



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
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Re: Laundry Fire at the Hernando County Detention Center

Date: December 9, 2020

On 12-09-20 at approximately 1:24 p.m., the fire alarm was activated at the Hernando County Detention Center; the alarm system indicated fire in the laundry room.

Hernando County Fire and Emergency Services was dispatched to the Detention Center.

Detention Deputies evacuated the immediate area while others responded to the laundry room with fire extinguishers.

Investigation revealed Deputies were performing daily laundry duties and placed a load of wet laundry into one of the commercial dryers. Approximately 40 minutes later, a fire started in the drum of the commercial dryer. The fire quickly grew, engulfing the entire dryer.

As expected, the fire suppression system (which triggered the fire alarm) activated and extinguished the flames within seconds. By the time Deputies arrived at the laundry room, the fire was out.

Hernando County Fire and Emergency Services and the Brooksville Fire Department arrived on scene within four minutes with a total of 10 apparatus. Upon arrival, fire crews responded to the laundry area where they addressed what was described as “fire smoldering in a dryer.”

There were no injuries as a result of the fire.

The laundry room/area is situated in a portion of the detention center that is separate from the inmate housing units; therefore, no inmates were relocated or evacuated during this incident.

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and was re-elected in 2020. Sheriff Nienhuis remains accountable to the people of Hernando County.