

# **Lightning strikes, starts blaze that destroys Dow home Thursday night**

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DOW - QEM Fire Protection District members and Fieldon firefighters responded rapidly Thursday but were unable to save a heavily involved home blaze in the 23000 block of Highway 109 in Dow. The fire call came in around 5:30 p.m. and apparently started after a lightning strike during the severe storm on Thursday night.

QEM Fire Protection District Chief Gerry New said his members were at the scene within minutes after the call, but by the time they arrived, winds had spread the fire quickly from the garage area to the entire house. He said the home was a large house and was destroyed by the fire. New said he was the first to arrive at the scene.

New said lightning strikes of this nature are more common than some think and in this case he believes struck a tree, then traveled underground to the house, igniting the fire.

"When we arrived, the fire was pretty involved in the attic area," he said. "Unfortunately, we were not able to save anything."

New said the fire was visible from several miles away.

"The Fieldon fire chief said he could see smoke from 4-5 miles away," he said. "The family was in the house at the time the fire started and thankfully, was able to get out. There were no injuries, although a couple of my firefighters did get overheated, however, they are OK now."

New said the fire started somewhere in the severe storm that hit the area.

"The homeowner told us he smelled smoke or something burning and he was looking around and a passerby started knocking on the door and said, 'hey, your house is on fire.' The fire was just too intense and we couldn't get inside the house."