



Eureka Police Department

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Media Release

Detective Sergeant Patrick O’Neill (707) 268-5261

On 7-31-2011 at about 1:36pm, Eureka Fire Department (EFD) personnel responded to investigate smoke they had seen coming from the green belt area, located at the foot of Vigo Street in Eureka.

Upon further investigation, EFD personnel located a moderate size fire, which was growing in size due to the increasing winds. EFD determined the originating area of the fire and responded to that location. As they arrived at the suspected fire’s origin, they encountered a subject. EFD ordered the subject to stay where he was, as part of their possible arson investigation, due to their belief that the subject may be responsible for the fire. However, the subject fled into the green belt.

Officers of the Eureka Police Department were summoned to the scene to assist EFD. A perimeter was quickly established. After the perimeter was set, a K-9 was utilized to track the subject. The subject was quickly located and taken into custody, after being identified by EFD personnel as the person who fled from them.

The subject was identified as Edward Dean Wilhite (47 Years old of Eureka). Wilhite was interviewed and admitted responsibility for the fire. He was booked into the Humboldt County Jail on a felony charge of unlawfully causing a fire. He is being held on \$25,000 bail.

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