



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**City of Duluth Fire Department**

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218-730-4400 | [www.duluthmn.gov](http://www.duluthmn.gov) | John Strongitharm, Fire Chief

For more information contact the Fire Department at 218-730-4391



**DATE: 05/03/2011**  
**NATURE OF INCIDENT: Arson Awareness Week**  
**CASE NO.:**  
**INCIDENT DATE :05/03/2011**  
**INCIDENT TIME:**  
**INCIDENT LOCATION:**  
**SUBJECT: Arson Awareness Week**  
**BY: Marnie Grondahl 218-348-0938**

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## **Arson Awareness Week**

In Minnesota, 1,268 arson fires were reported in 2009. They included 330 structure fires and 159 vehicle fires, with a total dollar loss of more than \$6 million. Figures reported to the State Fire Marshal by local fire departments show that only six of Minnesota's 87 counties experienced no arson fires that year. Since 1989, arson fires in our state have caused at least 53 deaths and more than \$318 million in property destruction.

The crime of arson is usually identified by investigators, but too often, the criminal is not. It can take a community to catch an arsonist, and that's one reason for Arson Awareness Week. People who are watchful and know the facts on arson can help prevent it or help apprehend arsonists.

The Duluth Fire Department advises citizens who know of, or suspect an act of arson to call their fire or police department. Report suspicious activity near houses or buildings, and participate in Neighborhood Watch groups. In addition,

- Don't allow leaves, firewood or other combustibles to remain near buildings. They make arson easy for vandals and cause flames to spread rapidly.
- Keep doors and windows of unoccupied buildings locked. Keep the keys handy. If necessary, board the building up.
- Illuminate the exterior of buildings at night and keep commercial dumpsters at least five feet from building walls.

The Duluth Fire Department in 2010 investigated 9 fires that were considered arson, and works cooperatively with the Duluth Police Department. Both departments would like to remind the public to make use of the Minnesota Arson Hotline, It is there to help stop arson, and your call may be anonymous. The Arson Hotline number is 800-723-2020 or Duluth Police Officer Todd Kuusisto 730-5709



STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

- WHEREAS: The theme for 2010 Arson Awareness Week is "Working Together to Extinguish Serial Arson", and
- WHEREAS: The U.S. Fire Administration reports there are an estimated 200,000 intentionally set fires each year, resulting in approximately 375 deaths and 1,300 injuries, and
- WHEREAS: From 1999-2009 fires set intentionally have caused 53 deaths and over \$384 million in property loss in the State of Minnesota, and
- WHEREAS: The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives reports that from 2000-2003, there were 89 incidents reported as being associated with serial arson, with an aggregate monetary loss of \$4.8 million, and
- WHEREAS: Public awareness is one of the specific responsibilities of the U.S. Fire Administration, and
- WHEREAS: A community Arson Watch Program puts the "neighbor" back into neighborhood by creating a sense of cooperation and brings fire service, law enforcement, and citizens together to reduce the crime of arson.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARK DAYTON, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim the week of May 17, 2010 as:

ARSON AWARENESS WEEK

in the State of Minnesota.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April.

Mark Dayton  
GOVERNOR

Mark Dayton