



News Release

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Arson Dog in North Louisiana Adds to Fire Marshal's Crime Fighting Capabilities

"Mazy" joins department; carries national fire academy training credentials

Monroe, LA – The newest member of the State Fire Marshal's office will be working out of Monroe. The new investigator is accelerant detection K-9 "Mazy." "Mazy," a yellow lab mix, and her handler, Deputy Patrick Freeman, recently completed certification requirements in a five week canine-accelerant detection school sponsored by State Farm® at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.

Deputy Freeman and "Mazy" will be introduced at a news conference at the Monroe Public Safety Center at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, which also coincides with observance of National Fire Prevention Week, October 5th through October 11th. "Mazy" will demonstrate her detection skills and technique at the press conference.

The team will work out of Monroe, and cover DPS-State Fire Marshal Area IV, which is northern Louisiana.

The Maine Criminal Justice Academy's arson-dog training program is funded by State Farm® and is available to fire departments and law enforcement agencies across the nation. Since its beginning in 1993, the program has placed more than 325 dogs in 44 states, 3 Canadian provinces, and the District of Columbia.

In 2012, over 38,000 fires in the United States were classified as intentionally set, causing over \$660 million dollars in property damage according to the Insurance Information Institute. The scope of arson goes beyond impacting insurance companies – it directly affects the personal and financial well-being of tens of thousands of individuals every year.

"We are pleased to support the work of the State Fire Marshal's office, and appreciate Chief Browning adding this capability in this area. Chief Browning knows first-hand, the value a trained dog can bring to an arson investigation because he was one of the state's first K-9 handlers in 1991," said State Farm spokesman Gary Stephenson of North Little Rock, Arkansas.

Fire Marshal Butch Browning stated, "We are very pleased to have Mazy join our Department. We believe she and Deputy Freeman will be great assets in our efforts to fight arson throughout north Louisiana."

A few years ago, investigators could spend days sifting through rubble at a fire scene. Today, a trained dog can often do that work in a couple of hours, in terms of locating accelerant residue. This can greatly speed the investigation and decrease the time in getting samples to the state crime lab for processing.

For more information about the Arson Dog Program, visit the website at www.arsondog.org.

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