

Former Williams Delight Home of Slain VIPD Officer Eustace Charles Engulfed in Flames

A late-night fire engulfed the former Williams Delight home of VIPD Officer Eustace Charles, who was killed in the community July 26. Officials say the residence was unoccupied, while the cause and full extent of the damage remain under investigation.

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Flames engulf the former Williams Delight home of slain VIPD Officer Eustace Charles late Thursday night. Officials say the residence was unoccupied, and the cause of the fire remains under investigation.

ST. CROIX — Fire and police officials are investigating a structure fire that fully engulfed the former Williams Delight residence of slain V.I. Police Department Officer Eustace Charles, who

was fatally shot in the same community last month.

According to VIPD Director of Communications Glen Dratte, preliminary information indicates that the residence was unoccupied when the fire occurred.

At approximately 11:01 p.m., the V.I. 911 Emergency Call Center received several calls reporting a structure fire at the Williams Delight residence.

Multiple callers identified the property as Charles's former home and reported that it was fully engulfed in flames.

V.I. Fire and Emergency Medical Services personnel and VIPD officers responded to the scene. Fire personnel confirmed an active structure fire and began firefighting operations.

[\[Watch: Former Home of Slain Officer Engulfed in Fire\]](#)

Authorities have not yet determined the cause of the blaze or the full extent of the damage.

The fire notice did not indicate any connection between the blaze and Charles's homicide.

Charles Was Killed in Williams Delight on July 26

Charles, 51, was a member of VIPD's Executive Security Unit and was assigned to Lt. Gov. Tregenza A. Roach's security detail when he was killed early July 26.

At approximately 5:50 a.m. that morning, authorities received notification of gunfire in Williams Delight. Responding officers [found Charles unresponsive](#) inside a vehicle with multiple gunshot wounds. Emergency medical personnel determined that he had no vital signs.

VIPD and the FBI began investigating the killing.

Subsequent court filings reported that a witness saw a person dressed entirely in black fire at Charles's black Ford Explorer before fleeing in a black four-door Hyundai without a license plate.

Ra'Kheel A. Velazquez was later arrested on firearm and ammunition charges arising during the ensuing investigation. He was not charged with Charles's homicide.

The investigation into Charles's killing remained separate from the structure-fire investigation announced Friday.

Authorities are asking anyone with information regarding the fire to contact Crime Stoppers V.I. at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Tips may be provided anonymously, and callers may be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$10,000 for information leading to an arrest.