

Wellington fire may be linked to suspicious Halton blaze

Wellington County OPP are investigating a suspicious fire at a vacant property in Wellington North Township, between Fergus and Arthur.

Just before 9 p.m. Sunday, OPP and the Centre Wellington fire department responded to a call regarding a fire on a property located on First Line, West Garafraxa.

Renovation materials outside of an unoccupied house, as well as a tree on the property, were on fire.

Firefighters extinguished the fire, which did not do any damage to the house.

The cause of the fire is considered suspicious, and the incident is being investigated by Wellington County OPP, West Region Criminal Operations and the OPP Forensic Identification Services Unit.

Police do not know yet whether this fire is linked to more than a dozen others that are being looked at as part of a joint investigation between OPP, Guelph Police Service, Halton Regional Police Service, and the office of the Ontario Fire Marshal.

In February, OPP announced the joint investigation would focus on 14 suspi-

cious fires at vacant and abandoned buildings in the area that may be connected.

Since then, there have been two more suspicious fires in the area — one at an abandoned building in Morriston on March 5, and this latest fire on Sunday in West Garafraxa.

The fire in Morriston and the one in West Garafraxa are both considered suspicious, so investigators will definitely be considering whether or not they were set by the same person(s), OPP media relations officer Marylou Schwindt said in an email response.

Because the investigations are not yet complete, police can't say specifically how many of the fires are linked, she said.

Police are urging property owners to be vigilant.

We are continuing to ask property owners to be locking all outbuildings and reporting suspicious persons/activity to police immediately, Schwindt said.

Anyone with information about Sunday's fire is being asked to contact OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

- Metroland News Service

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