

C. DAVID EYSTER
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

PAUL D. SEQUEIRA
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MIKE GENIELLA
PUBLIC INFORMATION

707-391-1019

geniellam@co.mendocino.ca.us



COURTHOUSE
P.O. Box 1000
Ukiah, CA 95482

COAST OFFICE
700 S. Franklin St.
Ft. Bragg, CA 95437

**OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**

PRESS RELEASE

January 27, 2012

Willits arsonist sentenced to 20 years in state prison

In a fait accompli, a Willits arsonist who admitted setting 19 fires last summer was sentenced Friday in Mendocino County Superior Court to 20 years in state prison.

Steven Gene Hensley, 36, was sentenced by Judge John Behnke in line with a stipulated plea agreement previously offered by District Attorney David Eyster, and accepted by Hensley and his appointed Public Defender.

Hensley's sentence also requires that he register for life as an arson offender when he is eventually released from prison. Hensley additionally was ordered to pay restitution for fire damage and firefighting costs totaling \$354,138.

Hensley in December entered guilty pleas to 19 separate counts of arson instead of going forward with a scheduled January jury trial. He admitted to setting fires in various locations in and around the Willits area starting on July 4, 2011 and continuing through August 21, 2011.

Eyster has previously cited the role of Cal Fire Captains Shawn Zimmermaker and Craig Dudley for their work in the Hensley investigation. "The defendant had no way out of this one and he realized it. We have Zimmermaker and Dudley to thank for this," stated Eyster at the time Hensley entered his guilty pleas.