



ARSON TASK FORCE

TASK FORCE UPDATES INVESTIGATION

REQUESTS THE PUBLIC'S HELP

Contact: Kelly Long
410-779-1728
443-250-1493

For Immediate Release
September 24, 2004

BALTIMORE, MD – The Arson Task Force has confirmed that five fires since August 30, 2004 have now been attributed to the serial arsonist that has plagued the Maryland, DC, and Virginia area for the past year and a half. The locations and dates of the fires are:

- September 23, 2004, a multi family dwelling fire in the 10800 block of Amherst Avenue, Montgomery County, MD
- September 20, 2004, a residential fire in the 2800 block of 30th Street NE, Washington, DC
- September 17, 2004, a residential fire in the 6300 block of 49th Avenue, Riverdale Park, MD, Prince George's County;
- September 8, 2004, a car fire in the 2800 block of Channing Street, NE, Washington, DC
- August 30, 2004, a residential fire in the 4000 block of Elmwood Drive, Fairfax County, VA.

All evidence retrieved has been taken to the ATF National Laboratory in Maryland for lab analysis.

The Task Force wants to reassure the public that everything is being done to apprehend the person(s) responsible for the fires. However, because of the complexity of arson investigations, it may take several months to complete an investigation from the time of



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conducted several hundred interviews and have collected dozens of potentially helpful items from each fire scene. The Task Force is continuing to work with a Behavioral Profiler. It is important for the public to know that a profile is an investigative tool only and should not be considered a solve- all investigative device.

Here are a list of traits and characteristics that might assist someone who may know the individual responsible for these fires.

THIS LIST OF TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS IS NOT CONSIDERED ALL – INCLUSIVE AND THE PUBLIC SHOULD NOT DISCOUNT AN INDIVIDUAL THEY SUSPECT IF HE DOES NOT HAVE THESE TRAITS.

- He may abuse alcohol
- He may engage in reckless driving or unsafe practices at work.
- When stressed or angered, he may reveal a more callous and uncaring side
- He may lead a secretive life and become skilled at lying
- These traits have probably caused problems with his family and in relationships.

Our most helpful tool is information from the public. The more information we receive, the more likely we are able to solve these fires. Many criminal cases are solved solely on information received from tips. Vehicle descriptions are very valuable and should, if possible, include license numbers, vehicle color, make and model. An odd individual or someone you know behaving strangely might provide a clue, as well as a sound heard at an unusual hour. Also, listen for people who have seen something suspicious talking amongst themselves, as there is a potential to discount the value of something they may know. If you think you should call the Task Force, then do just that. We operate a 24 hour tip line at (301) 77ARSON.

We remind the public that a reward in the amount of \$35,000 has been offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the individual(s) responsible for these fires.

CITIZENS WITH INFORMATION MAY CONTACT THE ARSON TASK FORCE AT:

301-77-ARSON

**FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES, CONTACT:
ATF SPECIAL AGENT KELLY LONG**

410-570-1700



ARSON TASK FORCE

Contact: Kelly Long
410-779-1729
443-250-1493

For Immediate Release
September 24, 2004

BALTIMORE, MD – The Task Force has linked five recent fires to the serial arsonist offending in the Washington Metropolitan area. Once again, we are calling for the public’s assistance in helping us identify this firesetter. We believe he is a member of the community and therefore is known here. We are providing the traits and characteristics listed below, so that they might aid people who know this arsonist in recognizing him. We are particularly calling out to family members who recognize him from the following description. As long as he remains at large, our community and the arsonist himself remain in danger.

Again, we remind the public not to discount an individual they suspect if he does not fit this description entirely.

People who know him likely notice the following traits:

- He may be described as having a “chameleon personality.” When he needs to, he can act charming, and appear caring and genuine, yet when he is stressed or angered, he may reveal a more callous, uncaring and angry side of his nature.
- At times, he may surprise and disappoint those around him with his indifference to the rights and welfare of others and society at large.
- When things go wrong in his life, or when he misbehaves, it is never his fault. He does not accept responsibility for the results of his actions. He will blame others.
- He can be manipulative and cunning if he needs to be
- He leads a secretive life and has become skilled at lying



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These traits will cause him problems with his family and other relationships. People close to him will know of problems and he may have a known history of setting fires when he is stressed. He has probably been in trouble with the law before.

It is very likely he had a difficult life growing up. He may have been a foster or adopted child. He may have felt that he never “fit in” and that has led him to become a very angry man.

Serial firesetting is a means to relieve stress for him. Stressors that might cause him to set fires can include the following: relationship problems; financial problems; work problems and legal problems. Besides firesetting, he may relieve stress through alcohol.

Serial arsonists usually do not start out setting fires to occupied structures. They generally have a history of arson that began on a much smaller scale. It may be the case that this offender is relatively new to our community-having arrived here within the past few years. The public should consider this when reading the firesetter’s description.

We are reminding the public that if they have any information to please call the Arson Task Force Hot Line.

301-77ARSON
301-772-7766