PRESS RELEASE

# CONTACT: Chief Michael Dingelstedt December 31, 2018

**Maplewood Fire Dept.**

**201-841-3017**

## Fire at 1787 Springfield Ave. Maplewood, NJ

At 1951 hrs. on Dec. 30, the Maplewood Fire Department was dispatched DC-3 arrived on the scene a reported nothing showing from the exterior but was advised by police officers on the scene that there was a heavy smoke condition on the second floor. Residents were evacuated by MPD prior to the arrival of the fire department. Eng. 32 personnel entered the apartment and found a plastic table and chair smoldering with plastic dripping on the wall and floor. Eng. 32 crew quickly extinguished the remaining fire while the crew from Tower Ladder 31 opened the wall and floor to check for extension with none found.

Investigation revealed that the occupant had candles burning on the kitchen table. He was in a front room when he smelled smoke and found fire in the kitchen. The occupant called 911 and used a dry chemical fire extinguisher to knock down the fire before leaving the apartment. Damage was confined to the table, chair and floor and wall immediately adjacent to them. There was also minor water damage to the first floor medical office from extinguishment efforts. The second and third floors were ventilated and checked for CO (carbon monoxide) with zero levels found after ventilation. The occupants were allowed back into the building. Two occupants were evaluated for smoke inhalation by South Orange Rescue Squad and refused further medical attention. Irvington FD was on standby for Maplewood during the incident.

The cause of the fire is accidental and may have been caused by a cat knocking a candle over. Residents are reminded that, while candles are pleasant to look at, they are open flames and should be used with caution. According to the National Fire Protection Association, on average, a candle fire is reported to U. S. fire departments every 40 minutes. It is recommended that candles be extinguished before leaving a room.

**# # END # #**