



Orange County Fire Authority NEWS RELEASE

CHIEF BRIAN FENESSEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Captain Jon Muir
949.239.2776
jonmuir@oca.org

SERIAL ARSONIST AND FIRE STATION BURGLARY SUSPECT IN CUSTODY

Investigators from multiple fire and law enforcement agencies help make arrest

Irvine, CA – August 27, 2019 – A suspected serial arsonist who authorities believe started numerous fires causing more than \$5 million in damage and burglarizing multiple fire stations in Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties is behind bars.

Christian David Saddler, 21 of Hesperia, who was taken into custody on July 22 at Corcoran State Prison where he was already serving a five year prison sentence on an arson and burglary conviction, is now facing new charges.

Investigators from Orange County Fire Authority, Irvine Police, Santa Ana Police, Anaheim Fire, Anaheim Police, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) and CAL FIRE spent over two years piecing the case together. Authorities believe Saddler, a former San Bernardino County Fire Explorer who was familiar with the fire department culture, set fires as a diversion to draw firefighters out of their stations so he could then burglarize them.

“The diligent and collaborative work by these investigators has protected residents from a callous criminal who was out for his own gain,” said Brian Fennessy, fire chief of Orange County Fire Authority. “It’s fortunate no one was injured in these blazes.”

Orange County Fire Authority investigators were first alerted to Saddler when he was arrested for a similar crime spree on January 30, 2017 in Norco, CA. Information provided by CAL FIRE in a bulletin announcing that arrest provided the investigative team the lead they needed in the Orange County cases.

Saddler is facing nine felony counts of arson and burglary for the Orange County crimes that took place in December 2016. He is being held on \$500,000 bail and his next court appearance is September 11, 2019 in Orange County Superior Court, Department 57.

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