



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gretna Man Arrested Following Arson, Machete Tirade, Escape Effort

ORLEANS PARISH, LA (June 7, 2018)- A Gretna man was booked into the Orleans Parish Prison late Wednesday June 6, following an attempt to set his brother's property on fire, creating a disturbance with a machete and attempting to escape police custody.

Mazen Hamdan (DOB 11/10/81) faces one count each of Simple Criminal Damage and Simple Escape, filed by the New Orleans Police Department. One count of Simple Arson, filed by the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office, will be added today, Thursday, June 7.

Around 11:45 a.m. on the 6th, the New Orleans Fire Department contacted the OSFM to assist with the investigation of an altercation involving a fire in the 2500 block of Jonquil Street.

The owner of the property told OSFM investigators that he was doing renovation work on the home when his brother, Hamdan, showed up demanding money. An altercation ensued between the two and the victim said Hamdan threatened to burn the house down.

The victim told investigators Hamdan then retrieved a gas can from his truck and started pouring the contents on the floor while continuing to argue about the debt.

The victim told investigators he was able to knock a lighter out of his brother's hands as he tried to start a flame. Hamdan then fled the scene.

However, the victim says his brother showed up at several other properties he owns creating disturbances at each, including one instance in which he armed himself with a machete.

Deputies confirmed the home was under renovation and unoccupied at the time. Pour patterns were discovered on an area of flooring and the scent of gasoline was noted. Investigators classified the case as incendiary.

Shortly after, Hamdan was taken into custody by N.O.P.D. through a traffic stop. During that stop, Hamdan reported suffering from medical distress and requested to be taken to an area hospital. When an ambulance arrived, Hamdan attempted to flee officers.

He was taken to the hospital for evaluation then transferred to jail.

Hamdan's criminal history includes a federal conviction for Interstate Transportation of Stolen Property, as well as state convictions for drug possession and being a felon in possession of a firearm, the latter of which he served time for at Angola State Penitentiary.

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