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VIFS Responds to Fire Engulfing 3-Story Building in St. John; Firefighters Sustain Minor Injuries

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Scene of the structure fire in Estate Grunwald on St. John.

ST. JOHN — V.I. Fire Service crews on Sunday at about 9:48 p.m. responded to a structure fire in Estate Grunwald on St. John.

According to a release issued Monday, six fire personnel and two units assigned to the Cruz Bay Fire Station initially responded to the scene. Upon arrival, firefighters found a three-story wooden structure fully engulfed in flames and promptly commenced firefighting operations.

Within 20 minutes, four additional fire personnel from the Coral Bay Fire Station arrived on scene to assist the first arriving crews.

Firefighters battled the blaze for a little over 14 hours. Enlisting the help of private water haulers, they were able to extinguish the fire using over 60,000 gallons of water and over 1,000 feet of hose. In total, two tankers, 1 pumper, and 1 rescue vehicle were deployed to the scene, according to the release.

Five firefighters sustained minor injuries. They were treated by Firefighter/EMTs on the scene, and two of the five were transported to the Myrah Keating Smith Clinic where they were examined by a doctor and released.

The structure, a 9-unit apartment complex, sustained significant damage. However, none of the residents reported any injuries. Representatives from the American Red Cross were on site to provide assistance, the V.I. Fire Service said.

“I must commend the members of the Fire Service who responded to this fire,” said VIFS Director Daryl George. “They did a tremendous job. The courage and determination they displayed is truly admirable. I would be remiss if I did not also acknowledge Prestige Water Delivery, B & C Trucking, Truck King, and L & N Trucking for supplying water on the scene. They played a major role in the success of our operations, and we are grateful for their assistance.”

This fire remains under investigation by the Arson Investigation and Prevention Unit.