



TANEY COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIRES NET FOUR (4) YEARS IN PRISON FOR VERNON CHRISTIAN

Vernon Christian (d.o.b. 5-11-1938), of Kirbyville, Missouri, pleaded guilty on Thursday, December 15, 2011, to two felony cases of knowingly burning. Taney County Circuit Court Judge Mark Orr sentenced Christian to the maximum sentence of four (4) years in prison on each of the two cases. Probation was denied.

One of Christian's felony cases stemmed from an altercation between Christian and his tenant at 201 Norfolk Road, in Branson, on December 20, 2009. The tenant told Christian she would be moving out at the end of the month, claiming Christian would not make needed repairs to the residence. Christian argued with the tenant, then removed personal property from the home and set it on fire in the yard. The fire spread to the home and Western Taney County Fire had to respond to extinguish the blaze.

Christian's other felony case was the result of an incident at Hollister Food Mart on October 27, 2010. Hollister Police investigated a suspicious fire started behind the Hollister Food Mart, and used surveillance video to develop a suspect. The video showed an older male, matching the description of Christian, pulling trash out of the dumpsters behind Hollister Food Mart, piling it near gas tanks, and setting it ablaze. No one at Hollister Food Mart authorized the trash to be burned and expressed concern to police for the danger of having such a fire set so close to gas tanks.

Knowingly burning is a class D felony. In Missouri, a class D felony carries a maximum prison sentence of four (4) years and a \$5,000.00 fine. Christian's sentences are to run concurrently with one another.

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