

NEWS FLASH

MAY 31, 2009

TWO STRUCTURAL FIRES CONSIDERED “SUSPICIOUS”

After the second structural fire within a three-week span, an arson investigator from the Pima County Sheriff's Department has been called as well as Cochise County Sheriff's Department.

On April 23rd, a blaze threatened 30 homes in the Mescal area to be followed by a May 12 call to a fire on the corner of Shawnee and Walapi.

The April 23rd blaze was reported in our previous News Flash. The railroad trestle and brush fire are believed to be human caused since area residents reported seeing people near the abandoned railroad track right before the fire started.

The May 12th structure was 50% involved when the fire crews arrived. With assistance from Benson and St. David Volunteer Fire Departments, the fire in the two-story workshop was quickly controlled.

Chris Bernal, Deputy Fire Chief, said that although the structure was saved, the entire second story was gutted. Fortunately, no one was in the building.

According to a recent News-Sun article, Bernal said the fire started in a neatly stacked wood pile placed near the structure and is suspicious in nature for several reasons including "... the time of the fire and the fact that the pile of wood would have required a lot more heat to ignite".

Bernal expressed there is no reason for residents to be alarmed, but suggests they should be watchful for suspicious behavior and activity. In case of a structure or brush fire, residents should call 911.

Currently burning - smoke to the west

A wildfire east of green valley on 1,425 acres is producing smoke visible from our area. The wildfire will now be used to benefit the landscape. It was originally started by lightening, but has been intentionally expanded by having helicopters drop plastic spheres containing flammable fluid. Low level fire will clear out dry brush and trees. The resulting ash will combine with summer rains and act as a natural fertilizer. Approximately 6,000 acres will be burned when the fire reaches the perimeter of land intentionally set aflame by fire officials. There have been no structures lost or threatened.

**THEY CAN'T HELP
YOU IF THEY
CAN'T FIND YOU!!
(Is your address visible from
the street?)**