



LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Contact: Janel Vasallo, Public Education / Information Officer

Telephone: (863) 834-8219

Fax: (863) 834-8222

Email: janel.vasallo@lakelandgov.net

Update: New Information About Fires at North Lakeland Walmart

Lakeland --- At approximately 5:15 PM, on Monday, December 2, 2013, the Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) responded to a report of multiple fires inside a North Lakeland Walmart, located at 5800 Highway 98 N, Lakeland, FL.

Fires were located in multiple sections of the store, located in the front and back of the store. The fires were partially extinguished by store employees; some by using common ABC rated fire extinguishers. Upon arrival, Lakeland Firefighters cleared the scene of any shoppers and completely extinguished any remaining signs of fire as well as secured the area. The fires on scene were cleared by 5:36 PM.

Investigators discovered what appeared to be four small fires, all intentionally set. Upon reviewing surveillance footage provided by the Walmart store, investigators identified a male juvenile as the suspect. The suspect was not apprehended and investigators are currently gathering more information that may lead to his apprehension.

Damage is believed to be approximately \$2,000 in merchandise, clean up, and disruption of regular business.

The customer evacuation went smoothly, with no injuries reported. The North Lakeland Walmart remains open to the public, however the affected areas inside the store will remain closed to shoppers until the investigation and appropriate clean-up are concluded.

The Lakeland Fire Department responded with six apparatuses and 15 personnel. If anyone witnessed the events or has information related to the fires they are encouraged to contact Fire Investigator John McGrath at (863) 205-6694.

~END~

Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

701 E. Main Street Lakeland, FL 33801 | Phone (863)834-8200 | Fax (863)834-8295

WWW.LAKELANDGOV.NET/LFD