

# “He Smelled Like Gasoline”— Enough to Charge Ron Makin for a Non-Gasoline Fire!

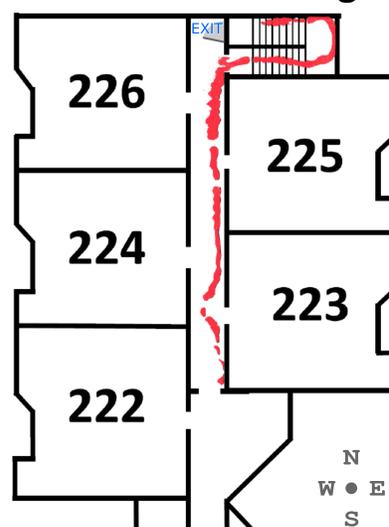
[MeadowsFire.com](http://MeadowsFire.com)

On May 19, 2018, there was a small fire inside the west building of the Meadows apartments. It started at approximately 11:35 p.m. The fire alarm sounded at 11:47, some twelve minutes later. Almost nothing was damaged. The Meadows is government housing for low-income or disabled residents, located at 285 East 1450 North in Bountiful, UT.

Investigators claim it was *arson* and said that *gasoline* was used, but no one smelled gasoline in the building, no valid evidence indicates that any gasoline was present where the fire occurred, and—totally uncharacteristic of gasoline fires—the fire quietly died out before fire fighters arrived because it simply did not have enough energy, despite having abundant available oxygen, to maintain itself or burn anything farther than a few inches from a thin trail of a dripped, flammable liquid. [Watch the small fire.](#)

The small, gentle fire burned this thin trail of a low molecular-weight, alcohol-like flammable liquid, along the right side of the upstairs hallway and adjoining (emergency exit) stairwell of the north wing, as though a person held a leaking garbage bag in their right hand on their way to the nearby dumpster. This hallway and stairwell lead only to a *one-way exit* to outside. It is a common route for upstairs tenants to remove their trash, take their pets to do their duties, go out for a smoke, or access the west area of the parking lot.

Area of Fire Damage



**The north wing:** the trail shows ALL of the fire damage. At the top is a one-way exit door to outside, convenient to access the dumpster.

## The Initial Suspect—The “Guy in a Red Shirt”

The Meadows West building is shaped like an upside-down ‘Y’, with the bottom leg facing north. The initial suspect for the north-wing fire was a “guy in a red shirt” and who was immobile without the use of crutches. He lived upstairs in the southwest wing. Because of the fire, he suffered extreme respiratory distress from smoke inhalation and was the *only* person who needed medical attention.

Of all of the footage *provided* by the Prosecution, the earliest building surveillance footage of this man in red shows that he evacuated the building with most of the other residents after the alarm activated. Residents can testify that he was then observed lying on the grass right next to the building, coughing and gasping for breath, because of smoke inhalation—smoke inhalation that could only have happened *before* the fire alarm activated.

After a few minutes, the man in red inexplicably reentered the building, went up the stairs (with crutches), briefly went to the entrance of his upstairs, southwest hall's entrance just long enough to see if anyone was there, then dashed toward the north wing to look at the aftermath of the mild fire, after the fire was out. The footage shows that he approached within 6 ft from the north-wing entrance, looking at the damage inflicted. He then headed away from the hallway and looked out the window to see emergency personnel. He was obviously panicking, running back and forth. He edged closer to the hallway entrance, whose automatic door had earlier been set to remain fully open, and he spent about ten seconds either at or just inside the hallway entrance, stooped down (where there was less smoke) so that he could see deeper into the hall.

An officer's bodycam video showed that he and other officers outside saw the man in red's actions. One officer reported into his radio, "There's a guy running around in a red shirt upstairs, up and down the hallway." Another officer pointed and said, "He's trying to hide."

As fire fighters emerged upstairs from the building's main stairway, they saw the man in red approach them and then faint. They removed his forearm crutches and carried him out, away from the building, where he received high-flow oxygen and was questioned by the officer and a medic, taken to the ambulance, and eventually transported to Lakeview Hospital. Below, what the man in red told the officer (wearing the bodycam) and the medic, is not what is shown in the *provided* building surveillance footage and must have happened before the fire alarm activated.

