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Family reaches \$6 mil. settlement in Rogers Park fire

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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 this morning.

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

"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.

A sixth child being baby-sat for at the apartment on Sept. 3, 2006, also died in the fire.

Ramirez choked back tears during a news conference this morning while her godmother stood behind her.

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

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.

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

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 Ramirez children killed were Vanessa, 14; Erick, 12; Idaly, 6; Sucette, 10; and Kevin, 3. Also killed was Scarlet Ramos, 3, a family friend.