

A TEXAS ADVISORY COUNCIL ON **ARSON**

Contact

For Immediate Release

Mark Hanna
(512) 326-7616

April 10, 2007

Arson Hotline Nets Three Arrests in Store Fire

A call to the Arson Hotline resulted in the arrest of three Sul Ross State University students following a fire in an Alpine convenience store. The trio was charged with arson and their bond set at \$25,000.

The fire occurred in the Food Basket Supermarket in Alpine on the evening of February 4. According to witnesses, the three suspects lit a bag of charcoal in the aisle of the store and then proceeded to check out. A store clerk saw smoke and flames and called the Alpine Fire Department. A store employee extinguished the blaze before firefighters arrived.

The suspects reportedly bragged about setting the fire. An informant overheard the conversation and called the Arson Hotline to report the crime. Alpine police arrested the three 19 year old suspects without incident.

In the past 18 months, 11 people have been either been arrested or warrants issued for their arrest on charges of arson stemming from calls to the Arson Hotline.

The Arson Hotline is funded by A Texas Advisory Council on Arson (ATAC), whose members include fire, police, industrial 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).

The Insurance Council of Texas (ICT) provides the administrative support in keeping ATAC operational on a daily basis. ICT staff members also publish and distribute the ATAC newsletter and work closely with the State Fire Marshal's Office in responding to calls from the Arson Hotline.

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