverend Chris Handy - searching for anything that will explain what sparked the flames.

To show you how much damage the blaze caused, not only did it burn the front doorway, the flames also spread up through the roof and to a bedroom next door, causing extensive damage where the family can no longer live here.

Candidate for City Marshall of Monroe Chris Handy says, "I am afraid, as a matter of fact, I was considering dropping out of the race Monday, but some people came forward to provide us 24 hour security."

The ordeal shook up the Handy family. They are living temporarily in an undisclosed location.

Though he admits that through it all, his campaign has become stronger.

Handy says, "We gone win, despite this latest attack, we gone stay in."

It's not known who or what was used to set the fire. But the fire marshal did tell us it was intentionally set with some type of flammable liquid.

Handy says, "We hope to find out the culprit, who did this, and bring them to justice."

Handy says that before announcing his candidacy, he was contacted by incumbent city marshal Wince Highshaw, and claims it was Highshaw who left two messages on his answering machine.

That tape has been confiscated by the fire marshal.

It's not known if the fire and the messages are related.

Highshaw issued a statement Monday offering sympathy to the Handy family.

Handy says he and Highshaw haven't spoken since June 10th.