



# News Release



For Immediate Release

Nov. 12, 2011

## MANHATTAN APARTMENT FIRE RULED INCENDIARY

MANHATTAN, Kan. -- The large apartment complex fire that occurred on Sunday morning, Nov. 6, at the Strasser Village Apartments, 300 N. Fourth St., Manhattan, Kan. has been ruled an incendiary fire by investigators. Investigators concluded the fire originated in the northern section of the apartment complex. Sufficient evidence was recovered by investigators to eliminate all known potential accidental causes and determine the fire was intentionally set. The fire caused an estimated \$2.7 million in damage to the Strasser Village Apartments. Total damage estimates to nearby businesses remain undetermined at this time but could exceed \$2 million.

Investigators from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)'s National Response Team (NRT), ATF's Kansas City Field Division, the Manhattan Fire Department, the Riley County Police Department and the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office completed the scene investigation today. The team of investigators took photographs, recovered potential evidence from the scene for analysis by the ATF's National Laboratory and conducted more than 90 interviews throughout the community.

"The work at the crime scene is finished, however our investigation is not over," said ATF Special Agent in Charge Michael P. Gleysteen. "ATF will continue to work together with our state and local partners to investigate this devastating crime and bring those responsible to justice."

Manhattan Fire Chief Jerry Snyder said, "This fire resulted in the largest dollar loss in Manhattan history. I'm grateful for the support from ATF, the Riley County Police Department and the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office. Without the resources and assistance by these federal and state specialists, we would not have been able to conduct this comprehensive investigation in such a swift manner."

"It's not often you can bring this many people together from around the United States to work towards a common goal and have the mission completed in such a short timeframe. Bringing in many people with years of experience and professionalism, but who lack ego, is how you get a job like this done. It has been a learning experience for me and I've been impressed with the professionalism of all the agencies involved," said Michael Quintanar, Lieutenant, Investigations Division, Riley County Police Department Investigations Division.

"Our ability to bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice is greatly increased by receiving information and evidence of the crime as quickly as possible," said Rose Rozmiarek, Chief of Investigations, Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office. "The resources from the local, state and federal agencies assisted in this effort and make the investigation more manageable."

Specific information regarding the fire and investigative efforts will not be released at this time as the criminal investigation continues. Anyone with information about the fire should call the Riley County Police Crime Stoppers at 785-539-7777 or toll free at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or ATF at 1-888-ATF-FIRE.

ATF's NRT, which consists of ATF personnel from across the country, responded to the scene to work alongside state and local investigators. The NRT's specialized resources include a canine team, certified fire investigators, forensic chemist, electrical and fire protection engineers, and additional specialists. This NRT activation was the third this fiscal year and 724 since the 1978 inception of the program.

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