**Officer:** Hey, are you able to talk to me for a second, man? Is there anyone else in there [in the fire area]?

**Suspect (Man in Red):** There was a gal in the hallway.

**Officer:** There's another person down the hallway?

**Suspect:** Yeah.

**Officer:** OK. How did this start, do you know?

**Suspect:** Uh, I guess somebody had some oil that leaked into the, uh, carpet, and it [developed the smoke?] everywhere.

There was a fire into that room, I guess that's it.

**Officer:** Do you know what room number?

**Suspect:** It's just the one right here... [pointing] #136.

**Officer:** 136? [Note that #136 does not exist.]

**Suspect:** Yeah.

...

**Medic:** Hey, what's the other person in the room with you [i.e. in the fire area]? What's her name?

**Suspect:** [Panicking] I don't know their [unintelligible]. I mean, I was just, I drop, I dropped one of my crutches and I went back up to grab it and I couldn't find it and then that's when I started passing out....

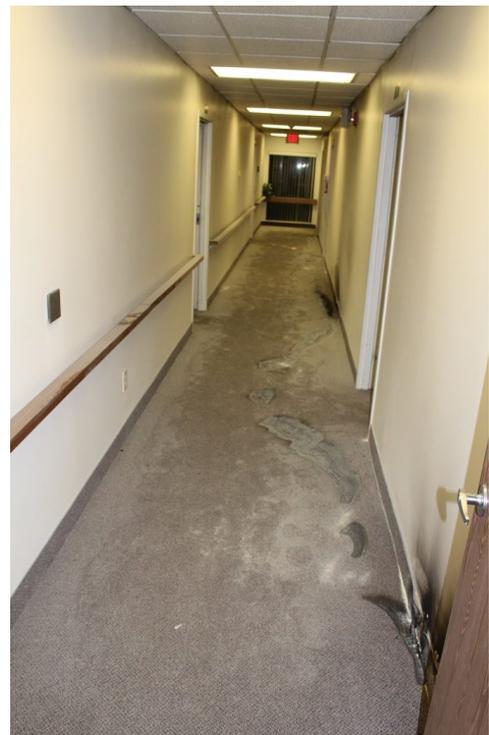
**Medic:** Okay, but, you said there's somebody else in the room, that didn't get out?

**Suspect:** There was someone in the hallway, I thought.

**Medic:** Okay. So, you don't know if they got out?

**Suspect:** I don't know if they got out [of there?] or not.

...



*After the fire: photo of whole hallway at entrance of upstairs north wing, where the flammable liquid spill apparently began.*

**Medic:** Were you around the fire at all, or just the smoke?

**Suspect:** I was just around, like, a small flame [cough] over into the hallway.

**Medic:** You were around the small flames in the hallway?

**Suspect:** Yeah, it was next to the door there were small flames.

**Medic:** And, how come you were right there? What happened?

**Suspect:** Uh, I had dropped my crutch, and I, I can't really walk with one crutch, and so I was trying to feel [unintelligible].... I started feeling nauseous and I started [having the?] smoke into my lungs.

**Medic:** Okay. Do you want to go to the hospital with us today?

**Suspect:** Not really, but I don't feel good.

Notice that the man in red said, "I guess somebody had some *oil that leaked* into the carpet." He did not report smelling gasoline. "There was a fire into that room, I guess that's it"—he guessed that one of the apartments had a (cooking?) fire inside which ignited the liquid in the hallway. (The fire was limited to only the hallway and stairwell.) Also, he was only around "*small flames.*" He did not think this was an intentional or a ferocious fire. He said he thought another person was in the fire area, but this does not explain why he reentered the building after evacuating previously. He did not seem to know how it started or what really happened, and described both the trail of flammable liquid and the fire as unintentional and mild.

The Defense believes that this man in red carried a garbage bag from his upstairs, southwest apartment to the north wing. At the north wing's entrance, evidence photos indicate that his bag likely swung around the automatic door as it fully opened, caught between the door and the wall, rupturing or tipping the bag so that it started leaking at that point. It continued leaking down the hall and down the stairwell. It is likely that the man in red, or someone else, propped open the stairwell's one-way exit to allow reentry. The alcohol-like liquid could have easily been accidentally ignited by a static discharge, friction, a nearby smoker's cigarette or lighter, or a discharge from a 7.2 kV power transformer along the path to the dumpster. There was no apparent motive or target.

