



News Release

Clark County Fire Department ■ 575 E. Flamingo Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89119

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For Immediate Release

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Monte Carlo Fire Sparked Accidentally Contractor Facing Possible Citation for Work Without Permit

The Friday fire at the Monte Carlo Resort & Casino was most likely caused by flying molten metal from a hand-held cutting torch, the Clark County Fire Department announced today.

At the time of the fire, workers on the roof of the hotel-casino were cutting corrugated steel products used for part of a walkway being installed on the interior of the protective wall along the perimeter of the roof, officials said.

“We believe this fire could have been prevented had appropriate steps been taken,” Chief Steve Smith said. “It appears that no slag mats were used to catch the molten metal and no fire watch had been posted. Additionally, the contractor responsible for the work on the roof did not obtain the necessary ‘hot works’ permit. We are now reviewing whether to cite the contractor.” Such citations are by law misdemeanors, punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine and/or six months in jail.

County regulations require a contractor to obtain a hot works permit from the Fire Department when using a torch. A licensed contractor is responsible for knowing what permits are needed for a particular job and obtaining all necessary permits.

The pieces of molten metal, called “slag,” started the fire on the southwest corner of the main façade at the roof line. On-scene construction workers unsuccessfully attempted to extinguish the fire, which spread to the exterior architectural façade of the building. The fire, investigators said, was accidental.

Special agents with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) assisted the county Fire Department with the investigation. A complete report on the incident is still being finalized but officials said the cause will not change.

The contractor, Union Erectors Limited Liability Company, had a permit from the county Department of Development Services to install window-washing equipment at the hotel – but no hot works permit. In general, hot works areas should not contain combustibles or should be provided with appropriate shielding to prevent sparks, slag or heat from igniting exposed combustibles. Additionally, contractors performing hot work operations are to conduct hot works site inspections to ensure that there are no exposed combustibles on the opposite side of partitions, walls, ceilings and floors.

Around 11 a.m. Friday, Clark County firefighters responded to a fire at the Monte Carlo on the Las Vegas Strip. Most of it was contained to the façade on top of the 32-story resort.

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In all, 35 fire suppression units, including about 120 personnel, from around the Las Vegas Valley responded to the fire. Firefighters from the cities of Henderson, North Las Vegas and Las Vegas also responded. The fire was knocked down at 12:15 p.m. that same day. No major injuries were reported.

“This fire showed the benefits of our fire-prevention and fire-suppression regulations,” Smith said. “When faced with a fire more than 400 feet above the ground, the fire resistant materials used in construction, fire suppression systems inside the building, and the swift and professional work of our firefighters quickly contained and extinguished the fire.”

Clark County is the entity responsible for providing fire protection on the Las Vegas Strip. If the unincorporated county were a city, it would be the largest in the state. The countywide population is 2 million, and 877,233 of them reside in the unincorporated county (841,352 of those in the 1,543-square-mile Las Vegas Valley) – compared to 603,093 for the city of Las Vegas, whose jurisdiction includes downtown.

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