

PRESS RELEASE

Arson Charges Laid in Connection with Mayerthorpe Fires

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**Mayerthorpe, Alberta, May 1, 2016 - Mayor Kate Patrick and Fire Chief Schroeder,
Town of Mayerthorpe**

Town of Mayerthorpe through its Fire Department confirms acknowledgement of the recent arrest of 19 year old Mayerthorpe Fire Department – Lac Ste. Anne County Fire Services member Lawson Schalm in relation to 18 charges of Arson including the CN Rail Trestle Bridge in Mayerthorpe. The Department and the community are in a current state of shock as its members learned of the arrest of one of its trusted members on the evening of April 30, 2016.

Starting today, Fire Department members will undergo Critical Incident Stress Debriefing and one on one counselling will be available to all members, to help to cope with what has happened.

The Department responded to 18 separate fire incidents beginning on April 19, 2016 through April 29, 2016, all of which were suspicious in nature in and around the Town of Mayerthorpe. Mop Up responses in relation to 5 of the incidents occurred as well to handle flare ups as a result of the previous fires in those incidents. The members of the Fire Department volunteer tirelessly and all that were available stepped up during this rash of fires and sacrificed their time from family and work to fight these fires on behalf of the community.

Through these incidents the Fire Department continues to work with Provincial and RCMP fire investigators. As suspicion grew with respect to the probability of intentional fire setting, each of these agencies were contacted.

Our community can continue to expect the highest possible service from its Fire Department volunteers and Town officials. The Fire Department will continue to handle emergencies and will respond to calls.

The Fire Department members all emphasize support and understanding to Lawson Schalm's family with respect to this difficult situation. The Fire Department and Town officials will handle this situation with understanding, compassion and the desire and wish that Lawson Schalm receive the help he needs.

Kate Patrick
Mayor

Randy Schroeder
Fire Chief



My Mayerthorpe



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