

Sect: It won't happen again

By LESLEY COLLINS
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CLEARWATER — What was thought to be a roofing job under way on the Fort Harrison Hotel's 10th-floor sundeck turned out to be gutter repairs, building officials confirmed Tuesday.

So Chief of Building Inspections Dave Christiansen said he's not sure whether the Church of Scientology needed a permit for such minor repair work or even a licensed contractor.

A pot of hot tar burst into flames about 4 p.m. Sunday at the sect's Clearwater retreat at

210 N. Fort Harrison Ave. No one was injured, and the building was not damaged.

But heated tar pots aren't allowed on rooftops, according to city building regulations.

In addition to the tar pot violation, building officials said Monday they were investigating the fire because their records showed no permit was issued for what they believed was roofing work.

Despite the mistaken identity of the repair work, "(Tar pots) are still not allowed on the roof," Christiansen said.

Scientology officials assured him it would not happen again.