



ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
Detroit Field Division

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ATF NATIONAL RESPONSE TEAM ACTIVATED IN DETROIT FIRE

DETROIT – The National Response Team from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and ATF special agents from the Detroit Field Division have been activated to assist the Detroit Fire and Arson Squad in the investigation of a building fire in northwest Detroit.

Valerie Goddard, Special Agent in Charge of ATF in Detroit, said, “ATF is assisting the Detroit Fire and Arson Squad and the Detroit Police Department in this joint investigation.”

The fire was reported at approximately 1:00 a.m., by a resident who noticed smoke and fire. The building located at Grand River Avenue and Lahser Road contains four current businesses and several unoccupied store fronts, along with six upstairs apartments, four of which were occupied. No injuries were reported.

In 1978, ATF developed the NRT to assist federal, state and local investigators in meeting the challenges faced at the scenes of significant arson and explosives incidents. The NRT consists of four teams organized geographically to cover the United States. Each team can respond within 24 hours to assist state and local law enforcement/fire service personnel in onsite investigations.

In addition to investigating hundreds of large fire scenes, the NRT has also been activated to scenes such as the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the Oklahoma City Federal Building bombing and the 9/11 Pentagon crash site, as well as explosions at explosives and ammunition manufacturing plants, legal fireworks factories and illegal explosive device manufacturing operations.

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The teams are each composed of veteran special agents who have post blast and fire origin-and-cause expertise; forensic chemists; explosives enforcement officers; fire protection engineers; accelerant detection canines; explosives detection canines; intelligence support, computer forensic support and audit support. The teams work alongside state and local officers in reconstructing the scene, identifying the seat of the blast or origin of the fire, conducting interviews, and sifting through debris to obtain evidence related to the bombing/arson. Further complementing the team's efforts are technical, legal and intelligence advisors. Moreover, a fleet of fully equipped response vehicles strategically located throughout the United States is available to provide logistical support.

This will be the NRT's third activation for fiscal year 2007 and the 621st activation since the inception of the NRT in 1978.

ATF is the federal agency with jurisdiction for investigating fires and crimes of arson. More information on ATF can be found at www.atf.gov.

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