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K-9 Used In Liberal Fire Passes Away

It is with a heavy heart that the Topeka Fire Department announces the passing of the Investigations Unit Accelerant Detection Canine Boomer, at the age of 10 years old.

Boomer was placed into service in December of 2005 and has been an 8 year collaborative partnership between the City of Topeka and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE): a division of the United States Department of Justice.

Since entering into service, Boomer has responded to over 900 incidents logging over 80,000 miles. He has been deployed in roughly 300 fire scenes both in the City of Topeka, and regionally; this includes two BATFE National Response Team activations in Kansas and Missouri.

Since January 2006 Topeka has seen a significant drop in the occurrence of fires that necessitated formal investigations. As compared to statistics generated prior to the program, we have experienced an equally impressive 33% drop in the number of fires being classified as incendiary and/or arson.

Boomer was pivotal in the investigation of an estimated 60 injury fires and over 20 fatality fires in both Topeka and the NE Kansas region. During his career Boomer aided in the collection of over 250 evidence samples. Once Boomer alerted, these samples were collected and tested and he achieved an approximate 90% positive laboratory confirmation rate. Boomer's positive alerts to the presence of ignitable liquids within a fire scene statistically indicated to Investigators there was a 90% chance that the laboratory would confirm the existence of ignitable liquids within the fire debris. This accuracy rate ultimately provided investigators with the crucial evidence needed to successfully prosecute the crime of Arson.

Boomer was actively involved in the arrest and/or conviction of over 40 suspects for crimes including arson and murder/homicide in both Federal and District Courts. Boomer was the K-9 used to investigate the Rent-A-Center Fire in 2010 in Liberal resulting in conviction of an arsonist.

Boomer served Topeka and the surrounding communities with honor and distinction and will never be forgotten.