

- Daily Leader staff report

A blaze that started in the Rent-A-Center store Monday morning in the Coronado Plaza strip mall resulted in a total loss to the store and smoke and water damage to two adjacent businesses.

According to an official press statement released at 10:01 this morning, "The Liberal Fire Department responded to a reported structure fire at 200 E. Parkway Blvd. at 7:35 a.m. Monday morning."

The release went on to note, "First arriving units reported heavy smoke exiting the front of the commercial structure, which is part of the Coronado Plaza. Initial attack crews were met with heavy flames exiting all of the front windows of the business. Crews were forced into a defensive attack mode and they concentrated offensive efforts to the businesses adjacent to Rent-A-Center.

"Firefighters were able to prevent the spread of the fire into the adjacent buildings because of effective firewalls and aggressive interior efforts of the firefighters," the report noted, even though a hole did appear in the firewall next to Aaron's, the blaze was kept in the Rent-A-Center area.

"The fire was declared under control at 10:04 a.m.," the release continued. "There was one civilian injury, associated with smoke inhalation, which was treated at the scene by Seward County EMS.

"Fire crews remained on scene until 5:26 p.m. extinguishing hot spots and conducting an

on-scene investigation.”

The report noted, “Damages are as follows: Rent-A-Center is a total loss, Aaron’s suffered water and smoke damage, Advance America Cash Advance suffered water and smoke damage and Gamestop suffered water damage.

“The Liberal Fire Department responded to the incident with 24 firefighters, three engines, one aerial apparatus and a light support vehicle. Seward County Fire Department provided mutual aid assistance and responded with nine firefighters and five fire apparatus.

“Seward County EMS remained on scene and monitored firefighters throughout the incident. The Liberal Police Department also responded to the incident and assisted with traffic control and on scene activities.

“Investigation into the cause of the fire is ongoing at this time,” the release concluded.