

Ad Remover **BLOCK ONLINE ADS** [INSTALL NOW](#)

Defense Team For Ghost Ship Collective Founder Says Fire Started Next Door

Victims' attorney counters that the defendant is the one who created a "death trap," so it doesn't matter where the fire sparked

By [Jean Elle](#) and NBC Bay Area Staff



A peaceful yet determined crowd gathered at the federal building in San Francisco on Thursday night, calling on new leaders at the federal level to shut down oil pipeline projects. [Jean Elle reports.](#)

Chris Columbus on Donald Trump's Cameo in 'Home Alone 2'

NYPD Wants to Speak to NBA Player in Nightclub Assault

Image May Lead to Break in Castro Valley Homicide Case

Peaceful Protest in SF Calls For Halting Pipeline Projects

The defense team for Derick Ion Almena, the founder of the Ghost Ship collective, claimed Monday that the fire that killed 36 people inside the Oakland warehouse did not start there, but in an adjacent building.

An attorney for the victims, however, says regardless of where the fire started, Almena is responsible for creating the "death trap" that ultimately caused those people to die.

- [Trump Vows 'Major' Voter Fraud Probe, Despite No Evidence](#)

Everything You Should Know About Net Worth

How do you stack up next to your peers? If you have a \$500,000 portfolio, download the guide by *Forbes* columnist and money manager Ken Fisher's firm called "Your Net Worth."

[Click Here to Download Your Guide!](#)

FISHER INVESTMENTS

TRENDING STORIES

- [Police Arrest 3 in Connection With Scotts Valley Bank Robber](#)
- [Search For Teen to Shut Down Niles Canyo Road Saturday](#)
- [Proposal Wants to Establish California as Separate Nation](#)
- [12,000 Juveniles Given 'Truancy Amnesty' in Santa Clara Co.](#)

SPONSORED [How the Right Mattress Can Ease Back Pain](#)

WEATHER FORECAST

San Jose, CA

The defense team said in a news release Monday that it has received a reliable scientific report indicating the new finding about the origin of the fire.

52° Clear
Feels Like 52°

PRESENTED BY
Mancini's SLEEPWORLD



Radar



Forecast

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Home News Weather Investigations Sports

52° Connect

Local State U.S. & World #Trending Entertainment Bay Area Proud Tech Politics Bay Area Revelations Health Weird Press Here Real Estate

RAW: Close-Up View of Burned Oakland Warehouse

Officials allowed media a closer look Tuesday at the burned Oakland warehouse where 36 people lost their lives late Friday. (Published Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2016)

"Such should reasonably foreclose any criminal negligence charges against Mr. Almena," the release said. "Recall that the ATF could not conclude where the fire originated. The reasonable doubt here is overwhelming."

But attorney Mary Alexander, who represents the families of several victims, said the report is nothing more than a legal strategy, and Almena is responsible for the deaths no matter where the Dec. 2 fire started.

VIDEO Clothes Believed to Belong to Missing Driver Spotted

"He created a death trap," Alexander said. "Once the fire started, these people couldn't get out, these beautiful young people. He is the one who allowed this event, didn't have a permit for it. He's the one who built the second floor with stairs made of pallets."

Crowd Mourns Victims of Oakland Warehouse Fire

Hundreds of people attended a vigil along Lake Merritt in Oakland, California, on Monday night, holding candles to honor those who died in the fire that erupted during a dance party in a warehouse. (Published Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2016)

The ATF has not yet provided an official cause of the fire or released a statement on the defense team's report.

Sears



Costco



NEXT

Powered by CivicScience

[Privacy policy](#)



NEWSLETTERS

Receive the latest local updates in your inbox

[Sign up](#)

[Privacy policy](#) | [More Newsletters](#)



Alexander, who is representing five of the 36 victims, said the defense's report indicates faulty wiring in an adjacent building sparked the deadly blaze. But, she added, the report was prepared by an investigator, not an electrician. She said the defense is merely trying to create doubt in the court of public opinion.

INVESTIGATIVE | [SF Restaurants With Poor Health Ratings Can Buy 2nd Chances](#)

Almena's attorneys did not comment further about the report.

Published at 3:36 PM PST on Jan 23, 2017 | Updated at 5:06 AM PST on Jan 24, 2017

Get the latest from NBC Bay Area anywhere, anytime



Download the App
Available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#)

Follow NBC Bay Area



YOU MAY LIKE

Promoted Links by Taboola

Here are 5 reasons why women need WunderBrow.

[Wunderbrow.com](#)

Monica Lewinsky's Net Worth Left Us Speechless

[Tomorrowoman](#)

What Mariska Hargitay Looks Like Now is Crazy

[Your Daily Dish](#)

Avalanche Rescue Continues as Crews Mourn Colleagues

Police Identify Couple Found Dead Inside Berkeley Apartment

Coast Guard Searches for Missing Kayaker Near Dumbarton Bridge

SPONSORED LINKS

MORE FROM NBC

- [Arlington: This Meal Service is Cheaper Than Your Local Store - Watch](#) (Home Chef)
- [Accredited Online RN to BSN – Pursue the Nursing...](#) (Southern New Hampshire University)
- [How Cruise Ships Fill Their Unsold Cabins](#) (Search Cruise Options)

- You Won't Believe Who Gene Wilder's Daughter Is (Your Daily Dish)
- How Alcohol Affects Your Heart (HealthCentral.com)
- Two People Found Dead in Berkeley Home; Cause is a Mystery
- Clothes Belonging to Missing Teen Driver Who Crashed Into Alameda Cre...
- No Trace of Missing Kayaker Who

Alameda Creek

Promoted Links by Taboola

Leave Comments

2 Comments

Sort by





Mark Brown

There are minimum safety standards required in all inhabited buildings. Every state has them. Every city has them. This building didn't have them. Therefore it was in violation of the statutes that govern safety in that city. It doesn't matter where or why the fire started. The failure to meet safety standards does matter.

Like · Reply · 6 · Jan 24, 2017 6:18am



Alan Biagi

The "Scientific" meathod of fire investigation is no longer accepted as valid for origin and cause determination of fires.

The damage found on the adjacent building appears to be exposure from the fire building and not the cause.

Someone is clearly grasping at straws.

Finally, ignorance of the law is not an excuse.

Like · Reply · Jan 25, 2017 8:07pm

[Facebook Comments Plugin](#)



THE SCIENCE OF Sleep

Did you know that the right mattress can ease lower back pain?

BROUGHT TO YOU BY Mancini's SLEEPWORLD

Simply the Best Place to Buy a Mattress

[Click here to find out more](#)

Traffic

Contact Us

Connect With Us



21st Century Solutions

Send Feedback

Terms of service

Privacy policy

 [Home](#) [News](#) [Weather](#) [Investigations](#) [Sports](#)

 52° [Connect](#)

[Local](#) [State](#) [U.S. & World](#) [#Trending](#) [Entertainment](#) [Bay Area Proud](#) [Tech](#) [Politics](#) [Bay Area Revelations](#) [Health](#) [Weird](#) [Press Here](#) [Real Estate](#)