

Placerville Police News Release



For Immediate Release

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Case Number: PG22-1856



PLACERVILLE MAN ARRESTED FOR FIRE AT A HOMELESS CAMP ON BROADWAY DRIVE

NEWS RELEASE

Placerville Police Department
Media Relations
Office of the Chief of Police
730 Main Street, Placerville, CA 95667

Placerville, CA – On 11/17/2022 at 7:23 am, Placerville Police Officers, along with CHP, El Dorado County Fire and Cal Fire, responded to reports of a wildland fire at a homeless encampment on the north hillside in the 1700 block of Broadway Drive.

Fire Personnel quickly extinguished the fire, preventing it from spreading beyond the single camp. Placerville Police Investigators and Fire Investigators discovered the camp belonged to 57-year-old transient, Bruce Benton. Benton has been contacted in the past by officers at this location.

Investigators determined that there were no injuries resulting from the fire and the fire likely started from an illegal campfire. Investigators interviewed witnesses and Benton was placed as the person responsible for starting the illegal campfire that grew out of control. Benton has fled the scene prior to first responders arriving.

Members from the Placerville Police Department Crime Reduction Team search for and located Benton in the area later in the day. Benton was arrested without incident and booked into the El Dorado County Jail on charges of 452(b) PC – Unlawfully causing a fire in an inhabited structure, 452(c) - Unlawfully causing a fire of forest lands and for failing to register as a sex offender. Benton is being held on a \$505,000 bail.

We would like to thank the quick response from El Dorado County Fire Protection, Cal Fire and CHP. Placerville Police Department has a zero tolerance for issues such as this. We are in these areas frequently, educating and enforcing our ordinances.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Placerville Police Department Crime Reduction Team at (530) 642-5210.