

**BIG SPRING FIRE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL**

DATE: July 6, 2023
TO: Local Media
FROM: Dan Hendrickson, Fire Marshal, City of Big Spring
RE: Dora Roberts Community Center Fire

On July 1, 2023, at 4:45 a.m. the Howard County Dispatch Center received a call for a possible structure fire at the Dora Roberts Community Center (DRCC). The first unit arrived on scene at 4:50 a.m. to find the building fully involved. The fire department responded with two fire trucks, a ladder truck, a medic unit, and command staff. Despite their best efforts, the building was a total loss. Crews cleared the scene and went back in service at 12:15 p.m.

Due to suspicious circumstances, the Big Spring Fire Marshal's office is investigating this incident as Arson, third-degree felony. The Big Spring Fire Marshal's Office is working in conjunction with the Big Spring Police Department and the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives). This is an ongoing investigation, and there is no other information currently.

We continue to ask the public to stay away from the DRCC; it is dangerous and illegal to trespass onto the property. This facility was important to our community, and we are asking the community for help in finding the person(s) responsible for this crime. If you have information about the fire at the DRCC, please report it to the proper authorities. To make an anonymous tip to Crime Stoppers, please call the TIPS line at 432-263-8477 (TIPS) or visit <https://www.p3tips.com/1277>.

Lastly, we want to take the opportunity to thank the multitude of departments for their assistance with this fire scene including the Big Spring Police Department; Oncor; Atmos Energy; Big Spring Code Enforcement; Shane Bowles, Public Works Director, and his staff; Hayley Lewis, Community Service Director, and her staff; and Gina Valencia and Becky Letz with the Senior Center.