



# News Release

## OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections  
Public Safety Services

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.lasfm.org](http://www.lasfm.org)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Gonzales Arson Leaves One Suspect Dead, Second Suspect Clinging to Life**

**Gonzales, LA** – Investigators from the Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office (APSO) and the State Fire Marshal's Office continue to piece together the facts surrounding a recent arson that destroyed a Gonzales home and injured two (2) suspects—one fatally.

On the evening of Friday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, Ascension Parish authorities responded to a residential fire located on Tom Miles road near its intersection with Louisiana Highway 941, where they found the home fully engulfed in flames.

Ascension Parish Sheriff Jeff Wiley said that interviews conducted by APSO deputies revealed that two black males, one of which was described by witnesses as "being on fire," were observed running from the area of the residence. The men then entered what was described as a light-colored, 4-door sedan and quickly fled scene, according to Wiley.

APSO requested the assistance of the State Fire Marshal's Office in conducting an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the fire.

Upon their arrival, State Fire Marshal investigators soon determined that the fire had been intentionally set, as evidenced by the multiple points of origins found in the rear of the structure.

On Saturday, State Fire Marshal investigators obtained information that two males had been transported to the burn unit of the Baton Rouge General Medical Center (BRGMC) after earlier being treated at a Gretna hospital, where officials were falsely informed that the men were injured while attempting to burn a pile of old, discarded tires.

The two males, now suspects in the arson, were identified by State Fire Marshal investigators as Joel Morrison, 68, of Marrero, and his nephew, Larry Morrison, Jr., 28, of New Orleans. Both men have extensive criminal histories.

Earlier today investigators were informed by BRGMC officials that Larry Morrison, Jr. had died as a result of his injuries, and that Joel Morrison remains in critical condition.

“We are continuing to work closely with Sheriff Wiley and his department in this investigation, which is far from being resolved,” stated State Fire Marshal H. “Butch” Browning, Jr.

Anyone with information concerning this arson is urged to contact the State Fire Marshal’s Arson Tip Line at 1-800-256-5452, or Crime Stoppers at 225-344-STOP (7867). Cash rewards may be available and callers may remain anonymous.

**END - END - END**

**LOUISIANA OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

**News Release – Addendum (Gonzales Fire; 8/14/15)**



Joel Morrison



Larry Morrison, Jr. (Deceased)

Photographs provided by the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office