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## **Arson Awareness Week May 1-7, 2011 Working Together to Extinguish Serial Arson**

(Anchorage, Alaska) – Nationwide each year arsonists destroy more than a billion dollars worth of property resulting in the death of more than 350 civilians and injuring another 1,300. Annually, at least three firefighters are killed at arson fires with another six thousand firefighters injured. Intentionally set fires account for 13% of fires responded to by fire departments across the nation.

Fire statistics in Alaska show that on average 67 structure fires per year are arson related. In 2008 arson related structure fires resulted in \$4,505,365 of property loss. In 2009 intentionally set fires increased by 7% for the first time in three years.

Alaska State Fire Marshal Dave Tyler joins the United States Fire Administration and several other fire organizations around the country in recognizing May 1-7, 2011 as Arson Awareness Week. This year's theme "*Working Together to Extinguish Serial Arson*" puts special focus on protecting communities from repeat fire setters.

Arson robs communities of lives and property. Arson destroys more than buildings: It can devastate a community. Communities can develop a watch program, partnering with their local fire department, law enforcement and local community groups. Promoting neighborhood watches can reduce the likelihood of arson occurring by educating people about recognizing and reporting unusual activities.

Please visit [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov) and click on arson awareness week for more information.

For more information contact: Mahlon Greene at (907) 746-5062, email [mahlon.greene@alaska.gov](mailto:mahlon.greene@alaska.gov)

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