



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Conserving the Peace Through Values Driven Service
Sheriff Pat Garrett

PRESS RELEASE

Case#50-151121378

Detectives Arrest Accused Serial Arsonist

December 31, 2015--Washington County Sheriff's Arson Detectives arrested and charged a Portland man with arson. Detectives believe he targeted Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District (THPRD) properties in the spring of 2015. Sheriff's Detectives have been working with Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue (TVF&R) Deputy Fire Marshals in an attempt to identify the person responsible for starting the fires.

Five fires were intentionally started on the THPRD properties listed below:

Arson Date

April, 22 2015
April, 23 2015
April, 29 2015
May, 19 2015
May, 20 2015

Arson Location

4950 NW Saltzman Road
4950 NW Saltzman Road
4950 NW Saltzman Road
20 NW 114th Avenue
20 NW 114th Avenue

The properties consisted of houses on small parcels of land owned by THPRD. TVF&R previously issued a press release (attached) at the time of the fires.



THPRD Saltzman Road Property

After months of investigation that included search warrants and interviews, on December 29, 2015 the case was presented to a Washington County Grand Jury. The Grand Jury returned an indictment charging John Michael Townsend, 24, from Northwest Portland, with five counts of First Degree Arson. Mr. Townsend was employed with THPRD as a park patrol security officer at the time all the fires were set. Detectives believe Mr. Townsend intentionally started the fires using road flares.

Today at 4:00 p.m., Mr. Townsend was arrested at the THPRD facility on NW Walker Road. He was lodged in the Washington County Jail and held on \$250,000 bail.



John Townsend

The Washington County Sheriff's Office would like to thank TVF&R for their invaluable assistance with this case.

Detectives ask anyone with any information about this case, please call the Washington County Sheriff's Office at 503-846-2500.