If the man in red had not been inside the fire area at the time of the fire, he would have had no reason to implicate himself by saying that he was. But he knew that several things looked suspicious about his unusual behavior and his smoke inhalation, and he knew the building surveillance would show him in the fire area (though this surveillance footage has been denied by the Prosecution).

After the man in red returned from the hospital, he moved out of the building immediately and has not been seen in the Bountiful area since that night of the fire! The officer with the bodycam, still recording, was shown searching on his laptop for the records of the man in red, but records were not found because of the unexpected spelling of his last name.



*Looking at the head of the fire damage from inside the hallway. A garbage bag likely swung around the automatic door as it opened, was ruptured between the door and the wall, and started leaking an alcohol-like liquid.*

## Ronald Wayne Makin and the (Zero) Evidence Against Him

Officers continued to treat the man in red as the main suspect for about an hour, until about 1:30 a.m. Then they focused on Ron Makin. Ron lived at the Meadows until he was falsely charged for starting the fire. The Prosecution has not provided *any* evidence that connects him to starting the fire or being there around that time. That is worth repeating: there is ***not even one shred of evidence*** to indicate that Ron was around or had anything to do with the flammable liquid in the north wing, its ignition, or contributed in any way to causing the fire—**none!** He was accused because he smelled like gasoline from an accidental spill on himself several hours earlier, but the Meadows Carpet fire was not a gasoline fire!

### Gasoline Fires Versus Alcohol-Like Fires

We have already described the fire as a small, gentle fire which quickly and quietly died out because it simply did not have enough energy to maintain itself, even with sufficient oxygen. There were a few remaining small patches of trivial flames that would have soon died out on their own if Ron had not used an extinguisher on them.

Throughout the fire's lifetime, it presented no notice of itself, and caused very little damage. The fire damage was constrained to singeing only three inches away from the flammable liquid's spill. The fire died out because its fuel could not generate enough heat to burn materials in its area. That is not the behavior of gasoline. The fire burned like an alcohol flambé in a fancy main dish—not ferocious, and not too hot to be around.

If it had been an actual gasoline fire, the alarm would have sounded *quickly*, there would have been a fireball, explosion, and significant surface and structural damage to the building. At a minimum, a gasoline fire would have partially charred most or all of the hallway and much of the (brick-aligned) stairwell.

Gasoline is the accelerant of choice for most arsonists, given its accessibility and effectiveness. It is so effective as an arson fuel that it rarely (if ever) leaves a targeted building intact or usable afterward, and it certainly doesn't extinguish itself within a few minutes of ignition or allow anyone to simply step over it or walk calmly beside it, as occurred in this case. It is nearly impossible for professional fire fighters to extinguish a gasoline structure fire quickly.

Anyone who has witnessed a gasoline fire, whether in person or on video, knows that gasoline is explosive, extremely flammable, violent, and causes catastrophic damage to surfaces and building structures. Its high heat and explosive power are what make it ideal for gasoline-powered vehicles. Gasoline vapors easily spread and ignite. Ignition of any part of a vapor pocket causes the entire vapor cloud to ignite almost instantaneously. This rapid ignition causes a rapid increase of heat, which causes a rapid expansion of air, called an "explosion," which can be heard and felt. In less than two seconds, an apartment building's otherwise-peaceful hallway will become an impassable inferno for residents there if even one cup of gasoline is dribbled down that hallway in front of apartment doorways then ignited, and those residents will not escape unharmed.

But at the Meadows, none of this occurred. No one reported smelling gasoline inside the building. The residents of the north wing were not even aware that there was a fire, or anything amiss, until the *fire*

*alarm sounded* several minutes after the fire started. Those residents were allowed to return to their apartments in the morning.

ABC4 Utah’s Marcos Ortiz, in covering this story one year later, stated in his news video, “Upstairs, in a hallway, one sees the flames. Tenants don’t appear panicked as they leave the area” (<https://www.abc4.com/news/the-justice-files-good-samaritan-becomes-suspect-in-apartment-fire/>). The first exiting tenant simply stepped over the patches or line of flames in front of her doorway, and a few minutes later, almost casually, she even returned to the entrance of the burning hallway, opened its door and stood there to wait for her neighbor while the small flames continued to burn immediately beside her. The tenants in that hallway—all elderly, and one walking slowly with a walker—took their time exiting their burning hallway. The older man, 89, aided Ron in extinguishing the fire and slowly walked down his smoke-filled hallway again after he had already exited. Neither Ron nor any of the residents of that hallway suffered any respiratory distress or needed any medical attention.

