



News Release



Los Angeles Field Division

Contact: Special Agent Michael Hoffman, ATF PIO
Office: (818) 265-2507
Cell: (213) 925-4547
michael.hoffman@atf.gov

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ATF NATIONAL RESPONSE TEAM ACTIVATED TO ALHAMBRA, CALIF. CONDOMINIUM COMPLEX FIRE

ALHAMBRA, Calif. – at the request of the Alhambra Fire Department, the National Response Team (NRT) from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) along with ATF special agents from the Los Angeles Field Division, have entered into the investigation of a large structure fire in Alhambra, CA. The fire occurred on November 18, 2008, at approximately 10:45 p.m. at a three-story apartment complex under construction, located at 101 North 3rd Street. The fire has caused an estimated \$4.5 million in damage to the complex and surrounding structures.

Special Agent in Charge John A. Torres, of ATF's Los Angeles Field Division, said that, "due to the size and complexity of the fire scene, in addition to the dollar loss, ATF is assisting the Alhambra Fire Department in this joint investigation."

The NRT will begin processing the fire scene tomorrow, working alongside state and local investigators in reconstructing the scene, identifying the cause and origin of the fire, conducting interviews and sifting through debris.

ATF's NRT, which will arrive on scene late today, has brought definitive experience and an array of state-of-the-art equipment to the investigation of major fire and explosive incidents since its inception in 1978. ATF developed the NRT to provide resources to 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 explosives device manufacturing operations.

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. 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 is the sixth activation of the NRT in fiscal year 2009, and the 664th activation since the inception of the team in 1978.

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