



CITY OF HARRISONBURG
FIRE
DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release – July 4, 2023
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(Above) Brandon Williams, shown here in surveillance video taken around the time of an intentionally set fire on Thursday, June 29, at Gabe's.

Individual arrested in Page County following intentional fire at Gabe's

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The Harrisonburg Fire Department Fire Marshal's Office, working together with the Harrisonburg Police Department and Shenandoah Police Department, has arrested a man suspected of intentionally setting a fire inside the Gabe's Department Store in Harrisonburg last week.

Brandon Williams, 39, of Shenandoah, Va., was arrested Tuesday, July 4, and taken to the Page County jail. He is facing a felony charge of attempted burning of a structure, and a felony charge of burning or destroying personal property.

The fire occurred late Thursday afternoon, June 29, in the home goods section of the Gabe's located near the corner of East Market Street and University Boulevard. When firefighters arrived, heavy smoke was found inside the structure. Two employees used fire extinguishers to control the fire prior to HFD's arrival, and both were transported to the hospital for care with non-life-threatening injuries suffered while trying to extinguish the fire.

“I am extremely grateful for the hard work of our fire investigators to get an incredibly dangerous individual off the street,” HFD Chief Matthew Tobia said. “The brazen nature of this incident underscores how dangerous this person is to our community. I would also like to thank those individuals who contacted us with tips and information that helped us apprehend this suspect, and we appreciate our local media who helped us get the word out, speeding our identification of this individual.”

Estimates put damage totals at \$30,000. The store was occupied with customers at the time of the fire who safely evacuated. The store closed Thursday, reopening Friday afternoon.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 55,700 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.

