

Jeddah fire takes lives of 5 children

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JEDDAH: Five Saudi children died in a fire that gutted two old houses in south Jeddah on Tuesday, said spokesman for the Civil Defense Maj. Abdullah Al-Amri, adding that firefighters from the Civil Defense reached the home after the fire was put out because of misinformation.

“We received a call informing about the fire and then we received another call, saying the fire had been put out. This was the reason for the delay,” the spokesman told Arab News. The Civil Defense got the information about the death of the children, who included two girls, from the Red Crescent. The spokesman did not rule out the possibility of a criminal motive, adding that an investigation team would present its report within a few hours.

Al-Amri urged the public to follow safety regulations to prevent fires. “The Civil Defense has been training people on how to deal with fires and other emergency situations. We instruct families to get out of their houses as quickly as possible when a fire breaks out.

“If there is a fire in the lower floors of the building it is better for residents to rush to the upper floors to escape,” the spokesman said. People should also contact the Civil Defense on 998 and give a correct description of the location where the fire has taken place.

“While giving information about the fire, people should show restraint and not panic. They should not do anything that could endanger their lives until the Civil Defense arrives. They should cut electricity from the house, close gas cylinders and remove all inflammable substances from nearby areas.”

Fires have become common, especially in Jeddah’s old neighborhoods, causing deaths.

Last June, three children died in the city’s southern district of Misfat as a result of a fire.

Another fire also, in June, took place in south Jeddah’s Kuwait district, killing a child and injuring his mother and sister. On Tuesday, another fire broke out at a famous fun park along Prince Sultan Street in Jeddah but nobody was injured or killed. The Civil Defense evacuated the park and extinguished the blaze. The officers also used special equipment to suck smoke that had spread. The department has launched a probe to ascertain the cause of that fire.