



# NEWS RELEASE

**RALPH T. HUDGENS**  
COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE  
SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER  
INDUSTRIAL LOAN COMMISSIONER

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Seventh Floor, West Tower  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
[www.oci.ga.gov](http://www.oci.ga.gov)

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**Contact: Glenn Allen**  
**404-463-0729**  
**[gallen@oci.ga.gov](mailto:gallen@oci.ga.gov)**  
**Twitter: @GA\_DOI**

## **HUDGENS: FIRE IN BERRIEN COUNTY CLAIMS THREE LIVES**

**Atlanta** – Fire Investigators with Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens' office have ruled a Wednesday morning house fire that claimed the lives of three and injured two, accidental.

The fire, which occurred around 3:25 a.m., killed Arturo Garcia, 39, his stepson, Toby Hawkins, 16, and family friend Christopher Rowan, 17. The house, located at 634 Shepard Street, Nashville, Ga., was destroyed.

"The investigation revealed that the fire originated in the kitchen, and was the result of unattended cooking," Hudgens said. "We found nothing suspicious about this tragic fire."

Injured in the blaze were Kathy Garcia, 42, and Shay Catlett, 32. Both Garcia and Catlett sustained smoke inhalation, and were transported to the South Georgia Medical Center. Jay Hawkins, 20, escaped with no injuries.

"With this tragedy in Nashville, we've had 15 fire fatalities reported this year in Georgia," Hudgens said. "I urge all Georgian to use extreme caution while cooking and heating their homes."

Fire Investigators with Hudgens' office were assisted in the investigation by the Nashville Police Department.