

\$200,000 damage in electrical fire

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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A fire that caused up to \$200,000 damage to a home in northeast Stouffville Sunday was caused by an electrical issue.

Jennifer Cooper, fire prevention/public education officer for the Whitchurch-Stouffville fire department, could not say whether the Pendutch Circle blaze was related to an ongoing renovation, an appliance or perhaps wiring in the home.

A forensic engineer, hired by the homeowner's insurance company, is investigating.

The amount of damage sustained to the second floor is more than originally thought and is closer to \$150,000 or \$200,000, she said.

Ms Cooper said the home looks repairable, but the homeowners will be displaced for quite some time.

Friends and relatives are rallying behind the family of four left temporarily homeless, according to neighbours speaking on social media. Plans were in the works to set up a

bank account to assist the family.

The fire started on the second floor of the home, just west of the Stouffville Country Market in the Tenth Line and Hemlock Drive area, around 3:45 p.m Sunday.

Residents of the house were not home when the fire started. However, when they returned, they found smoke coming from the brick home's second storey, according to Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire Chief Rob McKenzie.

There were no injuries.

Most of the damage occurred in the ceiling area above the garage, however, the entire home sustained major smoke damage and is uninhabitable, Mr. McKenzie said.

Containing the fire became "awkward" for firefighters due to zero visibility caused by the smoke, coupled with the second floor being in the midst of a renovation. Firefighters had to maneuver around large objects and a new layout, according to Mr. McKenzie.

When firefighters entered the home, they heard its smoke alarms, Mr. McKenzie said.

— with files from Jim Mason



STAFF PHOTO/JIM MASON

Police and fire officials at the site of a house fire west of the Stouffville Country Market.

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