

Jackie Lacey
District Attorney
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Ricardo Santiago
Public Information Officer
213-257-2000
RSantiago@da.lacounty.gov
Twitter: @LADAOoffice

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Man Pleads to Causing Multimillion Dollar Da Vinci Complex Blaze

A 58-year-old man pleaded no contest today to setting fire to a downtown apartment complex under construction, causing one of the largest structure fires in Los Angeles history, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Dawud Abdulwali entered the plea to one count of arson of a structure and admitted allegations of using an accelerant and causing damages in excess of \$3.2 million.

Deputy District Attorney Joy Roberts with the Arson Unit said Abdulwali was immediately sentenced to 15 years in state prison as a result of the negotiated plea.

On Dec. 8, 2014, the defendant used gasoline to start a fire on the fourth floor of the seven-story Da Vinci complex, the prosecutor said. The blaze soon spread destroying the structure at West Temple Street and North Fremont Avenue, causing tens of millions of dollars in damage to the complex and nearby buildings, the prosecutor added.

According to witness testimony at the preliminary hearing, Abdulwali set the unfinished building on fire as a response to the protests in Ferguson and other highly publicized cases of alleged police misconduct. No one was injured.

Case BA436838 was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Los Angeles City Fire Department's Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.