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## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Wisconsin DOJ Hosts First Fire Investigation Course**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today announced that the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) Office of the State Fire Marshal has completed the delivery of its first accredited Basic Fire Investigation Course.

“This course provides investigators with training and accreditation, bringing expertise in fire investigations to more communities and helping to protect public safety,” said Attorney General Kaul. “Thank you to the team in the DCI Arson Bureau that helped bring this training together.”

The Basic Fire Investigation Course is the first of its kind in the State of Wisconsin. The course is accredited through Wisconsin Technical College System – Fire Service Education Office (WTCS-FSEO). In the current fire investigation environment, accreditation to this degree is primarily available through national courses which are difficult and expensive to attend for many qualified personnel in Wisconsin. Acknowledging this barrier, DCI developed this course to expand local law enforcement and fire service agencies’ fire investigation expertise.

This seven-day course provided an introduction to fire investigation for public safety investigators employed by a law enforcement or fire service agency in Wisconsin. This course provided students a practical understanding of the methodology utilized to determine the origin and cause of a fire; fundamental concepts and techniques for conducting a thorough and science-based fire investigation while employing the scientific method; and preparing an incendiary fire investigation for prosecution. Upon successful completion of the course to include a written examination and

practical skill assessments, students earned a Fire Investigator certification from the WCTS-FSEO.

The investigation of a fire incident involves a complex and methodical process. While fires can be caused by a variety of factors to include an intentional human act, it is vitally important for a fire investigator to possess the knowledge, skills and abilities when accurately determining the origin and cause of a fire. Developing this expertise is important for thorough fire investigations.

DOJ Office of the State Fire Marshal led the course in collaboration with Stevens Point Fire & Police Department, WTCS, MSTC, DOJ Division of Law Enforcement Services, DOJ Division of Legal Services; and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.