

# Lake County Sheriff's Office

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**John D. Idleburg**  
Sheriff

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Man Attempts to Set Deputies on Fire, Barricades Self, Taken into Custody without Injuries**

On February 25, 2020, at approximately 9:40AM, members of the Lake County Sheriff's Civil Process Team attempted to serve a mental health writ on a 38-year-old Waukegan man in the 0-100 block of Philippa Avenue. The mental health writ was ordered by a Lake County Judge on February 24, 2020 and ordered deputies to take the man to an area mental health hospital.

The residence on Philippa Avenue was a single-family style residence which was subdivided into apartments. When the deputies attempted to enter the foyer, they found the front door was barricaded. The homeowner gave the deputies permission to force entry into the common area. The deputies forced the front door open and found it had been barricaded by a large piece of furniture.

Upon entering, the 38-year-old man emerged from his second-floor apartment. The man was verbally noncompliant and attempted to set the deputies on fire by spraying lighter fluid, through a flame from a lighter, toward the deputies. The deputies were able to block the stream of fire by utilizing their shield. A small fire was ignited in the foyer. The deputies retreated and retrieved a fire extinguisher from their squad car, and extinguished the fire.

The deputies immediately began crisis communication with the man and called for additional assistance. Members of the Sheriff's Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COaST), Sheriff's Negotiations Team, and Crisis Intervention Team spent several hours talking to the man, attempting to have him surrender peacefully. The man continued his noncompliance throughout the hours of negotiations. Several times he appeared at the top of the stairwell, armed with knives, telling deputies, "come get me."

Members of the Sheriff's Tactical Response Team (TRT) responded and formulated a plan to safely take the man into custody. TRT operators introduced pepper-based dispersion into the apartment, however, this did not cause the man to exit. TRT operators also fired beanbag rounds toward the man, when he appeared near his doorway with the knives. This caused him to drop one of the knives, but he again retreated into his apartment. TRT operators

breached the second-floor windows and entered the apartment through one of those windows, while other deputies continued crisis communications. At approximately 4:20PM, TRT operators then took the man into custody without causing injury to him or them.

The man will be transported to a mental health facility.

Sheriff John Idleburg said, “This was an extremely volatile and tense situation. Our staff was interacting with an unstable man who was clearly in mental distress, and posed a risk to himself and others. I could not be prouder of our staff who took their time and worked together to take this man into custody without injury to him or anyone else. This is precisely what they train for and that training paid off today.”

The Lake County Sheriff’s Office thanks Waukegan Police for their assistance along with the other law-enforcement agencies who responded to assist with traffic and crowd control.

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