John Lentini (firescientist.com), one of the foremost experts on fire science and fire investigation, has spent his career advocating a much-needed standardization and improvement in science-based fire investigation and requirements, and in exonerating people who were falsely accused of arson because of all-too-frequent faulty investigation practices. In his excellent book, *Scientific Protocols for Fire Investigators* (Third Edition), Lentini states, “Prejudgments based on ‘investigative’ findings that are not relevant to the fire’s behavior must not cloud the investigator’s scientific work” (p. xvii).

But that is exactly what happened to Ron in this case. The mild fire did not burn ferociously as would be expected of gasoline, but investigators blamed Ron because he smelled like gasoline, having spilled gasoline on himself two hours prior to the fire, over a mile away from his apartment building. As investigators swept the premises for gasoline containers, they found in the back of Ron’s truck a 2.5-gallon Mount Olympus water jug (with a compromised, broken-seal lid) that suspiciously contained approximately one-half gallon of gasoline, found *after* the fire! It is quite unusual for an arsonist to not use all of his available accelerant and to return that container to the back of his pickup truck, fully visible to police and public! No one claimed smelling gasoline anywhere inside the building that night; even a small amount would have been smelled.



*This water jug found in Ron's truck contained ~2 quarts of gasoline, after the fire! Investigators collected it as evidence for the fire.*

Lentini also states, when describing the use of canines to locate ignitable liquid residues, “... if the laboratory does not confirm the canine alert [or in the Meadows Fire case, the investigators’ presumptions], *the sample is negative*. The NFPA Technical Committee on Fire Investigations, addressing the problem of unconfirmed canine alerts being presented to juries, wrote, ‘In essence, a fraud is being perpetrated upon the judicial system’” (ibid, 486, emphasis in original).

In the Meadows Fire case, the only forensic report provided to the Defense is the State Lab technician’s brief text summary of the forensic analysis of the evidence materials. This presumptuous and incomplete, biased forensic report (not satisfying NFPA 921) gives no details, no value amounts, and no graphs, such as mass spectrometry or chromatography. Results for select items:

- For Ron’s shoes, “Partially evaporated gasoline was identified.”

- For the water jug’s gasoline, “Gasoline was identified in the light yellow liquid.”
- For a carpet control sample, “No ignitable liquids were identified.”
- For three samples of melted carpet, “Partially evaporated gasoline was identified.”

The carpet is made out of petroleum distillates (polyester or polyethylene), and incinerating or heating it fractions (cracks) it into the petroleum distillates perceived as those also found in gasoline directly. The control carpet sample, of course, did not indicate “gasoline” (petroleum) products because it was not burned like the melted carpet samples. For the carpet samples, saying that “*partially evaporated gasoline was identified*” is **misreporting**, and the behavior of the fire refutes the claim that it was a gasoline fire. The State Lab did not reveal whether it tried to match the “gasoline” in the carpet samples to the gasoline in the water jug or Ron’s shoes.

## Ron Makin’s History

Ron is physically and neurologically challenged. He is mildly autistic and dyslexic, due to traumatic brain injury as a toddler. He often has difficulty in communicating coherently to people, especially under duress, and he easily mixes up the times and sequences of previous events. Some people at the Meadows disliked him because of his disability-related personality.

He also has a bad heart and a pacemaker, among other health problems. In 2021, he received a letter from his pacemaker’s manufacturer, informing him that his pacemaker was defective. It had been shocking him and causing him excruciating pain and distressing spasms, which he was unaware was abnormal, and these shocks had been happening long before the fire at the Meadows on May 19, 2018.

**Acquiring the Water Jug of Gasoline:** On Wednesday, May 16, three days before the fire, Ron noticed an estranged family associate (mislabeled as his “friend” by investigators) at Slim Olson’s on Main Street in Bountiful. This “friend’s” vehicle was towing a trailer holding lawn mowers and lawn care equipment. He asked Ron to take his water jug for a few days, which contained gasoline and was used to distribute that fuel to fill his gas-powered lawn equipment. This “friend” apparently overestimated how much gasoline was needed for his equipment and had filled the water jug with more gasoline than he could utilize completely. Since this water jug was unapproved for gasoline, the “friend” did not want to be caught with it on his vehicle or trailer. He deceptively told Ron that he would come and retrieve it in a few days. He carefully placed this jug into Ron’s truck bed, with a compromised, broken-seal lid.

