



# OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### One Arrested for Woods Arson in George County

Hattiesburg, MS—On April 7, 2009, one man from George County was arrested and charged with two counts of felony woods arson and one count of misdemeanor woods arson. Eric D. Fairly, age 34, was arrested by Mississippi Forestry Commission investigators Scott Miles and Brandon Hendry. Miles and Hendry had been investigating the series of arson fires since February.

This is a good example of different departments and agencies coming together with information to help protect and serve the public. The State Fire Marshall's office assisted with the investigation along with the George County Sheriff's Office, Basin VFD, and MS Forestry Commission crews. Key information and evidence was attained from several witnesses within the area.

In Mississippi, the penalty for felony woods arson is, upon conviction, sentenced to the state penitentiary for not more than two years nor less than one year, or be fined not less than \$200 nor more than \$1,000, or both at the discretion of the court.

Please report any suspicious behavior in regard to a woods fire by calling the Mississippi Forestry Commission's Woods Arson Hotline at 1-800-240-5161. Information leading to the arrest and conviction of a woods arsonist can be rewarded up to \$2,500.

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The Mississippi Forestry Commission asks that you ***THINK TWICE Before You Do Any Outdoor burning! Don't Burn on Windy Days because Carelessness Causes Wildfires. Check for local burn bans at [www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us)***