



Bexar County Office of the Fire Marshal
San Antonio, Texas 78205-3036

Press Release
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Serial Arsonist Arrested

On March 2, 2023, deputies from the Bexar County Fire Marshal’s Office arrested a suspected serial arsonist without further incident. The arrestee was identified as 59-year-old Modesto Martinez.

A series of more than 15 fires had been set in or near the Oak Island Community, primarily over the past two to three months. The fires resulted in damage to vehicles, residences, and wildland areas. No one was injured as a result of these fires.

As part of their months-long investigation, Fire Marshal Deputies set up surveillance. During that surveillance, Martinez was observed setting fire to a singlewide mobile home and fled back to his residence. Fire Marshal Deputies followed him there, and he was safely taken into custody. He was charged with Arson of Habitation, a first-degree felony.

The successful investigative effort is the result of a combined effort involving fire/arson investigators from the Bexar County Fire Marshal’s Office, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and Texas Rangers. The Bexar County Sheriff’s Office Patrol Division, the San Antonio Police Department’s Bomb Squad and Helicopter Detail provided additional support.

The fires occurred in Bexar County Precinct 1, represented by Commissioner Rebeca Clay-Flores. She reacted to the arrest saying, “I applaud the dedicated work of our Fire Marshal’s Office and their staff. The safety of the residents of Precinct 1 is a central concern for me. The success of the Fire Marshal’s investigation is a result of their tenacity and commitment to address this serious threat. Residents of the community will be able to sleep well again.”

The investigation is active, ongoing, and the Fire Marshal expects to file additional charges in the near future.

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