For Immediate Release
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Detectives Seek Public’s Help in Identifying Suspect in Arson Cases

Arson detectives are seeking the public’s help in four arsons in the Causeway Isles neighborhood in west St. Petersburg.

The first incident took place on October 25th, 2011 to an unoccupied residence located at 7909 2nd Avenue South. The home’s occupants were out of town at the time of the fire, which investigators later determined was the result of arson started from inside the home. The home was later determined to be a total loss.

The second incident was discovered on September 4th 2012 at 181 79th Street South. This residence was also unoccupied as the home owner had recently died. A relative inspecting the property discovered that someone had attempted to set fire to an exterior area of the home, near an air conditioning unit. Evidence of arson was found, but it appeared the fire self-extinguished and the damage to the home was relatively minor.

The third case took place on October 16th, 2012 at the vacant residence located at 199 79th Street South. In that instance, the fire was set inside a screen porch attached to the house. Damage was confined to the porch and again the fire appeared to self-extinguish, and was not reported until it was discovered by a lawn maintenance worker.

The last and most recent case took place yesterday, November 25th at 7949 2nd Avenue South just before 6:00 a.m. The home owners were out of town for the holidays, but their two dogs, left inside the residence, were being cared for by a neighbor. Damage to the home was extensive and one of the dogs was found deceased inside. Detectives have determined the fire was started from inside the home with evidence of arson being present.

Due to the close geographical area these fires have occurred in and the similar circumstance in which each incident has taken place, detectives do believe the four cases are related.

At approximately 5:00 p.m. this afternoon, detectives will be canvassing the immediate neighborhood, distributing flyers and seeking the assistance of the public in hopes of identifying any potential suspects.

Anyone with information regarding the arsons should call the non-emergency number at 727-893-7780, Text-A-Tip to 727-420-8911 or leave a confidential tip at 727-892-5000.

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