

Fireplace Embers Blamed for Deadly Nebraska Fire

NEHAWKA, Neb. (AP) - Investigators say embers or hot ashes from a living room fireplace touched off a fire that killed six members of a southeast Nebraska family.

Thirty-six-year-old Michael and Michelle Speer and their girls were killed early Thursday morning at their home near the village of Nehawka about 30 miles south of Omaha.

The Cass County Sheriff's Office said in a news release Monday that flames erupted in combustible materials near the fireplace and soon spread to room furnishings and up walls.

The sheriff's office says firefighters found all six bodies in beds. A preliminary autopsy report says they died from smoke inhalation.

The four girls have been identified as 11-year-old Elli Perez, 7-year-old Adilynn Speer, 5-year-old Emma Speer and 2-year-old Anniston Speer.

Associated Press