

VALENCIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Valencia County, NM – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 25, 2025

Suspect Identified and Arrested in Connection with Los Lunas Wildland Fires

Los Lunas, NM – A multi-agency investigation has determined that two wildland fires—*Cotton 1* and *Cotton 2*—which occurred in the Rio Grande Conservancy (Bosque) area of Los Lunas, New Mexico, were intentionally set.

The *Cotton 1* fire ignited on **June 21, 2025**, and quickly outpaced initial containment efforts, despite a prompt and coordinated response from both ground and aerial firefighting units. After breaching a key firebreak along the ditch bank, the fire advanced into residential neighborhoods. In total, **11 homes were destroyed** and **12 firefighters** were injured while working to suppress the blaze.

On **June 22**, a second fire—*Cotton 2*—began in the same Bosque region. This second incident prompted further concern and initiated a separate but parallel investigation.

A unified investigative effort was launched immediately, led by the **New Mexico State Fire Marshal's Office**, with support from the **Valencia County Sheriff's Office**, **Los Lunas Police Department**, **New Mexico State Forestry and State Parks**, **New Mexico State Police**, **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**, **U.S. Forest Service**, and certified fire investigators from the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)**. Investigators conducted interviews, analyzed surveillance footage, and completed on-site field evaluations to determine the origin and cause of both fires.

On **June 24**, the *Cotton 1* fire was officially classified as **incendiary**. Based on gathered evidence, investigators identified **31-year-old Los Lunas resident Jacob LaHair** as a suspect. A **\$50,000 cash-only arrest warrant** was approved by the Honorable **Judge James Sanchez** of the **13th Judicial District Court**.

On **June 25**, Mr. LaHair voluntarily turned himself in to the **Los Lunas Police Department**, where he was taken into custody by **Valencia County Sheriff's Office** deputies. He has been formally charged with **one count of Arson** and **one count of Criminal Damage to Property**, and was booked into the **Valencia County Detention Center**.

We would like to thank the many agencies whose collaborative efforts were vital in this investigation and in protecting the community:

- New Mexico State Fire Marshal's Office
- Valencia County Sheriff's Office

- Los Lunas Police Department
- Belen Police Department
- Isleta Police Department
- Bosque Farms Police Department
- New Mexico State Forestry / State Parks
- New Mexico State Police
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- U.S. Forest Service
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)

Their professionalism, coordination, and commitment were essential in identifying the cause of these fires and helping ensure the safety of Los Lunas residents.

For press only:

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