



State Farm® Arson Dog Program Quick Facts

Key Messages

- Arson is a very serious problem as each year hundreds of lives are lost and millions of dollars in property damage occurs as a result of arson. It is important that law enforcement officials have every tool possible to combat this costly and sometimes deadly crime.
- Public education on arson, arson investigation and fire prevention through community outreach programs is essential to providing safer communities.
- Arson dogs can help fire investigators or law enforcement find evidence of arson crime quickly.
- Using their super strong noses, arson dogs are trained to point out where there is evidence that a fire has been started on purpose. Evidence can be gasoline, oil, or many other types of fuels that can start a fire.
- More information can be found by visiting www.arsondog.org.

Arson Dog Program Facts

- The State Farm Arson Dog Program was established in conjunction with the Maine State Police and the Maine Criminal Justice Academy in 1993.
- Over the past 29 years, more than 435 teams have been trained and placed in 46 states, District of Columbia and Canada through the State Farm Arson Dog Program.
- As of April 2022, there are 100 certified arson dog teams trained through the State Farm Arson Dog Program active and in service. These teams investigate fire scenes to find evidence of possible arson across North America.
- The K9s are all Labrador Retrievers or Goldadors (Lab x Golden Retriever mix) because:
 - Labs have a superior ability to discriminate scents at a fire scene (the nose of a lab can smell in parts per quintillion!).
 - Labs generally have a good disposition and an outgoing personality.
 - Labs are very active and have a “love to work” type attitude.
- K-9s are chosen through a cooperative program with guide dog and disability assistance canine organizations, as well as through local animal shelters and humane societies.
- K9s are trained using the food reward method, meaning the dogs only eat from the hand of their handler when they are training or working a fire scene. They never eat from a dog bowl!
- K9s live and retire in the home of their handler.



- K9s are trained by Maine Specialty Dogs and are certified through the Maine State Criminal Justice Academy. The K-9s and handlers are required to complete 200 hours/ four weeks of training.
- Teams (K9s and handlers) are required to be recertified every year to remain a certified Accelerant Detection Canine team.

Superhero powers...SMELL!

- Dogs possess up to 300 million olfactory receptors in their noses, compared to about six million in us.
- The part of a dog's brain that is devoted to analyzing smells is 40 times greater than humans.
- We might notice if our coffee has had a teaspoon of sugar added to it but a dog could detect a teaspoon of sugar in a million gallons of water, or two Olympic-sized pools.
- When an arson dog smells gasoline or evidence at a fire, they sit down and point to it with their nose...even if it is buried under burnt debris or has been soaked in water.

