



# NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

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**Photo: Firefighters outside the Beaufort Hilton Garden Inn hotel, 1500 Queen Street**

## **Beaufort firefighters say hotel sprinkler system helped save lives, property Thursday**

Built-in sprinklers helped save Beaufort's Hilton Garden Inn hotel off Boundary Street Thursday afternoon, firefighters said – and possibly saved lives.

When Beaufort, Port Royal and Burton firefighters arrived at the scene around 4:30 p.m., all the hotel's tenants had been evacuated into the parking lot, Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Chief Sammy Negron said.

On the hotel's third floor, firefighters found a fire in one room already extinguished by the built-in sprinkler system -- but the fire was still smoldering. Firefighters checked for any other flames and began checking for possible causes of the room fire.

At the time of the fire alarm, all 115 hotel rooms were occupied. Tenants of 47 hotel rooms were relocated to other local hotels until the rooms affected by the sprinkler system could be cleaned and cleared for use, Negron said.

"The hotel staff did a fantastic job getting everyone out of the hotel, and that is key," Negron said. "It wasn't a drill. This was an actual fire, and everyone was out within minutes. Thursdays are capacity days for most of the local hotels because of the Friday morning graduations at Parris Island (Marine Corps boot camp).

"The fire suppression system kept this fire from spreading, which is always the fear in a structure such as a hotel," he said. "The hotel was filled with Marine recruit families and friends, and they all got out fine. It was a good ending to a potentially very bad situation."

The Hilton Garden Inn property is valued in excess of \$10 million.

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