



Robert L. Quinn
Commissioner

State of New Hampshire

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

Division of Fire Safety
Office of the State Fire Marshal

nh.gov/firemarshal



Sean P. Toomey
State Fire Marshal

NH State Fire Marshal's Office – May 2024 Report

(For the period of April 1 through April 30, 2024)

ADMINISTRATION:

Personnel:

We currently have 1 part-time vacancy that we are actively recruiting for at this time:

Part-time Building Code Review Board Administrative Secretary

On March 22nd we welcomed Bryce Michaud to our staff as the part-time State Building Permit Coordinator.

On March 22nd we welcomed Glen MacDonald to our staff as a part-time Community Risk Reduction Specialist.

Legislation:

The following bills are the key bills that we are currently monitoring:

HB 1059 Relative to the state building code

Status: Passed House with Amendment, In Committee in Senate

HB 1065 Relative to fire sprinkler requirements in residential buildings

Status: Passed House with Amendment, In Committee in Senate

HB 1215 Relative to development approvals and appeals

Status: Passed House with Amendment, In Committee in Senate

HB 1352 Relative to firefighting personal protective equipment

Status: Passed House with Amendment, In Committee in Senate

HB 1386 Relative to prohibiting the disposal of lithium-ion batteries in solid waste landfill facilities, composting facilities, or incinerators

Status: Passed House with Amendment, OPA in Senate

HB 1387 Relative to revisions to the state building code

Status: Passed House with Amendment, In Committee in Senate

SB 352 Establishing an early detection cancer screening pilot program for active and retired firefighters

Status: Passed Senate, In Committee in House

- SB 365 Relative to the sale or use of lithium-ion batteries for electric bicycles, scooters, or personal electric mobility devices
Status: Passed Senate, In Committee in House
- SB 373 Relative to the state building code
Status: Amended in Senate, In Committee in House
- SB 430 Relative to establishing a counsel to study the impacts of electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and e-mobility devices on first responder response, the environment, building and fire codes, and life and safety property protection
Status: Passed Senate, OTPA in the House
- SB 437 Relative to local authority to amend the state building code
Status: Passed Senate with Amendment, OTP in the House
- SB 599 Relative to the state fire code
Status: Passed Senate, OTP in the House

Board of Fire Control:

The next Board of Fire Control meeting is scheduled for June 19, 2024.

Foam Take-back Program:

The contract for the foam take-back program was approved by the Governor & Executive Council at the end of June 2023. DES has updated that they are now working on some facility disposal items with the vendor and anticipate the program remaining in a delayed status until late spring.

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:

In the month of April, we received 29 incident notifications resulting in 13 scene responses. The Bureau of Investigations currently has 14 open arson or suspected arson investigations.

New cases (synopsis of some of our cases are listed below):

- On April 3rd, investigators responded to Rye to assist with a building fire. The fire had occurred during a nor'easter, with strong winds and resulted in excessive fire damage. The cause of the fire was undetermined.
- On April 7th, investigators responded to Canaan to assist with a barn fire. The cause of the fire is undetermined.
- On April 18th, an investigator responded to Nashua for an intentionally set fire on state property. This joint investigation with Nashua Police and Fire Departments remains ongoing.

- On April 20th, investigators responded to Plymouth for a fire in multiple commercial buildings. No one was injured and the cause of the fire is currently under investigation.
- On April 23rd, investigators responded to Newbury for a house and two chicken coops on fire. The fire cause is undetermined.
- On April 23rd, investigators responded to Barnstead for a building fire. The cause of the fire is undetermined.
- On April 24th, investigators responded to Pelham for a motor vehicle accident and fire, with a fatality. Autopsy determined that the victim had died from traumatic injuries, thus ending SFMO's involvement.
- On April 27th, an investigator responded to Plymouth for a fire at a multi-unit residence. The cause of the fire is undetermined.
- On April 27th, an investigator responded to Lincoln for a fire in a multi-use building. The cause of the fire is undetermined.
- On April 29th, an IGL K9 team assisted Merrimack Fire and Police Departments with intentionally set fires on an island. The Merrimack Fire and Police Departments are conducting the investigation and three people have been arrested.

Fatal Fire/CO Incidents:

- On April 4th, investigators responded to Derry for an explosion at a single-family home. One person was pronounced dead on scene while a juvenile was transported to the hospital for treatment and later released. The explosion and subsequent fire happened during a nor'easter, the effects of which had caused a tree to fall, severing the propane line to the home. The cause of the explosion/fire was accidental.
- On April 25th, the SFMO was notified of a fire fatality. The victim died at a Massachusetts hospital where they had been receiving treatment for their injuries. The fire had occurred in Nashua on April 22nd.
- On April 25th, investigators responded to a fatal fire in Concord. SFMO investigators worked alongside Concord Fire Department investigators to document the fire scene. The fire remains under investigation.
- On April 26th, investigators responded to a fatal fire in Manchester. SFMO investigators and Manchester Fire Marshal's Office investigators worked in tandem to document the fire scene. The fire remains under investigation.

- On April 27th, investigators responded to a fatal fire in Nashua. SFMO investigators along with Nashua Fire Marshal's Office investigators and Nashua Police Department detectives collaborated to document the fire scene and conduct witness interviews. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams:

- There was 1 IGL canine deployment in April.

Youth Firesetter:

- There were no youth fire setter assessments in April; however, there were 3 cases involving youth firesetters and 2 inquiries.

Training/Committees:

- Two investigators attended the IAAI (International Association of Arson Investigators) conference in Las Vegas during the week of April 8th.

BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:

State Building Permit System:

We processed the following permits in the month of April:

- Building: 21
- Electrical: 24
- Plumbing: 5
- Mechanical Fuel Gas: 3
- Mechanical Non-Fuel Gas: 4
- Fire Protection: 2
- Fire Alarm: 7

Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:

We initiated 9 educational and 9 healthcare plan reviews, completed 236 inspections and 213 technical consults in the month of April.

Variance Requests:

We processed 5 variance requests in the month of April.

Fireworks Safety and Enforcement Program

The Fireworks Safety and Enforcement Program has conducted the following in the month of April:

- Proximate Licenses Issued: 1
- Display Certificate of Competency Issued: 5
- Consumer Fireworks Retail Store Licenses Issued: 3
- Explosive Magazine Inspections: 10
- Proximate Audience Inspections: 0
- Technical Assistance: 1

Modular Building Program

The Modular Building Program has conducted the following in the month of April:

- Inspections: 3
- Audits of Manufacturers: 2
- Audits of Educational Facilities: 0
- Labels Issued to Manufacturers: 38
- Units Shipped to New Hampshire: 61

Tramway and Amusement Ride Safety

The Tramway and Amusement Ride Safety section conducted the following in the month of April:

- Amusement Registrations: 117
- Amusement Inspections: 137
- Amusement Incidents: 0
- Tramway Registrations: 2
- Tramway Inspections: 2
- Tramway Incidents: 1

BUREAU OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION:

Hazardous Materials:

Hazardous Materials response, coordination and consultation is available through the on-call SFMO supervisor.

Our Hazardous Materials Coordinator is available for PEAC Software training for fire departments. PEAC is used for documentation of Tier II facilities and chemical storage.

In the month of April, our Hazardous Materials Coordinators attended an HSEM REP Exercise, the Haz Mat Collaborative Meeting, TEEX Haz Mat Trainer Class, Hazard 3 EV Webinar and the monthly PEAC Training. They also assisted the Haz Mat Collaborative with the two-day NH Haz Mat Conference and presented a session on PEAC software.

Also, in the month of April, we received 4 Tier II reports from NH facilities.

Electric Vehicles and Lithium-Ion Batteries

Pending the final approvals for SB 430 we will be formally establishing a council to study the impacts of electric vehicles, e-mobility devices, and the associated lithium-ion batteries hazards for first responder response, the environment, building and fire codes, life safety, and property protection.

Regional Outreach/Fire Chief Roundtables:

We continue to partner with the Commissioner's Office, other Department of Safety Leadership and the NHAFC to conduct regional outreach/Fire Chief Roundtables. Our latest meeting was held at the Burton Fire & EMS Training Facility in Bethlehem on April 11th. We are planning a program in the Souhegan Mutual Aid System for June.

Incident Reporting:

Your commitment to ensuring we have great data to accurately show the fire problem in NH is greatly appreciated! Please remember to report any EV or lithium-ion battery fires to us.

Please reach out to our NHFIRS team for any incident reporting questions at nhfirs@dos.nh.gov

We continue to monitor the development of the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA) new fire information and analytics platform, known as the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), for the American fire and emergency services.

Outreach Events:

Members of the SFMO were busy in the month of April, engaging with just over 1000 people at a variety of events across the state. Members of the SFMO attended the Keene Home Show on April 6th and 7th to hand out fire safety education and our side-by-side sprinkler trailer was used to show the difference between fires in a room with and without sprinklers.



Members of the SFMO also presented at and attended career fairs at Conant High School, Somersworth Middle School, Lin-Wood High School, Groveton High School, Concord Regional Technical Center, Lakes Region Community College, and the University of New Hampshire. Our K-9 teams provided five demonstrations in the month of April.

Please consider us as you plan your next community event! Send your request to us at fmopubliceducation@dos.nh.gov.

Public Education:

Are you familiar with the USFA’s Fire and Life Safety Communicators Initiative? This initiative is a collaboration among the fire and emergency medical services to speak with “one voice” on fire and life safety. They believe in working together to present consistent messages. The theme for the month of May is “Home Fire Sprinklers.”



Handout: [Home Fire Sprinklers Save Lives \(fema.gov\)](http://fema.gov)

Video: <https://youtu.be/-zMKhJckhDQ>

For more information on this initiative, or to find outreach materials on the monthly topics, please visit:

[Fire and Life Safety Communicators Initiative \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov)

Arson Awareness Week 2024 runs from May 5-11, 2024. This year's theme is "Protecting Houses of Worship – Fire as a Weapon." Arson was the leading cause of reported fires in houses of worship in 2020. Excluding fires for which a cause was undetermined, 58% of fires in houses of worship were classified as "incendiary."

Find messages and assets to share here: [Protecting Houses of Worship Against Arson \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov)

Training Opportunities:

Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections

Thursday, May 16, 2024

6:00PM-9:00PM

Wilton Fire Department

A review of the State Fire Code relative to NFPA 54: National Fuel Gas Code, NFPA 58: Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code, and NFPA 31: Standard for the Installation of Oil-Burning Equipment. This session will give the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or their designee a better understanding of how to navigate these codes and standards.

Registration Link: <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

Collection of Witness Data in Fire Investigations

Thursday, May 23, 2024

6:00PM-8:30PM

Raymond S. Burton Training Facility, Bethlehem

Competent and credible fire investigation work requires proper consideration of witness information. This program will offer first responders data collection techniques for successfully obtaining critical information from witnesses that will assist them in determining the origin and cause of a fire, as well as information that will be needed if the decision is made to request assistance from the NH SFMO.

Registration Link: <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

Additional locations and offerings will be announced soon. We are working on topics to include interviewing witnesses, air monitoring, inspections of multi-family dwellings and NHFIRS Incident Coding. Please reach out to Deputy Stacey Dubois at stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov if you are interested in hosting one of these sessions, or a future session, or would like to suggest a future training topic.