



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Police Department

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DATE: 04/30/2010
NATURE OF INCIDENT: Structure Fire
CASE NO.: 10245970
INCIDENT DATE :03/20/2010
INCIDENT TIME: 12:01 PM
INCIDENT LOCATION: 2325 West 7th Street
SUBJECT: Duluth Man charged in Apartment Fire
BY: Officer Brad Wick, Information Coordinator

A 21 year old Duluth man has been charged in connection with a March 20th, 2010 fire that caused \$72,000 in damages to a Lincoln Park apartment building.

Derek Thomas LaPlante, age 21 of Duluth, has been charged with: Felony Negligent Fire; Felony Sale/Manufacture of Marijuana; Felony Possession of a Controlled Substance; and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

On Saturday, March 20th, 2010, at 12:01 PM, the Duluth Police and Duluth Fire Departments responded to 2325 West 7th Street on the report of smoke coming from the second floor apartment. A short time later flames were seen coming from the roof which the fire department was able to extinguish.

During the investigation into the fire, it was determined that LaPlante had a marijuana grow operation in his second floor apartment and that the excessive electrical draw overloaded the circuits causing a fire in the wall. LaPlante was unable to extinguish the fire himself forcing him to call 911. Fire and Police Department personnel found numerous marijuana plants, drug paraphernalia, and growing equipment in the LaPlante's second floor apartment.

LaPlante is not in custody and will appear in court on a future date.