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CICERO MAN ARRESTED ON FEDERAL ARSON CHARGE INVOLVING FATAL FIRE AT WEST LAWN APARTMENT BUILDING IN JANUARY

CHICAGO — A Cicero man was arrested by federal ATF agents and Chicago police on a federal arson charge for allegedly setting a fatal fire to a southwest side apartment building that killed a resident in January. The defendant, **Juan Adame**, allegedly was involved in a domestic dispute with a woman who occasionally occupied the apartment where the fire began but who was not there at the time of the fire. The blaze killed a neighbor in an adjacent unit. Adame was charged with setting fire to a building used in interstate commerce in a criminal complaint that was unsealed following his arrest yesterday afternoon, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Andrew L. Traver, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and Garry McCarthy, Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, announced today.

Adame, also known as “Jaime Garcia,” 38, of 3600 South 52nd Ct., Cicero, was scheduled to appear at 1:15 p.m. today before Magistrate Judge Jeffrey Cole in U.S. District Court.

According to the charges, at approximately 4:30 a.m. on Jan. 14, 2012, Adame used gasoline to start a fire in the second-floor rear apartment of a building at 4246 West 63rd St., which contains two one-bedroom apartments on the second floor and commercial space on the ground floor. No

one was inside the rear apartment where the fire began, but James Maca, 60, the sole occupant of the front apartment unit, died as a result of carbon monoxide intoxication and inhalation of smoke and soot.

The Chicago Fire Department's Office of Fire Investigation and the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Division of Arson Investigation assisted the Chicago Police Department's Bomb and Arson Section and ATF in the investigation. A state fire marshal's accelerant detection canine alerted at the presence of ignitable substances in the rear apartment, and debris was later determined to contain gasoline, the charges allege.

Investigators determined that there were no signs of forced entry to the building or the rear apartment, which was rented by a woman identified as Individual A, who lives and works in northwest Indiana but usually spent weekends at the Chicago apartment, according to the complaint. Investigators who responded to the fire observed only female clothing in the unit, but Individual A told them when she was last in the apartment a few days before the fire, Adame also had most of his clothing in the apartment.

Individual A told agents she had dated Adame since August 2011, but knew him as "Jaime Garcia." In late December and early January, Individual A and Adame had argued about Individual A's plan to visit a sick relative in Mexico, where Adame knew that Individual A had an ex-boyfriend. When Individual A arrived at her Indiana home during the early morning of Jan. 14, she found her car and some personal belongings were missing, and she sent text messages to Adame, saying she was leaving for Mexico and wanted nothing more to do with him.

Further investigation, including law enforcement interviews with Adame and another woman he spent the early morning hours with on Jan. 14, resulted in the charges against him. Simultaneous to his arrest, agents today conducted a search of Adame's Cicero residence.

The arson charge carries a maximum penalty of death or life in prison and a \$250,000 fine. If convicted, the court must impose a reasonable sentence under federal statutes and the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The government is being represented by Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Nasser.

The public is reminded that a complaint contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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