

police/fire calls Man is charged with conspiracy

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

A fire repair contractor from Farmington Hills faces conspiracy and arson charges for allegedly conspiring to burn down three Detroit houses.

Arraigned Monday before Magistrate Vesta Fiverson of Detroit, Sanford (Sandy) Zack, 51, stood mute. Innocent pleas were entered in his behalf. Bond was set at \$10,000 pending a preliminary examination in 36th District Court.

Zack is charged with:

- conspiracy to commit arson, arson of a dwelling, conspiracy to burn insured property and burning of insured property at 11630 Birchwood Ave. 3, 1981.

- conspiracy to commit arson and arson of an unoccupied dwelling at 8029 Terry Ave. 9, 1981.
- conspiracy to burn insured property and conspiracy to obtain money over \$100 by false pretenses at 22745 Cambridge March 30, 1984.

If convicted, Zack faces up to 20 years in prison for conspiracy to commit arson and arson of a dwelling, and up to 10 years in prison for conspiracy to burn insured property and burning of insured property. THE CHARGES stem from a two-year investigation coordinated by the Wayne County Organized Crime Task Force and conducted by the Detroit Police-Fire Arson Unit.

Task Force director Patrick

Foley called arson-for-profit a serious problem in Detroit. "Overall, it results in insurance companies being defrauded of millions of dollars and results in insurance premiums of others being increased."

Compounding the problem is the visual blight resulting from unrepaired houses that have been torched. "They're atrocious looking," Foley said. "Lots of torched houses go unrepared, then deteriorate and fall down."

Tax rolls also are eroded as a result of arson for profit. "And the schools, the county, the city, police and fire protection, and neighborhood maintenance all suffer as a result," Foley said.

ZACK WAS one of eight people who Wayne County investigators charged last week with burning down six northwest Detroit houses in arson-for-profit schemes.

Of the eight charged, four were charged previously on conspiracy and arson-related charges, three were convicted. One was found not guilty by a jury. Three of the suspects are serving sentences for previous arson-related convictions, Foley said.

In 1974, Zack was indicted by a Wayne County grand jury on 24 arson-related counts. All but one count was dismissed. He struck a deal that in return for his promise to assist in the investigation of fire repair fraud — allowed him to plead guilty to preparing -- set a fire.

Listed are some of the Farmington-area police and fire calls received during the past week:

• **BULLET FOUND**
A spent .38-caliber bullet was found on a deck on Birchwood Sept. 13-14, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report. The bullet was recently fired and apparently struck the patio on its base. Residents said shots had been heard recently in the area.

• **DAMAGE REPORTED**
Listed below are some of the damage reports filed with local police agencies during the past week:

Damage was estimated at \$1,209 when someone tried to break into a 1986 Pontiac 6000 Sept. 11-12. Damage was estimated at \$175 when someone vandalized a car parked at Casa Armando's, 29200 Orchard Lake, Sept. 12.

Damage was estimated at \$350 when someone tried to pry off the rear spoiler of a 1986 Pontiac Trans-Am parked on Bycroft Sept. 13-14.

Damage was estimated at \$100 when someone vandalized a mailbox on North Park Sept. 14. Damage was estimated at \$300 when someone vandalized a car parked on Creekwood Sept. 14-15.

Damage was estimated at \$60 when the side mirror of a car parked on Leelanau was broken with a beer bottle Sept. 15.

Damage was estimated at \$300 when someone tried to steal a 1988 Pontiac Grand Am parked in a driveway on Old Colony Sept. 16.

Damage was estimated at \$800 when someone smashed a special energy window at Hall & Hall Inc., Realtors, 27888 Orchard Lake, Sept. 16.

• **THEFTS REPORTED**
Listed below are some of thefts reported to local police agencies during the past week:

A \$1,600 gold necklace with diamonds was reported stolen from a woman shopping at Loomis, 31001 Orchard Lake, Sept. 7.

A radar detector valued at \$200 was reported stolen from a car parked at Gateway Apartments Sept. 10-11.

Two tall lights valued at \$101 were reported stolen from a car parked at Greenhill Apartments Sept. 12-13.

A typewriter valued at \$1,595 was reported stolen from a PPOM Co., 32985 12 Mile, Sept. 12-15.

A wallet and its contents valued at \$75 was reported stolen from a customer at the Farmington Lanes,

Hills store robbed

A man who implied that he had a gun took \$400 in cash and \$3,300 worth of sweaters from Courtesy Corner, 23300 Nine Mile, Sept. 15.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

A man who walked in at 5:40 p.m. asked where the greeting cards were, then picked out two cards. After the clerk rang up his sale, he put his hand in his pocket and implied that he had a gun.

He ordered the clerk to move away, then took the money and 22 new sweaters. He left after ordering the clerk into a back room.

The robber was described as white, 6-3, 200 pounds, dark complexioned, clean shaven, neatly dressed and wearing large rectangular black-rimmed glasses and a dark blue baseball jacket and cap.



32315 Grand River, Sept. 13.

A radar detector valued at \$129 was reported stolen from a car parked at Bargaintel Inn, 38300 Grand River, Sept. 13.

A radar detector and other items valued at \$250 were reported stolen from a car parked in a garage on Eastfield Sept. 13-14.

An in-dash radio valued at \$600 was reported stolen from a car parked on Sudbury Sept. 13-14.

A 1988 Chevrolet Cavalier valued at \$12,000 was reported stolen from Stone Ridge Apartments Sept. 13-14.

Construction tools valued at \$1,190 were reported stolen from D'Angelo Construction, 24485 Middlebelt, Sept. 13-14.

A VCR valued at \$400 was reported stolen from a house on Quaker Valley Lane Sept. 14.

A portable compressor valued at \$1,000 was reported stolen from Art's Rental, 28811 Grand River, Sept. 14-15.

A color TV, a cellular telephone, a radio, a radar detector and a computer valued at \$3975 were reported stolen from Roger Peck Fleet & Leasing, 30630 Grand River, Sept. 14-15.

A camera, jewelry and cash were reported stolen from an apartment at Gateway Apartments Sept. 15.

Jewelry and a camera valued at \$5,930 were reported stolen from a house on Nine Mile Sept. 15.

A videotape recorder, a cable TV box, a camera, a coin collection, a hunting bow and arrows, currency, a double-barrel shotgun and two rifles valued at \$2,498 were reported stolen from a house on Fendi Sept. 16.

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