



# Office of Commissioner of Insurance

## NEWS RELEASE

**Ralph Hudgens**  
Commissioner of Insurance  
Safety Fire Commissioner  
Industrial Loan Commissioner

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### **RULING ISSUED ON MITCHELL COUNTY HOUSE EXPLOSION**

**Atlanta** – Fire Investigator with Insurance Commissioner Ralph Hudgens' office has ruled the cause of a house explosion and fire that injured three people on August 8 in Mitchell County accidental.

"Investigators determined that a propane gas ball valve located behind an electric cooking stove was partially open and leaked gas," Commissioner Hudgens said. "The home previously had a gas stove, but replaced it with an electric stove; investigators believe that valve was not properly shut-off."

Injured in the explosion and fire were Willie Wimberley, 67, Willie Mae Harvey, 77 and Betty Brown (age unknown). Wimberley and Brown were life flighted to the UF Health Shands Burn Center in Gainesville, Florida in critical condition. Harvey was treated at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital and released.

The explosion, which occurred around 9:15 a.m. destroyed the home located at 112 Harney Street, in Camilla, Ga.

Fire Chief James Sullivan and the Camilla Fire Department assisted with the investigation.