



Texas Department of Public Safety

Information for the News Media

Media Relations Office

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DPS identifies persons of interest in Mansion fire; \$50,000 reward offered

Texas Rangers have developed information about a man they consider to be a person of interest in the Texas Governor's Mansion arson on June 8, 2008. A \$50,000 cash reward is being offered for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the individual(s) responsible for this arson.

In October 2009, DPS assumed responsibility for the investigation and took custody of the evidence, which included all collected physical evidence and thousands of hours of video surveillance tapes.

Since October 2009, the Texas Ranger-led DPS task force:

- Enhanced the surveillance video footage of the arson suspect to the greatest extent possible with the assistance of FBI experts.
- Produced a forensic sketch of the suspect taken from the video and compared it with potential suspects.
- Reviewed thousands of hours and thousands of frames of videos from 11 separate cameras that had not been previously examined.
- Reviewed all collected physical evidence.

During the forensic review of the surveillance video, which took a significant amount of time and manpower to review the thousands of hours of tape from 11 separate cameras, the investigative team found a video segment of a suspicious vehicle—a white Jeep Cherokee, whose occupants were observed taking photos of the Governor's Mansion at approximately 2 a.m. on June 4, 2008—four days before the arson.

There were more than 3,000 similar Jeeps registered in Texas, but through a process of elimination investigators were able to locate the specific vehicle in question and its owner, who admitted to driving the vehicle while the photos of the Mansion were being taken. The driver, now considered a person of interest, also revealed to investigators the identities of two people who were riding in the vehicle with him that night.

Investigators subsequently interviewed the two passengers, who are now also considered persons of interest. One passenger initially denied having been in the vehicle, but later admitted to having been

in the vehicle and taking photographs after failing a polygraph examination. All three persons have denied involvement in the arson of the mansion.

At least one of the persons of interest has been placed in the downtown area the morning of the mansion fire.

Investigators have also established a direct link from the persons of interest to an Austin-based anarchist group that was linked to a planned attack on the Republican National Convention in Minneapolis in September 2008, which involved Molotov cocktails.

See the videos, sketches and photos:

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/video/News/GovernorMansionArson/index.htm>.

Submit a tip online: <https://www.tipsubmit.com/WebTipsCSI.aspx?L=E&AgencyID=650>

Anyone with information that could be helpful to investigators is urged to call 1-800-252-TIPS (8477) or text "DPS plus your tip" to 274637 (CRIMES). **All calls or texts are anonymous.** Any reward would be paid in cash.

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