

Ruptured gas line fueled blaze that destroyed Grand Island home



Crews battle a fire on Huth Rd. in Grand Island Tuesday, April 28, 2015. (Mark Mulville/Buffalo News)

An investigation continues into the cause of a fire that destroyed a Grand Island home, where a ruptured gas line and swirling winds contributed to the intensity of the flames, officials said. The fire at 1762 Huth Road, at the corner of Pellamwood Court, was reported at 1:38 p.m. Tuesday by someone who saw it from the playground of Huth Road Elementary School, directly across the street.

The blaze at the two-story home already was raging out of control when fire crews arrived, according to Ray Pauley, public information officer for the Grand Island Fire Company. The occupants of the home, which is owned by Neil Gallagher, had fled safely, and firefighters also were ordered out of the structure because of a partial roof collapse.

A Grand Island firefighter was taken to Kenmore Mercy Hospital for treatment of an ankle injury. "It was a tough fire to fight. The fire got underneath the roof," Pauley said. The building was declared a total loss, with damages estimated at \$225,000 to the structure, \$50,000 to the contents and \$5,000 in exposure damage to a neighboring property, on which siding was melted by the heat, Pauley said.

Grand Island firefighters were assisted by crews from the Ellwood Fire District, Sheridan Park Volunteer Fire Company and City of Tonawanda. Because of road closures during the firefighting effort, the afternoon bus run for the elementary school had to be rerouted around the scene, resulting in some delays.