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## Families Get \$6 Million Settlement For Deadly Fire

### 6 Children Died In Rogers Park Blaze Last Year

CHICAGO (CBS) — The families of six children killed in a Rogers Park fire touched off by a candle last year reached a \$6 million settlement with the owners and managers of the apartment building, attorneys announced Tuesday morning.

A smoke detector had been removed from the third-floor apartment at 7706. N. Marshfield Ave. and one in the hallway never sounded, said John Perconti, attorney for the families.

"Our investigation revealed they were haphazard. Some units had one, some units had none, some had three. That's where the problem was," Perconti said.

An independent fire safety professional found that each of the other 14 units in the building had a working smoke detector at the time of the fire.

Six children – siblings Vanessa, 14, Erick, 12, Suzette, 10, Idaly, 6, and Kevin Ramirez, 3, and a family friend, Escarlet Ramos, 3 – all died in the fire on Sept. 3, 2006.

The family used candles to light the apartment, and one touched off the blaze, officials ruled.

"This money cannot replace my brothers, it can only provide material things," said Yadira Ramirez, 19, an older sister of five of the children killed in the fire. "It's just been a year, and I think even over 10 or 20 years, we're still going to remember them," she said.

Ramirez choked back tears during a news conference Tuesday morning while her godmother stood behind her. "Everything is really hard. Everywhere we go, every time we see a family, then we remember everything. It's not easy," Ramirez said.

The owners and managers liable for the settlement are Marshway Limited Partnership, Marshway L.L.C. and CIG Management L.L.C.

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*"This money replace my only provid things," said Ramirez, 19 sister of five killed in the*

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The Ramirez family, who came to Chicago from Mexico for a better life, had no power in their apartment. They were struggling financially, and ComEd had shut off their electricity the May before the tragedy.

Lawyers for the families did not sue ComEd. They determined the company took the necessary legal steps before shutting off power to the unit.

The \$6 million will be paid out to the surviving family members in installments during their lifetimes.

*CBS 2's Mike Parker and the STNG Wire contributed to this report.*  
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The six children who died in the Sept. 2006 fire: Vanessa Ramirez, 14, Erick Ramirez, 12, Suzette Ramirez, 10, Idaly Ramirez, 6, Kevin Ramirez, 3, and Escarlett Ramos, 3

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