



-- MEDIA RELEASE -- For Immediate Release

11-year-old Charged in Connection with Dollar General Fire

CARROLL COUNTY, MD (September 12, 2022) - In collaboration with Hampstead Police Department, and Carroll County State's Attorney's Office, State Fire Marshal Brian S. Geraci announced today that an 11-year-old boy is facing criminal charges in connection with the massive fire that destroyed a Dollar General in Hampstead on September 3, 2022.

The youth was identified last weekend during the investigation by the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Hampstead Police Department, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. His name will not be released because of his age. After consulting with the Carroll County State's Attorney's Office, he was charged with First Degree Arson and released to his parent's custody. Charges will then be referred to the Department of Juvenile Services.

"I would again like to thank the residents of Carroll County for their support since this devastating fire," said State Fire Marshal Brian S. Geraci. ***"I'd also like to express our gratitude for the assistance of the Hampstead Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives."***

Just after 5:00 p.m., Hampstead Volunteer Fire Company and surrounding fire departments, along with Hampstead Police Department, responded to the Dollar General at 834 South Main Street for a reported building fire. Firefighters were on the scene within minutes and quickly upgraded the fire to two alarms, bringing firefighters from Carroll, Baltimore, and Adams counties to the scene. It took over one hour to bring the fire under control, and no injuries were reported.

Juvenile firesetting is a serious issue contributing to dozens of fires yearly in Maryland. About half of these fires are started using smoking materials such as matches and lighters. State Fire Marshal Geraci takes this opportunity to urge parents and caregivers to keep these items away from children and explain the dangers of fire. To learn more about responses to youth firesetting, visit https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa_332b.pdf.

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The Office of the State Fire Marshal is an agency of the Department of State Police dedicated to helping protect citizens from fire and explosion through a comprehensive program of education, inspection, investigation and fire protection engineering. For more information on fire safety call 1-800-525-3124, log onto our website at: [Maryland State Fire Marshal](#) and/or our [Facebook Page](#).

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