



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: February 02, 2010

To: The Media

From: Karen Lindsay, Nanaimo Fire Rescue

**Re: Nanaimo Fire Rescue Crews respond to a 5<sup>th</sup> structure fire in a 2 week period**

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On Tuesday morning at 3:00 am Nanaimo Fire Rescue Crews were dispatched to another residential structure fire in the 600 block of Hillcrest Street. Crews from Station 1, 2 and 3 were dispatched to the scene. The first crew arrived on scene within minutes of being dispatched to find a vacant one story single family home with smoke coming from the eaves. Nanaimo Fire Rescue Crews worked aggressively to knock down the fire and had it under control within 20 minutes of arrival limiting further damage to the home.

The Hillcrest Street fire falls on the heels of the Stewart Avenue Fire from last week and is the fifth structure fire in a two week period for Nanaimo Fire Rescue crews. Four of the fires are suspected arson with one being accidental. Since October Nanaimo Fire Rescue has experienced a spike in the number of structure fires totalling 37 to date and exceeding the number experienced at the same time last year which was 25. Nanaimo Fire Rescue wants to remind citizens to check their smoke alarms and report any suspicious activity to 911.

The investigations have been completed on both residential fires, Stewart Avenue and Hillcrest Street. According to Captain Doug Bell, Chief Fire Prevention Officer, "Both the Stewart Avenue Fire and the Hillcrest Street residential fires are suspected arsons. Nanaimo Fire Rescue investigation details have been turned over to the RCMP for follow up." Bell further added that there is no need for the public to be concerned at this time as the string of suspected arson fires over the past few weeks have all been isolated incidents and do not appear to be connected in any way to each other.

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For more information about the investigation contact Doug Bell, Captain, Fire Prevention and Loss Division. 250-268-2108