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**MICHAEL EVERHART PLEADS GUILTY IN  
CHARLES COUNTY SUBDIVISION ARSON**

GREENBELT, Maryland - Michael McIntosh Everhart, age 21, of Waldorf, Maryland pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to commit arson in connection with the December 6, 2004 fire at the Hunter's Brooke development in Charles County, Maryland, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein.

According to the statement of facts provided to the court as part of the plea agreement, from October 1 to December 6, 2004 Everhart conspired with Patrick Walsh, age 21, of Ft. Washington, Maryland, Jeremy Parady, age 22, of Accokeek, Aaron Speed, age 22, and Roy McCann, age 23, both of Waldorf, to commit arson at 35 houses under construction in the Hunter's Brooke development. On the night of December 5, 2004 or early morning hours of December 6, 2004, Everhart traveled to Hunter's Brooke as a participant in the arson with his co-conspirators. To carry out the scheme, the conspirators poured flammable materials into containers and placed the containers within and around numerous houses. None of the houses were occupied at the time of the fires. To conceal the flammable materials, the conspirators used common containers such as drywall buckets, detergent bottles and other large plastic containers. The conspirators poured other accelerants in the entranceways and other areas of the houses. Using flares, matches and propane torches, the conspirators lit the flammable materials, causing a series of fires which destroyed or damaged several houses in various stages of construction. The approximate amount of loss attributable to Everhart is \$3,274,538.

Parady and Speed pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit arson and were sentenced to 87 months and 100 months in prison, respectively. Walsh was convicted in September, 2005 of conspiracy to commit arson and 35 counts of arson, and was sentenced to 235 months in prison. Judge Titus also ordered that each defendant pay restitution of \$3,274,538.42. The remaining defendant Roy McCann is scheduled for trial in June, 2007.

Everhart faces a mandatory minimum penalty of 5 years and a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison followed by up to three years of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine. U.S. District Judge Roger W. Titus has set sentencing for September 8, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. Everhart is on 24-hour home detention and McCann is detained pending trial.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the investigation coordinated by a task force which includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Office of the Maryland State Fire Marshal and the Charles County Sheriff's Office. Mr. Rosenstein also thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Donna C. Sanger and Chan Park, who prosecuted the case.