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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: March 1, 2009
Re: People v. Michael Linch – Arsonist is
sentenced to 32 months in State Prison

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Michael Linch, age 28, of Riverbank, was convicted of arson. Deputy District Attorney Michael D. Houston prosecuted the case for the People.

The case arose out of events which occurred on November 20, 2008 in the city of Riverbank. Linch was seen fleeing the scene where an 18-foot palm tree caught on fire near the Le Porccini Italian restaurant on Atchison Rd. Linch has a prior felony conviction which falls under California's "Three Strikes" law.

Upon entry of a guilty plea, the Honorable John G. Whiteside sentenced Linch to 32 months in state prison and ordered him to pay restitution.

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