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## **ATAC Honors Austin Fire Investigations Team**

A Texas Advisory Council on Arson (ATAC) has honored the Austin Fire Department's Arson Investigations unit with its 2011 Law Enforcement Award. The award is given in recognition of an outstanding effort to achieve excellence in the field of arson investigation.

The Austin Fire Investigations unit holds an impressive record in clearing many of its arson investigations with an arrest. Last year, Austin Fire investigators made 116 arrests in 179 fires that were determined to have been arson. In some cases several suspects were arrested for an intentionally set fire.

In the past five years Austin Fire investigators have examined more than 600 arson fires and they've cleared nearly 40 percent of the cases with arrests. In 2010, Austin Fire investigators cleared 50 percent of their cases with arrests.

ATAC honors both individual fire fighters and fire departments each year at the Texas Fire and Arson Investigators Seminar held in Austin. Accepting the award on behalf of the 12-member investigations team was Austin Fire Department Chief Investigator Aaron Woolverton.



The Texas Fire and Arson Investigators Seminar is a week-long event that draws Texas fire chiefs and fire marshals from all over the state for in-house training and updates on fire fighting capabilities. ATAC meets during this event to discuss the activities of the state fire marshal and the Arson Hotline.

The Arson Hotline is funded by ATAC, whose members include fire, police and insurance representatives. 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** (1-877-434-7345).

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