Of all of Ron’s explanations and event details he provided to investigators, the only thing that investigators looked into—and gave any (belated) credence worth looking into—was this so-called “friend” at Slim Olson’s who placed the illegal container of gasoline into Ron’s truck bed. For a time, Ron had been charged with obstruction of justice because he did not know the address or contact information of this person. More than one year after the fire, after Ron found out this person’s address himself and told it to investigators, the detective performed a cursory interview of this “friend” about his Slim Olson’s encounter with Ron. He denied ever seeing Ron at Slim Olson’s or having a gasoline-filled water jug. Investigators never tested for fingerprints on the water jug.

**Ron’s Gasoline Spill on His Pants, Socks, and Shoes:** On May 19 at about 9:45 p.m., about two hours before the fire, Ron went for two coffees. He also went to fill water jugs at the church water well at 200 East 200 South in Centerville, a mile north of the Meadows. As he exerted himself to lift the gasoline-filled jug out of his way, his pacemaker kicked in and shocked him, causing a painful spasm.

He was unaware that this gasoline-filled water jug had a leaking, non-resealable lid, and with his pacemaker's convulsing shock, he painfully spasmed and inadvertently tipped the jug and spilled a fair amount of gasoline onto his pants, socks, and shoes, and onto the asphalt of the parking lot.

**Ron's Only Time in the Pre-Fire Area:** At ~10 p.m., Ron returned to the Meadows and brought in his wife's coffee, along with his two dogs. (There is no provided surveillance footage of this.) Ron lived in the upstairs, southeast wing. At 10:07 p.m., surveillance cameras recorded Ron (empty handed) entering the upstairs north wing hallway, where the fire would occur, therethrough on his way to his vehicle to retrieve a second cup of coffee. This was the *only* time he was near the fire area before the fire alarm would activate at 11:47, *one hour forty minutes later*, and no footage or other evidence has been provided by the Prosecution to try to refute that. Ron used this one-way exit route at 10:07 to retrieve his other cup of coffee from his vehicle, and he was next shown holding a coffee at 10:10, reentering the building at its main (east) ground-floor entrance.

Investigators claim that Ron poured gasoline down the north hallway and stairwell. However, they have never suggested *when* he would have done such a thing. They have not provided any footage, witnesses, or any other evidence that might indicate even a time window tighter than the 1-hr 40-min interval between being there at 10:07 and the fire alarm activation at 11:47.

**Ron's Late-Night Walk:** At 11:15 p.m., surveillance footage showed Ron exiting the building through the main (east) ground-level door to take a late-night, 1.1-mile walk around the block. At 11:47 p.m., the very moment the fire alarm activated, Ron had just returned from his walk. He was not shown or witnessed near the property between 11:15 and 11:47. Halfway through his walk he witnessed a documented legal event which confirmed his alibi of his off-site location during the ignition of the fire. Ron could not have known about this legal event (explained later) if he had not been there to witness it directly.

At 11:46, a moment before the fire alarm activated, Ron returned from his walk and entered the building through the ground-level north entrance. This north entrance is adjacent to the exit-only door at the bottom of the fire-involved stairwell. He went to his apartment in the southeast wing, notified his wife to evacuate, retrieved his phone, and called 911 to report the alarm sounding and locate the fire, reporting that he could smell smoke.

As Ron called 911 and looked for the fire, he necessarily walked into the view of the upstairs mezzanine camera. This footage of Ron during his 911 call has not been provided by the Prosecution, though other footage from this camera has been given. Only carefully selected fractions of footage has been provided, in their attempt to incriminate Ron.

There were two (2) outdoor cameras whose footage could have shown whether Ron was even on the property or approached or left his vehicle (with its container of gasoline in its rear) when the alleged arson occurred, but that footage from these cameras has been withheld. As previously stated, Ron was one-half mile away at that time, witnessing a legal event.



