

December 21, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Springfield Man Charged With First Degree Arson

A Springfield man is charged with first degree arson, accused of throwing an incendiary device, commonly known as a Molotov cocktail, in a local attorney's office. On Tuesday morning, Springfield fire crews were called to the office of Van Pelt and Van Pelt Attorney at Law after reports that a man entered the office, ignited the device and threw it against the wall. An investigation by Springfield Fire Marshals led to the arrest of 26-year-old Stephen DeLong. Fire Marshals do not believe he was specifically targeting anyone in the attorneys office. However, the investigation revealed DeLong has a history of violence and has recently made threats against his father, who works in the adjoining office. One employee was injured in the incident. She suffered minor injuries while trying to extinguish the fire. Fire damage to the building was limited to the area where the Molotov cocktail was thrown.

DeLong was arrested in St. Louis Friday morning and transported back to Springfield where charges were filed Saturday morning. DeLong is being held in the Greene County Jail. Bond has not been set.

For more information, contact: Cara Erwin at cerwin@springfieldmo.gov.