FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Late-night fires ignited, arrest made

Salem, Ore. — Salem Police officers made an arrest today in a late-night fire set in northeast Salem.

At approximately 10:00 p.m. on December 17, Salem Police officers and Salem Fire crews initially responded to the 1900 block of Lancaster DR NE on the report of a fire in the dumpster at the BottleDrop building. Officers obtained a suspect description from surveillance video at the facility.

In the hours that followed, two other suspicious fires were reported in the same geographic area, concluding with the report of a fourth fire shortly after 1:00 a.m. today at the Lucky Fortune Restaurant at 1401 Lancaster DR NE.

An alert officer on patrol recognized and detained a person matching the description of the suspect in the fire set at the bottle redemption center. The suspect, Leonardo Hernandez-Cruz, attempted to flee and was subsequently arrested. Hernandez-Cruz later admitted to arson investigators his involvement in the garbage receptacle fire at the BottleDrop location.

The 28-year-old Hernandez-Cruz is lodged at the Marion County Jail and charged with the following:

- Arson in the second degree
- Criminal mischief in the first degree
- Disorderly conduct in the second degree

He is due to be arraigned tomorrow, December 19 at 2:30 p.m. at the Marion County Circuit Court Annex. All further inquiries on this case should be directed to the Marion County District Attorney's Office.

The remaining arson incidents are under active investigation, and as such no other information in these cases is being released.

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