

Woman Dies in House Fire

Vocabulary

1. **Authority** - The power or right to give orders or make decisions.

Sample sentence: He has the authority to issue warrants.

2. **Blaze** - A strong flame that burns brightly.

Sample sentence: The blaze spread rapidly.

3. **Cessation** - An end to something.

Sample sentence: Due to the fire, there was a temporary cessation of production at the factory.

4. **Erratic** - Liable to sudden unpredictable change.

Sample sentence: I can never stick to my diet, and thus my eating habits are quite erratic.

5. **Surveillance** - Close observation of a person or group (usually by the police).

Sample sentence: Since he was suspected of committing the crime, the police kept him under surveillance.

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Let's read

An 80-year-old woman died Tuesday afternoon in a fire. The blaze was reported about 2:30 p.m. at a home on Sunnyside Avenue. The victim was identified as Mary Cass. Her husband, Roy Cass, 80, was not at home at the time of the fire. Investigators from the local fire department were trying to determine the exact cause of the fire. They said it looked like the woman had fallen asleep on the sofa with a cigarette in her hand.

The value of the home was estimated at \$700,000. The Casses were married in 1945. Both of them had been smokers throughout most of their lives.

Mr. Cass said, "Six months ago, we decided to quit smoking, because we wanted to live to be 100. So we went to a smoking cessation clinic. The clinic worked! We both managed to quit a month ago. At least I thought we both did. I can't believe she was smoking behind my back."

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Mr. Cass started sobbing after his remarks. He repeatedly cried out his wife's name. Authorities took him to a nursing home where he could be kept under surveillance.

"We've had too many instances of long-time married couples who, if they discover their spouse is dead, commit suicide within 48 hours," said a nursing home spokesperson. "Mr. Cass's behavior has been erratic, from talking nonstop to crying to staring vacantly. We are going to have to watch him closely."

Discussion A

1. Have you ever escaped from a fire?
2. Do you have a smoke alarm? How often do you check the batteries?

Discussion B

1. Do you have a fire escape plan? Does everybody in your family know where to go in case of fire?
2. How do you put out a fire when you have no water?
3. How would you escape from your house if it caught on fire?