



News Release

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Volunteer Firefighters Arrested in Connection with Oakdale Arsons

Baton Rouge LA: State Fire Marshal H. “Butch” Browning announced today that six adults and four juveniles have been arrested on several charges relating to nine arson fires in the City of Oakdale, located within Allen Parish. Five of the adults arrested were members of the Oakdale Volunteer Fire Department.

A joint investigation conducted by the State Fire Marshal’s Office, Allen Parish Sheriff’s Office and the Oakdale Police Department revealed that eight fires occurred between the months of April and December of 2010. The fires occurred at five unoccupied structures, one vehicle and three wild land areas. All fires were determined to be intentionally set and the work of arsonists. Investigators developed suspects and after questioning obtained multiple confessions. There were no injuries reported in any of these fires. The following suspects were arrested and charged, all were booked into the Allen Parish Jail:

1. Harold D. Elkins Jr. dob. 9-5-92, charged with aggravated arson and conspiracy to commit arson. Mr. Elkins was not a volunteer firefighter.
2. Michael Hill, dob. 9-30-93, charged with 2 counts of simple arson and conspiracy to commit arson.
3. Jeremy Sheppard, dob. 12-21-93, charged with simple arson.
4. Paul Laird, dob. 11-1-90, charged with simple arson and conspiracy to commit arson.
5. Hanna Ware, dob. 1-1-91, charged with simple arson and conspiracy to commit arson.
6. Christie Doyle, dob. 8-31-92, charged with 4 counts of simple arson and conspiracy to commit arson.
7. Four Juveniles will be charged by the Allen Parish District Attorney.

State Fire Marshal Browning commended the professional work of all the agencies, as they quickly cleared these cases with arrests. The Fire Marshal stated, “We will not tolerate when a person sworn to protect others sets fires. They did this to be a hero and respond to the fires they set. The Fire Chief had a suspicion and called for the investigation, he did the right thing and we can assure the public that they are protected. The Oakdale Fire Department does an excellent job of protecting their community; the actions of these few do not represent the many dedicated members of this department.”

Photos of Suspects



Christie L. Doyle



Hannah L. Ware



Harold D. Elkins



Jeremy D. Sheppard



Michael Hill



Paul R. Laird

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