



INSURANCE AND SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER

- State of Georgia -

NEWS RELEASE

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DODGE COUNTY MAN ARRESTED FOR ARSON, OTHER CHARGES

ATLANTA – On August 10, Laurens County Fire Department Investigators charged Andrew Thomas Whittle, 36, with Arson in the 1st Degree, Burglary, and Terrorist Threats. The charges stem from Whittle’s role in a July 23 structure fire at 209 Barrs Road near Dexter in rural Laurens County near the Dodge County border.

The Laurens County Fire Department responded to the fire in question just after 4:30 on the afternoon of July 23. Earlier that afternoon, Whittle had been involved in a domestic dispute, damaging the inside of a residence approximately one mile down the road in Dodge County. He was later detained by the Laurens County Sheriff’s Office near the scene of the fire for acting erratic and making threatening statements to several individuals and turned over to the Dodge County Sheriff’s Office for their pending charges from the earlier incident. During the course of the arrest, Whittle became violent and damaged two Dodge County Sheriff’s Office vehicles.

“Our investigators worked closely with the Laurens County Fire Department on this investigation,” said Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner John F. King. “After a number of interviews, written statements, and other evidence, fire investigators were able to bring these charges forward to ensure that this dangerous individual is held accountable for his actions.”

Mr. Whittle is currently being held at the Dodge County Jail without bond for additional charges, including Terrorist Threats, Criminal Trespass, 2 Counts of Obstruction of Law Enforcement, 2 Counts of Simple Battery Against Law Enforcement, and 2 Counts of Criminal Interference with Government Property.

Commissioner King’s Fire Investigations Unit assisted the Laurens County Fire Department, Laurens County Sheriff’s Office, and Dodge County Sheriff’s Office with this investigation.



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