***The north wing entrance (camera facing south). Left: one-way exit at bottom of fire-involved stairwell. Center: north entrance used by Ron at 11:46, coincidentally in the same moment when the fire alarm activated.***

Of the fifteen (15) relevant indoor surveillance cameras, footage from only *four* (4) of those cameras was provided to the Defense. We know that 24 hours of surveillance footage was captured or available to the Prosecution, but footage was only provided between 10:07 p.m. through midnight, except for a brief 12:06 a.m. (~24 hours earlier) video and a brief 7 a.m. video. Also, there is missing footage from those four cameras between 10:07 and midnight, as multiple people can attest. Even fractions of video are missing.

But the most obvious indicator of missing surveillance footage of the building is that *someone* had to have entered the pre-fire area that evening, spilled or dribbled the flammable liquid, and was there incidental to its ignition, yet there are no *provided* videos to indicate the entry or exit of that individual from that area. There is no *provided* footage of anyone except Ron (empty handed) transiting that area before the fire.

Are we to believe that an obvious spill trail of flammable liquid spilled itself and then ignited itself? Can we believe that the surveillance system is so ineffective that *multiple* cameras coincidentally somehow failed to capture someone moving directly across those cameras' fields of view—someone who held a container of flammable liquid (likely a leaking trash bag on its way to the dumpster) while approaching the pre-fire area?

During Ron's 911 call to report the fire, he was told to get everyone out of the building. Given his training as a first responder, he helped evacuate disabled residents, deftly extinguished the tail end of the fire, and sought to help emergency personnel. He seemed too helpful!

The moment that fire fighters arrived, one of the residents from the burning hallway was recorded by the patrolling officer's bodycam, excitedly saying, "...And Ron's going to go to jail!" But no one had witnessed Ron around the building before the fire alarm, and no surveillance footage of him ever existed. Obviously, someone had smelled the gasoline residue on Ron, and reported it around the less-than-friendly women who did not like his disability-affected personality and so immediately fingered him as their arsonist.

**The Lighter:** At the end of the night, investigators curiously acquired a cigarette lighter in Ron's apartment but claimed in their written report that it was located in his pocket. This could not be true! His lighter was placed on his television stand throughout the night, a little after 10:10 p.m., when he returned to his apartment with his coffee and then, for comfort, emptied his pockets of all protruding and bothersome items.

Within two hours after the fire, Ron had been detained by officers and was under their constant watch until he was booked into jail. During this continuous observation and detainment, he was taken to his apartment at about 4 a.m. to submit his on-person clothing into evidence, where an officer's bodycam recorded him thoroughly emptying his pockets as he changed his pants, socks, and shoes. Importantly, there was no cigarette lighter in his pockets or on his person. Ron's old gasoline residue-contaminated pants were immediately sealed inside a metal can to preserve their gasoline fumes. The lighter was haply discovered, and only mentioned, at the very end of the cold, harrowing night, over an hour after his clothing was already sealed in a metal can. At the end of that night, investigators finally mentioned the lighter, stating that the lighter was found in his pocket—again, this cannot be true, as he had already surrendered his clothing and returned to his outside location of detainment. They suggested that he used that lighter to start the fire, and this lighter is what—in their presumption—justified his formal arrest

and booking into jail. There was no statement of acquisition and no photos taken of finding or collecting the lighter into evidence.

**The Brady Doctrine** has been repeatedly violated in this case, which constitutionally requires that all evidence favorable to the defendant be provided by the Prosecution, regardless of whether the Defense has requested it or not.

When asked to follow up on the case, the lead detective said he “was not able to locate any video for the incident from the apartments known as Meadows West.” This was in response to the Defense’s requests to provide all building surveillance footage relevant to the case. All 24 hours of footage should have been preserved until the case ends. All of the footage of all cameras—not just four cameras—should have been provided.

### ***Jail and the Legal Event Witnessed by Ron***

Ron spent thirteen (13) days in jail and was not allowed contact with any of his friends or family. He was not allowed to have contact with an attorney hired by his friend.

Ron was not allowed to bring his life-saving medications with him to jail. In jail, his daily dose of Coumadin (a blood thinner) was *doubled*, and he suffered internal bleeding! He was given Fluoxetine HCl (‘Prozac’), which is frequently used on people in custody to make them more susceptible to suggestions and giving false confessions.

Ron described the legal event he witnessed during his jail interrogation, but most of his description of it was somehow removed from the video. The whole jail interrogation video is rife with out-of-sync audio/video, numerous video jumps, and hundreds of audio pops.

