



News Release



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ATF NATIONAL RESPONSE TEAM ACTIVATED TO SPRINGFIELD

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — The National Response Team (NRT) from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) along with ATF special agents from the across New England have entered into the investigation of a fire that occurred on Nov. 5, 2008, at the Macedonia Church of God and Christ at the request of State Fire Marshall Stephen Coan.

NRT Team Leader Tom Rooney said that the approximate 13,000 square foot structure, located in the 200 block of Tinkham Road, was destroyed with early estimates of damages in excess of \$1.5 million.

ATF's NRT has brought definitive expertise and an array of state-of-the-art equipment to the investigation of major fire and explosives incidents since 1978. Four regional components, organized geographically to cover the United States, comprise the NRT. The team can respond within 24 hours to assist state and local law enforcement or fire service personnel in on-site investigations.

The responding NRT component normally has 13 to 18 members, including 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; and intelligence, computer forensic and audit support. A fleet of fully equipped response vehicles strategically located throughout the United States provides logistical support.

ATF's partnership with federal, state and local officers is vital to the most effective processing efforts at an explosives or fire scene. The NRT capitalizes on that by working alongside its partners in reconstructing the scene, identifying the seat of the blast or the origin of the fire, conducting interviews and sifting through debris to obtain evidence related to the explosion or fire.

In addition to investigating hundreds of large fire and explosives scenes, the NRT trucks were deployed for the 2001 terrorist attack of the Pentagon, the Olympics, other

major sporting events in the United States, and presidential inaugurations, national political conventions and major international conferences.

This is the 3rd NRT activation in fiscal year 2009 and the 661st since the program began in 1978. Other agencies involved in the investigation are the State Fire Marshal and the Springfield Fire and Police Departments, FBI, Massachusetts State Police, Hampden County District Attorney's Office, including Massachusetts State Police assigned to the offices of the Hampden County District Attorney and Massachusetts State Fire Marshal.

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