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# Accused Arsonist's Pacemaker Could Get Him Convicted

By **Crime and Justice News** | July 31, 2017

Wired examines (<https://www.wired.com/story/your-own-pacemaker-can-now-testify-against-you-in-court/>) the arson prosecution of an Ohio man whose key evidence was provided by the suspect's cardiac pacemaker. Ross Compton, 59, is charged with setting a fire last September at his Middletown, Ohio, home. Judge Charles Pater ruled that data evidence that tracked Compton's heartbeat could be used against him at the upcoming trial. Compton said he awoke to find his home on fire. He survived, but the blaze caused \$400,000 of damage and killed his cat. Before escaping, Compton managed to pack his belongings in multiple bags and grab his computer and medical device charger before fleeing.

Authorities suspected arson because the property smelled of gasoline and the fire originated in multiple locations. Police obtained a search warrant for the data recorded on Compton's pacemaker, suggesting that it would reveal his heart rate and cardiac rhythms before, during, and after the fire. Medical technicians downloaded the information and law enforcers subpoenaed those records from the hospital. Authorities allege the data showed that Compton was awake when he claimed to be sleeping. Blood samples and medical records have long been used as evidence in criminal cases, but this apparently is the first case in which police obtained a search warrant for a pacemaker.

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