

Heater caused motel blaze

A faulty portable electric heater appears to be responsible for a fire at the Park Motel on the morning of May 18.

"The heater was near the point where the fire started," said Farmington Hills Fire Marshal Steve Hume. "We are having the heater analyzed."

Firefighters from Stations 3 and 1 put out the fire after arriving at 10:26 a.m. Two rooms were badly damaged at the motel on Grand River and the street was completely blocked off for about a half hour.

There were no injuries.

Motel guests were evacuated from their rooms after one of them had seen flames from the room and asked the manager to call firefighters.

The damage to the hotel and contents is estimated at about \$110,000.



STAFF PHOTOS BY TOM HOPPMAYER

Tough sledding: Students at Mercy High School in Farmington Hills found out Wednesday what it's like to drive drunk without taking a single swig of alcoholic beverage. The students drove a specially modified 1996 Dodge/Plymouth Neon that has an on-board computer that simulates drunk driving. The computer, introduced in 1988 in conjunction with the "THINK . . . Don't Drive and Drink" public awareness campaign, allows sober drivers to experience first-hand the dangers of drinking and driving. Students drive the car on a safe, controlled course with a trained instructor in the car. The weight of the driver and a hypothetical number of drinks are entered into the computer. The information automatically sets the timing delay on the car's braking and steering. Sophomore Katie Brennan, above, tries to keep her car under control. Upper right, from left to right, Casey Tluzek, Carey Czech, Teresa Wojnaroski and Stephanie Barlow watch as some other students try to keep the car on the course. Right, the special car is driven over the course — and a plastic cone.



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