

TOLEDO ARTICLES

TOLEDO, OHIO -- A three-member volunteer panel will meet Tuesday to investigate the adequacy of the water provided to extinguish a fire that [destroyed a historic West Toledo house](#).

"It is very important to clarify and answer all questions regarding the unfortunate incident," said Toledo Mayor Carty Finkbeiner, who created the group.

Serving on the panel are, Doni Miller, Dr. Douglas Nims and Dr. William Kramer. The members, whom each have a different expertise, are unrelated to city hall.

Miller is the past president of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority Board of Directors and serves as Principal Developer for Health Services Design Group.

Dr. Nims, a civil engineering professor at the University of Toledo, has an expertise in civil and structural engineering, mechanics and materials.

Dr Kramer is currently the director of Fire Service and the University of Cincinnati and recently studied the City of Sylvania's fire department. In the past, he served as the Fire Chief of Indianapolis International Airport and Deputy Chief and Assistant Fire Chief in Cincinnati.

The panel will have two weeks to review the facts of the fire and report back to the mayor and safety director with their conclusions.

-Kristen Zenz



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Mayor taps panel to review Westmoreland fire

By [IGNAZIO MESSINA](#)
BLADE STAFF WRITER

Toledo Mayor Carty Finkbeiner appointed a three-member independent review panel yesterday to examine the city's handling of a fire that destroyed a home in the historic Westmoreland district two weeks ago.

The trio will review a blaze at 1945 Mount Vernon Ave., which raised questions about the fire response and the city's water system.

On the panel are Doni Miller, former president of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority board of directors, Douglas Nims, a civil engineering professor at the University of Toledo, and William Kramer, director of fire service at the University of Cincinnati, who was recently employed by the city of Sylvania to study its fire department.

AUDIO

[HEAR: 911 audio from the Westmoreland fire](#)

"As the [Barbi and Herman] Harrison home was destroyed by fire, and there have been questions raised regarding the adequacy of water provided to extinguish the blaze, it is very important to clarify and answer all questions regarding the unfortunate incident," Mr. Finkbeiner said.

"Three individuals, unrelated to Toledo city hall in any manner, have volunteered to review the facts as they are known and report back to myself and the safety director as to their conclusions," he said.

Their report is expected within 14 days.

"I have no reason to be suspicious of any aspect of the data received to date," the mayor said.

"However, this three-person panel will review the matter in detail and provide a summary report."

The panel is to meet with Mayor Finkbeiner and Safety Director Bob Reinbolt at 12:45 p.m. today.

Fire officials have said responding crews probably did not know that the hydrant to which they connected to extinguish the blaze was on a 4-inch water main.

Chief Michael Wolever said inadequate water volume and delay in notification were two factors in the destruction of the Harrisons' house.

Mr. Nims said he would examine what standards exist in comparable neighborhoods and cities and what is the expected level of service.

"I just have to understand how it should happen, and what generally happens, and what happened in this case, and what could prevent it in the future," Mr. Nims said.