



News Release

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections
Public Safety Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Long-serving Police K9 “Darge” to Retire from Duty

Baton Rouge, LA – One of the longest serving detector dogs in the history of the State Fire Marshal’s Office makes his retirement plans official today: November 30th to be his last day on the job.

“Darge” has performed services in nearly every parish of the state, focusing most of his attention in Southeast Louisiana where he is familiar to most law enforcement and fire officials. “Darge” will be officially removed from service, effective December 01, 2014, after having been utilized across this state for more than a decade.

A black Labrador Retriever, “Darge” is a product of the State Farm Arson Dog Program. Training was provided by Maine Specialty Dogs, which is certified by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. After initial “imprinting,” the process of teaching dogs to detect odors associated with products commonly used to accelerate fire development, the K9s are partnered with a “handler” and together they complete an extensive five-week training course in Alfred, Maine.

“Darge” has been instrumental in the arrests of dozens of arsonists since his arrival at the State Fire Marshal’s Office in 2004, including those attempting to defraud insurance companies by the filing of false claims. These arrests, in turn, save Louisiana citizens on their insurance premiums by diminishing fraudulent claims, the costs of which are unfortunately born by other policy holders.

Accelerant detection K9s are used on fire scenes to assist investigators in determining whether an accelerant was used to facilitate the fire. Because of their very sensitive noses, these dogs are capable of detecting trace amounts of ignitable substances, thus allowing investigators to pinpoint samples which are then submitted for laboratory analysis. The use of detector dogs significantly reduces the amount of time and effort required to locate these substances on fire scenes, resulting in additional savings to Louisiana taxpayers.

During his retirement, “Darge” will remain in the care of his handler, District Chief Lance LaMarca, for the remainder of his life.

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

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News Release – Addendum (11/14/14)

Darge 2005



Darge 2014

