

A TEXAS ADVISORY COUNCIL ON **ARSON**

Contact

For Immediate Release

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Republic Group Donates to Arson Hotline

The Republic Group, celebrating over 100 years of service in Texas, has donated \$1,000 to the Texas Arson Hotline. The Arson Hotline has been responsible for more than two dozen arrests on charges of arson since its inception on November 10, 2001.

The Texas Arson Hotline was started by the State Fire Marshals Office to encourage people who had any knowledge of acts of arson to anonymously call in and report the crime. A Texas Advisory Council on Arson (ATAC) has been responsible for providing the funds that reward the anonymous callers.

ATAC President David Mitchell of the Republic Group said the donation shows the company's concern with fighting arson. "The Arson Hotline is helping put a stop to criminals who intentionally set fires," said Mitchell. "The Republic Group is proud to be a part of any organization that can claim success in putting arsonists behind bars."

The Republic Group joins Germania and Nationwide who have recently donated \$1,000 to the Arson Hotline.

Arson hotline posters are often hung on posts or fences where arson fires have occurred in hopes that someone with information about the crime will call the Arson Hotline. The Arson Hotline is answered seven days a week, 24 hours a day and every caller remains anonymous. Calls that lead to legitimate arrests may result in a reward. The Arson Hotline number is 1-877-4-FIRE-45.

In 2005, Texas recorded approximately 8,100 intentionally set fires that resulted in more than \$26 million in property losses. About ten percent of all fires in Texas are reported to be suspicious in nature.

ATAC has also distributed nearly 1,000 bumper stickers to approximately 75 Texas fire departments in hopes of spreading the word about the Arson Hotline.

The Insurance Council of Texas (ICT) provides the administrative support in keeping ATAC operational on a daily basis. To obtain posters, bumper stickers or donate to the Arson Hotline, contact ICT's Mark Hanna at mhanna@insurancecouncil.org or call 512-444-9611.

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