



## News Release



Charlotte Field Division - Charlotte, NC

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### **SPRUCE PINE UNIMIN PLANT FIRE INVESTIGATION CONCLUDED** *No Evidence of Foul Play Discovered*

SPRUCE PINE, N.C. – The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Charlotte Field Division, along with the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, has concluded the fire investigation at the Unimin Industrial Plant in Spruce Pine, NC. The fire occurred on Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, and resulted in the activation of special agents and fire investigators from the SBI and the ATF National Response Team.

Zebedee T. Graham, special agent in charge of the ATF Charlotte Field Division expressed his appreciation to the management and staff of the Unimin Plant for their complete cooperation throughout the investigation. SAC Graham advises the investigation uncovered no indication of foul play or criminal activity that may have contributed to the cause of the fire. Investigators are confident the fire began in the flotation control room near the center of the manufacturing facility. Due to the extensive fire and water damage in this area all possible accidental ignition sources could not be eliminated as the cause of the fire. The official determination of the cause of this fire will be “undetermined.”

The local and regional fire departments and emergency responders that answered the call and successfully suppressed this massive fire are to be commended for an outstanding job. Although there were too many responding agencies to mention them all individually, this region continues to demonstrate the highest level of dedication and performance in their public service commitments.

The North Carolina Emergency Management along with the Emergency Management Services of Mitchell, Buncombe and Burke Counties contributed to this investigation and should be commended for their responses as well.

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