



News Release

Office of the Louisiana State Fire Marshal
8181 Independence Blvd.
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.lasfm.org

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CONTACT: MARSHAL BUTCH BROWNING
225-925-4911
1-800-256-5452
225-806-0803 (cell)

Suspects Sought in Three Early Morning Arson Fires across the State

Baton Rouge, LA- State Fire Marshal H. "Butch" Browning released information in reference three separate fires in cities of Buras, Logansport and Plaquemine. These unrelated early morning Christmas Eve arson fires endangered lives and also caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in property damage.

The Buras Volunteer Fire Department was called at 1:53 am to 141 East Collins Drive, when firefighters arrived they discovered a residential home in flames. Once the fire was under control it was determined that the home had been burglarized and a fire had been set to cover up the crime of theft. The State Fire Marshal's Office is working jointly with the Plaquemines Parish Sheriff's Office in developing suspects in this case

The second fire occurred in Logansport where the Logansport Volunteer Fire Department responded at 4:02 am to the First Baptist Church located at 1009 Gum Street. The sanctuary has been destroyed however firefighters were able to combat the fire and save the fellowship hall. The fire was so severe that it took many hours to control. State Fire Marshal Deputies have been on the scene all morning working with the Desoto Parish Sheriff's Office. At this time the fire has been ruled suspicious and is believed to have been caused by the actions of arsonists.

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The final fire this morning occurred when the Plaquemine Fire Department responded at 4:52 am to a report that a mobile home was on fire at 20237 Toni Lane. Two people were asleep inside the home and narrowly escaped the danger of the fire without injury. The fire was intentionally set and was the result of an ongoing dispute over the trade of illegal drugs. The State Fire Marshal has executed an arrest warrant for Christopher James Thomas; he is a black male (dob. 4-9-88). He is accused in the warrant of committing aggravated arson. Thomas has not yet been located, the Fire Marshal's Office and the Iberville Parish Sheriff's Office are actively searching for him. Anyone knowing the whereabouts of Thomas is asked to notify law enforcement immediately.

The State Fire Marshal is seeking any information relating to these active arson investigations this morning. The public can provide confidential information through the Arson Hot Line at 866-946-1097. Fire Marshal Browning stated, "It has been a very bad morning as arson fires have caused tragedy to peoples Christmas holiday. We have committed our full resources this morning and throughout the weekend to work with our local partners to bring about arrests to these terrible crimes, we need the public's help in providing information that is known about the persons responsible for these fires".

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First Baptist Church, Logansport, LA



Christopher James Thomas

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