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Press Release

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2009 Arson Awareness Week

May 3 - 9



(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) — Across the nation this week, fire officials are speaking out against Arson. The Alaska Department of Public Safety is joining in the educational push. According to the National Fire Protection Association, in 2005, an estimated 323,900 intentionally set fires were reported to U.S. fire departments. These fires resulted in 490 civilian fire deaths, three firefighter deaths, 1,500 civilian fire injuries and 7,600 firefighter injuries. These fires caused \$1.102 billion in direct property damage.

In Alaska during 2005, six deaths were attributed to intentionally set fires. Last year, there were two people in Alaska killed by intentionally set fires.

The theme for the 2009 Arson Awareness Week is Arson for Profit. Nationwide, community officials are reporting a sharp increase of vehicle owners who are suspected of reporting their vehicle stolen and then destroying their vehicle by setting it on fire. There has also been an increase of vehicle arson arrests.



Arsons are often times done for financial reasons, to include collecting insurance money, liquidating property, dissolving businesses and concealing losses.

Arson for profit affects everyone through the loss of life, increased insurance premiums and related expenses for the fire and law enforcement professionals. It can be curtailed by a collaborative effort and cooperation of fire investigators, law enforcement, insurance professionals and the legal system.

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