Since the audio is quite out of sync with video, a *corresponding* video jump for Ron’s description of the legal event, as indicated in the sudden jump of ~17s in the video timestamp (from 3:00:12.301 PM to 3:00:28.851 PM), also indicates that ~17s of audio is missing in his description.

Ron’s entire jail interrogation video is 3m45s shorter than its initial and final timestamps indicate that it should be. The video recorder never stopped recording. There are several places where the audio conversation is disconnected or missing, being totally out of context with surrounding dialogue. In other words, a total of 3m45s of video and audio is missing from various locations throughout the video file. These video “features” have occurred on all computer systems that Ron’s Defense team and other attorneys have tried.

**Ron:** I’m trying to cooperate with you. [audio pop in video]

**Officer:** Yeah, but like I said, all I need to know is, is, is what happened, and, and I’m not getting the truth! [audio pop, followed by only a couple of seconds of quiet before Ron’s next statement]

[At this point there would have been ~17 seconds of additional dialogue about an SUV, but the dialogue doesn’t exist. Ron now discusses the SUV, which had nothing to do with the previous 5 minutes of dialogue that still exists in the video.]

**Ron:** It was like a SUV-type vehicle. And that was almost right, right, almost just to the side of, uh, where Arctic Circle is [at 1493 N. Main Street, Bountiful]. It was about 11..., ‘bout 11:30, right around there, within a few minutes here and there.

[Long, awkward pause by officer, and audio pop]

**Officer:** I don’t know! We both, we both know what happened!

**Ron:** I know there was a fire, but I don't know for how sure, how it got started.

**Officer:** Ahem. [audio pop] *We both do. We both know how it started. I just need you to tell me how it started. We make mistakes; everyone makes mistakes.*

**Ron:** *We all make mistakes; there's no one perfect.*

Ron is usually very trusting, especially of authority figures, and he tried to be very accommodating to the officers and investigators, giving them the benefit of the doubt (even while in jail!) when they repeatedly stated as “fact” that he started the fire and that the “gasoline” in the hallway was the same gasoline that was on his clothes and in the water jug. Being thereby convinced that it was gasoline, Ron suggested that maybe he did it but “I don't recall” and that maybe he blacked out.

In Ron's jail interrogation, he was constantly badgered and lied to. It was conducted by the fire investigator in charge, who correctly stated in the interrogation that he had just returned from handing over the collected evidence to the State Lab for testing, saying, “And what do you think we found?” The investigator falsely “informed” Ron of the presumed forensic results, even though the forensic results were not known until a few days later.

The interrogator convinced Ron that the so-called “gasoline” in the hallway was the same as the gasoline on his clothing and in his truck's gasoline jug. He also convinced Ron that he (Ron) had a motive, namely, that some residents in the southwest or southeast wings (not the north wing where the fire occurred) were provocation for his act of arson, or that he was acting out as a hero (the “hero syndrome”—starting a fire, heroically extinguishing it and saving everyone). Ron was so trusting of the interrogator's claims, that he (Ron) even suggested the idea that maybe he, himself, blacked out because he couldn't remember starting the fire!

If Ron had actually committed arson, it meant him losing his own housing and his security in life. His disabled wife was dependent on him. Because he was falsely accused, both he and she lost their home and were unlawfully evicted; he lost his wife, because her parents had her get a divorce; and he lost most of his possessions. For nearly four years (as of this writing, March 2022), Ron has been homeless, suffering deprivation and declining health, suffering attempted entrapment and harassment, sleeping on friends couches, and relying on the charity of friends to shelter and support him and save him from this legal chicanery.

## **Conclusion**

Investigators claim that Ron Makin started the Meadows Fire, using gasoline, but all evidence refutes that he was involved and shows that gasoline was not used. The Brady Rule has been extensively violated.

There is overwhelming evidence that the activities of the “guy in a red shirt” unwittingly set the conditions for the fire. There was no crime, no malintent, no arson—just a simple accident!

For more information, please visit [MeadowsFire.com](http://MeadowsFire.com) or [ArsonThatNeverWas.com](http://ArsonThatNeverWas.com).

**Court Case #181701041: RONALD MAKIN VS. BOUNTIFUL CITY (Utah).**

**Full name:** Ronald Wayne Makin.