



**Rick Staly, Sheriff**  
**FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Date:** May 10, 2024  
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### **Palm Coast Man Arrested for Residential Bomb Explosion**



**PALM COAST, FL** – Last night on May 9 at approximately 10 p.m., the Flagler County Sheriff's Office arrested a Palm Coast man at his residence on Bronson Lane. He is accused of creating a pipe bomb that exploded outside a home on Poppy Lane in January 2022.

Following a two-year joint investigation between FCSO's Homeland Security section, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), and the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad, Jason Burns, 49 was arrested on felony charges of Arson in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree and Making/Placing/Possessing Destructive Device with Property Damage.

In the early morning hours of January 27, 2022, the Flagler County Sheriff's Communications Center received two 9-1-1 calls reporting a loud explosion, followed by a bright light and smoke which seemed to originate outside a home at 30 Poppy Lane in Palm Coast. Upon arrival, responding deputies smelled a

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strong odor of gas and smoke in the air and observed remnants of a blast from an improvised explosive device (IED). Fortunately, the residents were unharmed, but both the home and an adjacent home were damaged.

Investigators determined the explosion was created by a home-made pipe-bomb that left a 1-inch-deep crater, 12 inches wide, only several feet from where the residents of both homes were sleeping. During the investigation, the resident of 27 Poppy Lane, Jason Burns, was identified as a person of interest due to his hostility toward the victims. Burns was also known to the Sheriff's Office, the FBI and local businesses for being a prolific writer who wrote, distributed and mailed rambling rants about various claims against government, elected officials and businesses.

Flagler County Sheriff's Office detectives and Special Agents from ATF's Jacksonville Field Office served a search warrant at his residence where they seized items that were consistent with material found at the crime scene. These items included a drill bit with PVC residue, caulking used to seal the pipe bomb, and a single sock that matched a sock found in the IED. All of these items were believed to be used by the suspect while making the bomb and were analyzed using the scientific capabilities by Sheriff's CSI and ATF forensic and lab experts.

During the investigation, Burns denied any involvement and said he was sleeping in his truck at Flagler Beach with a friend at the time of the explosion. However, detectives obtained phone records and GPS data that placed him in the area at the time of the explosion. When confronted with this discrepancy, he claimed a friend had his phone.

On January 4, 2023, detectives obtained a search warrant for Burn's DNA. The DNA sample was sent to ATF's National Laboratory Center in Beltsville, Maryland which determined the DNA found at the scene of the blast was a match for Jason Burns. In fact, the forensic DNA match was so strong, DNA experts determined there was only a 1 in 1-trillion chance the DNA recovered from the scene belonged to anyone other than Burns.

"In this case, the DNA match was like winning the lottery, only instead of a cash windfall, he got an arrest warrant," said Sheriff Rick Staly. "I want to commend our Homeland Security section which includes PACE, the Real Time Crime Center, and our Criminal Intelligence Unit for their thorough investigation. This investigation could not have been successful without the support of our partners at ATF and FDLE, who had been working with us from day one of this investigation and help from the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad."

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In addition to the two felony charges connected to the explosion, Burns also faces an additional charge for violating his probation that stemmed from a 2023 arrest for stalking his ex-wife. In that case, he placed multiple letters in her mailbox, one containing white powder. He is currently being held at the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility on \$75,000 bond.

For a link to arrest report, bodycam footage, 911 calls and evidence photos: <https://bit.ly/3JUM86r>

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