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Parents and 7 Children Killed In Suspected Perm Arson Fire

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A suspected arson fire killed two parents and their seven children — aged four to 13 — on Friday in a blaze that swept through their apartment in the Perm region, Interfax reported.

Investigators believe that the fire began in the kitchen before spreading to the rest of the apartment, located in a four-story building in the village of Mokhovoye. A 34-year-old man, his wife and seven children died of smoke inhalation in the blaze.

The fire was likely intentionally set by someone or was caused accidentally by one of the children, investigators said. A criminal arson case has been opened in connection with the incident.

Only one of the parents' young sons survived, as he was at his grandmother's apartment at the time. Perm Governor Oleg Chirkunov said the orphaned child will receive government assistance, Interfax reported.

The family was designated low-income and was considered part of a "risk group" by the

Health and Social Development Ministry, due to the father's lack of full-time work, Chirkunov said.

One of the highest death tolls from a fire in recent memory came at a nightclub in Perm in December 2009, when 109 people perished in a blaze and the resulting stampede. The fire was caused by a pyrotechnics display that ignited a plastic ceiling.

Meanwhile, a fire in the Saratov region over the weekend claimed the lives of five people, Interfax reported.

About 100 people were evacuated from the burning five-story apartment building in the Saratov region town of Engels on Saturday. Five people died in the fire and 11 were hospitalized.

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