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Boys alive at start of fire, report shows

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A preliminary autopsy on the bodies of two Hewitt boys who died in an Aug. 26 storage shed fire shows the boys were alive at the time of the fire and indicates they died of smoke inhalation and severe burns.

The state fire marshal's office labeled the fire "suspicious" last week, saying it bore characteristics common to incendiary fires or arson.

Results of final autopsies at the Southwest Institute of Forensic Sciences in Dallas are pending.

Autopsies done by Dr. Alan D. Northcutt the day after the fire showed significant soot in the lungs and a high level of carbon monoxide in the blood of Joby Graf, 9, and Jason Graf, 8, of 505 Angel Fire Drive. The soot and carbon monoxide in the body indicate that the Graf boys were alive at the time of the fire and inhaled smoke, officials said.

Northcutt reported finding no other injuries and no evidence that either boy had been drugged.

A post-mortem urine specimen done on Joby Graf, for instance, showed no traces of amphetamines, barbiturates, codeine, methadone, opiates or tranquilizers, the report said.

Northcutt's autopsy states that both Graf boys suffered third- and fourth-degree burns.

A synopsis of the state fire marshal's report states that the fire spread rapidly.

Joseph D. Porter, an investigator with the state fire marshal's office, reported that the fire burned too quickly, considering the items in the shed.