









■ The LAFD shines during the recent slew of alleged arsons.

Photos by Juan Guerra

When a string of odd fires turned into what seemed like an intentional onslaught, the LAFD got busy and put them down. The more the fires came some 52, according to the LAFD, over just a few days on and around New Year's Day - the more the Fire Dept. responded.

Arson investigators worked around the clock to find the cause and stop the string.

The work of the investigators culminated in the arrest of a suspect in the early morning hours of Jan. 2. The case against him is continuing at press time.

Meanwhile, the Firefighters were heroes, scrambling to extinguish the fires and minimize the damage. There were no fatalities.

The aftermath of the Hollywood area arson fires continues to tax 19 Investigators from the LAFD Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section, according to LAFD spokesman Brian Humphrey.

Details

During the early morning hours of Dec. 30, a series of 17 car/structure fires developed; five in West Hollywood and 12 in Hollywood. Following

this series of fires, a Joint Arson Task Force comprised of the LAFD, LAPD, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, the District Attorney's Office, and the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives was assembled.

In the early evening hours of that same day, and through the early morning hours of Dec. 31, 16 additional vehicle/structure fires occurred; four in Hollywood, 11 in North Hollywood, and one in Sunland. An additional car fire occurred in Burbank.

That evening, eight additional car/structure fires occurred: six in Hollywood and two in West Hollywood.

During the early morning hours of Jan. 2, 11 additional car/structure fires occurred; two in West Hollywood, two in Hollywood, and seven in North

This string of fires has resulted in one firefighter and one citizen injury; there have been no fatalities to date.

The entire City Employees Club thanks the men and women of the LAFD and the other agencies that worked diligently to keep us safe.

Chief Brian L. Cummings commented:



Chief Brian L. Cummings

"First and foremost I would like to thank the men and women of the Los Angeles Fire Department and also the members of our allied Command who worked tirelessly alongside us. But most importantly I would like to thank the people of Los Angeles for giving us the team, tools and training to get the job done.

"Your firefighters minimized the impact that these horrendous acts had on our community through their coordinated efforts

at the scene of 52 separate fires over a four-day period. The valiant efforts of your firefighters limited the loss to less than \$3 million and ultimately prevented the loss of a single life.

"From the very first fire on Dec. 30, when we first determined what we were facing, the Los Angeles Fire Department along with the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles County Fire and Sheriff's Department, the District Attorney's Office and Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives began working around the clock to apprehend this arsonist and insure the safety of our community. We are grateful for the trust and support of the public."

