

PRESS RELEASE

EUREKA POLICE DEPARTMENT



To: All Humboldt County Media

Re: CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE LAB FIRE SERIOUSLY INJURES THREE

Released by: Det. Sgt. Patrick O'Neill 707-441-4060

On 2-11-2009 at 0722 hours, the Eureka Police/Fire communications center was called by a citizen concerning a possible explosion at the 1900 block of Hilfiker Avenue in Eureka.

Eureka Police and Fire personnel responded to investigate. While Officers and Firemen were on scene, the communications center received a call concerning a burn victim in the St. Joseph Hospital ER, who maybe associated with the Hilfiker incident. The subject had serious and extensive burns to his upper body. It was soon discovered that this subject had driven himself to the hospital and his vehicle was parked in front of the ER doors. The vehicle contained an amount of unidentifiable chemicals. The vehicle was cordoned off and soon inspected by Haz Mat personnel, who deemed the chemicals not to be a threat. The vehicle was then towed as evidence.

Officers and Firemen at the Hilfiker scene had difficulty locating the actual location of the incident, since the resulting fire from the explosion caused interior damage only. Also subjects on scene were less than cooperative. The communications center soon received a call from two additional burn victims from the incident, who finally advised their exact location. Those two subjects were transported to the hospital for moderate to severe burns. A fourth subject, identified as Sandra Dornenbyrg-Fulton (62 years old of Eureka) was arrested at the scene for charges of maintaining a residence for the purpose of controlled substance production and obstructing an officer.

Agents of the Humboldt County Drug Task Force were requested and responded to the scene. The location and vehicle were secured until a search warrant could be obtained.

Preliminary investigation indicates the laboratory was most likely for the production of Hashish. This process creates a very flammable environment.

More arrests are expected in this case. This is an ongoing investigation and further information will be released as it becomes available.