



Hazmat Response at St. Joseph Manor results in safe evacuation. Freon leak identified as the cause.

DYERSBURG, TN – March 9, 2026 – On March 8, 2026, Dyersburg Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services personnel responded to a medical call at St. Joseph Manor, located on Highway 51 Bypass, after a patient reported choking and chest pain. Upon arrival, Fire and EMS personnel began exhibiting symptoms consistent with exposure to an unknown chemical.

Additional Dyersburg Fire, EMS, and police personnel were immediately dispatched to the scene. As a precautionary measure, the entire facility was evacuated, and the Dyersburg Hazmat Team suited up and entered the building to assess the situation.

Hazmat team members utilized air quality monitoring equipment and obtained a positive reading in one of the rooms. Upon further investigation, teams isolated the air conditioning unit in that area. They determined that a possible freon leak into the facility was the source of the symptoms experienced by first responders and residents.

As a result of the exposure, six individuals were transported to the local emergency room for evaluation and treatment: one Dyersburg firefighter, one EMS student, two St. Joseph Manor residents, and two Medical Center EMS team members.

Following the identification of the freon leak, the facility was properly ventilated, and all residents were safely returned to their rooms.

“The safety of our community and our first responders is always our top priority.” Said Fire Chief Brett Sipes. “I am proud of the swift and coordinated response by our fire, EMS, and police personnel. Their quick actions ensured the safe evacuation of all residents and the identification of the source of exposure.

The Dyersburg Fire Department would like to thank the Dyersburg Police Department, Medical Center EMS, Dyer County EMA, West Dyersburg Church of Christ, Jackson Madison County Health Department, Madison County Fire Department, First Presbyterian Church, and all personnel who assisted in yesterday’s response.