



HILLSDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT

380 HILLSDALE AVENUE • HILLSDALE, NJ • 07642

HQ 201.664.4200 • FAX 201.666.4503 • www.HillsdalePolice.com

PRESS RELEASE FOR ALL NEWS MEDIA – 5/20/2010

PRIMARY CONTACT: DET. SGT. ROBERT FRANCAVIGLIA @ 201.664.4200

SECONDARY CONTACT: P.O. JEFF ANGERMEYER @ 201.664.4200

For Immediate Release (Page 1 of 2):

Home Destroyed by Fire

Hillsdale Police Chief Chip Stalter wishes to announce the conclusion of a house fire investigation that began on May 19, 2010. The response to this incident involved assets from the Hillsdale Fire Department and Hillsdale EMS, as well as several nearby Fire Departments such as the Westwood Fire Department, the Park Ridge Fire Department, the Woodcliff Lake Fire Department, the River Vale Fire Department, and the Washington Township Fire Department.

On May 19, 2010, at approximately 7:39 p.m., Police Headquarters received multiple reports of a fully involved house fire at 42 Morris Drive. The Police Department immediately dispatched Police Sergeant John Scordato and Police Officer Chris Donaldson, along with the Hillsdale Fire Department. Sergeant Scordato and Officer Donaldson arrived within moments of the reports, and located heavy fire emanating from the south side of the residence. The officers ensured that the home was already evacuated, and that no one was injured. Further, they cordoned off the area and assisted with crowd control as the Hillsdale Fire Department, under the direction of Fire Chief Timothy Van Riper, along with assistance from several neighboring fire departments, suppressed the blaze.

The Fire Department knocked the fire down after nearly three hours of fire suppression. The house sustained heavy damage and is uninhabitable. Subsequently, a joint investigation into the cause and origin of the fire was initiated by the Hillsdale Fire Prevention Bureau, Detective Sergeant Bob Francaviglia of the Hillsdale Police Department's Detective Bureau, members of the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office Arson Squad, and the Bergen County Sheriff's Office Crime Scene Unit.

Preliminary investigation by these agencies revealed that the fire was not intentionally set, and is most likely accidental. As such, the Hillsdale Police Department, the Bergen County Arson Squad, and the Bergen County Sheriff's Office, closed their investigation into this matter; they have turned jurisdiction back over to the Hillsdale Fire Prevention Bureau for final analysis.

Police Chief Chip Stalter praised the hard work of the responding police officers and the men and women of the Hillsdale Fire Department. In addition, he would like to thank the continuing cooperation from assets such as the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of Prosecutor John L. Molinelli and its Arson Squad, under the leadership of Chief of Detectives Steven Cucciniello; and the Bergen County Sheriff's Office, under the direction of Sheriff Leo P. McGuire.

See Page 2 of 2 for Image of Fire.

The origin of the Hillsdale Police Department dates back to as early as 1898, when a single constable patrolled the town. The first regular police department for the borough was incorporated in 1921. Currently, the Hillsdale Police Department is under the direction of Police Chief Chip Stalter, with a complement of 20 police officers who range in assignment and rank. From Patrol Officers and Detectives, to School Resource and D.A.R.E Officers, the Hillsdale Police Department has an affirmative organizational focus on community-oriented policing strategies. 365 days per year, Hillsdale Police Officers serve almost 11,000 residents; they patrol 54 linear miles of consecutive streets under their jurisdiction; and they respond to nearly 14,000 calls, requests or referrals from the public annually.



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Below is an image of the house fire on May 19, 2010.



Photo by Tracy Jeffery

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