



# NEWS RELEASE

## OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Franklin Man Arrested for Fire-Related Murder, Attempted Murder**

**ST. MARY PARISH-** A Franklin man has been arrested for allegedly setting his girlfriend and his young nephew on fire, resulting in the child's death and the woman being hospitalized with critical injuries.

Derwin Hamilton, 49, has been booked into the St. Mary Parish Jail on one count each of 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Murder and Attempted 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Murder.

Around 8 p.m. on Tuesday, July 13, the Centerville Volunteer Fire Company, with the assistance of the Franklin Fire Department, responded to the 400 block of Prairie Road North in the Centerville community, located in the Franklin area, for a report of a mobile home fire. Upon arrival, firefighters located a woman and a 5-year-old boy, who were badly burned, outside of the home. Both were transported to area hospitals where the child was pronounced dead and the woman remains in critical condition. The identification and official cause of death of the child is pending an autopsy by the St. Mary Parish Coroner's Office.

Firefighters also encountered Hamilton upon their arrival, who was outside of the home with minor burn injuries. Due to statements made by the female victim about the incident, Hamilton was detained by the St. Mary Parish Sheriff's Office prior to being taken to an area hospital for treatment.

SFM deputies learned that Hamilton and the female victim were in a relationship and were arguing about ending that relationship when the fire occurred. The woman reported to first responders that during the argument, Hamilton poured a liquid on her and the child, who is Hamilton's great nephew, and then set them on fire.

In an interview with deputies, Hamilton admitted to the crimes. A warrant was then obtained for Hamilton's arrest and he was booked following his release from the hospital.

"The ultimate danger is when fire is used to commit a crime," said State Fire Marshal H. "Butch" Browning, "In this instance, that crime resulted in the tragic death of an innocent child and left his guardian in critical condition. Our prayers go out to the victims' families while we pursue justice on their behalf."

The SFM would like to thank the St. Mary Parish Sheriff's Office for their assistance with this case.

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