

## **UPDATE: Fire Totals Shawnee Road Home**

Written by Steve Frank  
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An early morning structure fire destroyed a home near the Avery-Watauga line. It was 7:15 this morning, the structure fire was reported near the Shawnee Road-Lee Gwaltney Road intersection, a Banner Elk fireman spotting flames in the area, causing a call for Banner Elk and Shawneehaw to be dispatched along with Watauga Rescue. After struggling over soft, soggy roads in the area, first units reached the fire to find the two-story structure, just inside Watauga County at 1859 Shawnee Road, totally destroyed, collapsed into the basement. Firemen at the scene speculated that the structure had been burning for hours before being spotted, and Watauga Fire officials at the scene said they are looking into the possibility of lightning, checking National Weather Service data for the early morning, and possible mechanical issues. Mountain Electric was called to the scene to deal with disconnecting power to the site, and Steve Sudderth of Emergency Management said that the owner was possibly from Florida, but no one was at the home at the time of the fire.

Photos; Paul Buchann, Watauga Emergency Management