

Van crashes into occupied laundromat in Lee

By [Joey Cresta](#)

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LEE — A local man doing his laundry at the laundromat on Mast Road Saturday morning had a scare when a van crashed through a wall just a few feet away from where he was loading his clothes into a machine.

Police and firefighters responded to the Lee Laundromat on Mast Road shortly after 10 a.m. Saturday after receiving a report of a vehicle crashing into the building. Upon arrival, they found a silver Chevrolet Venture had struck a wall that had a large glass window, going straight into the laundromat.

John Osambo, of Lee, said he was loading his clothes into one of the machines when he heard a loud "boom." After jumping out of the way, he turned and saw the vehicle sitting next to him, he said.

"It happened very quick. I just had to jump," he said. "It was very close. If I didn't jump, it actually could have knocked me."

Osambo said it was a scary few moments, but he left with only a couple of damaged clothes baskets. He said he was going to finish his laundry elsewhere.

Lee firefighter Warren Hatch said the building would have to remain closed until the owners repaired the wall. Police put up yellow caution tape around the accident scene.

Glass, wood and insulation was scattered about inside the laundromat. A row of plastic seats was up against the wall before the van drove through it, and the impact forced the bench into a plastic sink, which appeared to have been destroyed.

The firefighter said he did not know what caused the vehicle to crash through the building. The female driver was shaken up by the accident, he added.

"Her nerves are shocked right at the moment," he said. "It's a good thing no one was hurt."

The van had scratches along its sides and its driver's side mirror was left hanging from the vehicle. The van was towed away, but Police Sgt. Thomas Dronsfield said it probably could have been driven from the scene.

Dronsfield identified the driver as Heather Boettner, 42, of South Portland, Maine. He said she was on the phone with her father, who was camping in the area, when she pulled into the laundromat parking lot. Her father was trying to give her directions, Dronsfield said.

He said Boettner did not put the vehicle in park, but kept her foot on the brake. She told police her foot slipped off the brake and the vehicle crashed through the wall.



Cresta/Citizen photo Lee Police Sgt. Thomas Dronsfield starts putting yellow caution tape around the scene of an accident at the Lee Laundromat on Mast Road Saturday.

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An apartment building occupies the other half of the building, but no one was home when the accident occurred, Dronsfield said.

There were three young children in the van along with Boettner. There were no injuries to anyone involved, he said.

Authorities made contact with laundromat owner Patricia Valle. Dronsfield said they were already in the process of resetting the wall Saturday afternoon, and the business was due to reopen by nighttime.

No charges were filed as a result of the accident, Dronsfield said.



Cresta/Citizen photos

