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**NEWS RELEASE**  
**JULY 8, 2022**

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**BROCKTON MAN ARRESTED ON ARSON, BREAKING AND ENTERING  
CHARGES FOR SETTING SERIES OF FIRES**

*Fires caused damage to the Brockton Fairgrounds, two schools and the Brockton RMV*

**BROCKTON** – A Brockton man is under arrest, charged with allegedly setting a series of fires to distract authorities from a break-in, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

On June 30, 2022, a Plymouth County grand jury indicted Brian Leite, 29, on one count each of Burning of a Building, Malicious Destruction of Property, Burning of Wood and Other Property, Wanton or Reckless Destruction of Wood, and Breaking and Entering at Nighttime.

Today, Leite was arrested at his home by the Brockton Police Department Fire Investigation Unit, and the Massachusetts State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's Office. Leite was arraigned on the charges in Brockton District Court where he pleaded not guilty and was held pending the outcome of a dangerousness hearing scheduled for July 15.

The indictments follow an extensive investigation into a series of fires in the city of Brockton which occurred on March 17, 2021. On that date, multiple fires occurred, along with a break in at the Sears department store by two suspects. Investigators believe the fires are linked to the break-in, and that two suspects ignited the fires to distract police and firefighters while they broke into the store located at the Westgate Mall.

March 17, 2021

- 12:54 a.m.: Brockton Police and Brockton Fire received several calls for a structure fire at the Brockton Fairgrounds, located at 433 Forest Avenue. Upon arrival, firefighters found the Old State House engulfed in flames. Black smoke poured out of the historic, two-story wooden structure, and flames burst from the left side of the building. Firefighters battled the blaze for several hours, but the fire ultimately destroyed the historic building. Brockton Police and Fire contacted the Massachusetts State Police Arson Unit, who determined that the fire at the Old State House was intentionally set.

- 12:56 a.m.: Brockton Fire Department received a report of a fire at the Brockton West Middle School, located at 271 West Street. Upon arrival, Brockton Fire found several trees and bushes on fire. After extensive suppression efforts, Brockton firefighters extinguished the flames, and prevented the fire from spreading to the middle school.
- 1:15 a.m.: A security alarm at the Sears department store at the Westgate Mall alerted Brockton Police to a forced entry. Surveillance cameras in the store captured a male at the store merchandise pickup entrance. The male pulled several times at the door handle, before kicking out a bottom glass panel on the door. The male suspect matched the physical description, and wore similar clothing as the male previously captured on surveillance cameras at the RMV, and West Middle School fire scenes. The male is seen on Sears security video going through the damaged door and motioning towards someone off camera. Seconds later, another male is seen on video crawling through the door into the store. This male wore the same clothing as the second male observed on video obtained from the RMV, and at the West Middle School. The two individuals broke into several cash registers and removed money. A Brockton Police officer and the Sears store manager responded to the activated security alarm, and the two suspects fled from the store into nearby D.W. Fields Park.
- 1:39 a.m.: Brockton Fire responded to a fire ignited in the woods of the lower section of D.W. Fields Park. The fire was quickly extinguished and investigators determined the fire to be incendiary in nature, and ruled it arson.
- 9:15 a.m.: Investigators searched the Brockton High School, and discovered a section of turf at the Rocky Marciano football stadium was damaged due to fire. Several pieces of the turf were singed, and stretches of the turf were charred and stained with streaks of black. Massachusetts State Police and Brockton Fire Department determined that the damage on the turf resulted from an intentionally set fire.
- The Brockton Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) is directly adjacent to the Brockton Fairgrounds. Investigators searched the RMV property, and found several burned wooden crates, and burnt scattered debris in back of the building. Investigators determined all of the burnt items behind the RMV were intentionally set on fire.

The extensive investigation found that Leite allegedly set the fires and broke into Sears, and fled when Brockton Police responded. Brockton Police located Leite walking on a nearby street and he once again fled when police approached. As Leite fled, he dropped clothing that was recovered by Brockton Police. This clothing was submitted to the State Police Crime Lab which found DNA evidence consistent with Leite's known DNA profile. These recovered articles of clothing matched the ones worn by the individual captured on camera at the RMV, West Middle School, and Sears.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Alex Zane, and was jointly investigated by the Brockton Police, the Brockton Fire Investigation Unit, Brockton Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau, the Massachusetts State Police Fire & Explosion Unit assigned to the Office of Massachusetts State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, and State Police Crime Scene investigators.