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Commissioner

State of New Hampshire

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

Division of Fire Safety

Office of the State Fire Marshal

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Sean P. Toomey
State Fire Marshal

NH State Fire Marshal's Office – February 2023 Report

(For the period of January 1 through January 31, 2023)

ADMINISTRATION:

Personnel:

We currently have 5 full-time vacancies and 5 part-time vacancies. The following openings are those that we are actively recruiting for at this time:

- Full-time Fire Investigator (2 positions)
- Full-time State Building Inspector
- Full-time State Building/Mechanical Inspector
- Full-time Hazmat Coordinator
- Part time State Building Inspector
- Part-time Fire Protection Specialist
- Part-time NFIRS Coordinator
- Part-time Building Code Review Board Administrative Secretary
- Part-time Outreach & Education Specialist

Keith Boden has been promoted to Fireworks Inspector/Program Manager effective February 10, 2023.

Fredrick Miuzzo has been promoted to a full-time Administrative Support role effective February 10, 2023.

Staci Davis joins our staff as the State Building Permit Coordinator effective February 10, 2023.

Legislation:

The 2023 session is just getting started. Below are some of the bills that we are watching:

- HB 182 prohibiting discharge of volunteer firefighters or volunteer emergency medical technicians from other employment
- HB 265 relative to municipal property tax relief for installation of fire suppression systems
- HB 296 relative to local authority for granting driveway permits
- HB 477 prohibit municipal inspections of owner-occupied units of multi-unit housing
- HB 564 relative to ratification of amendments to the state building code and state fire code
- SB 71 relative to workers' compensation for firefighter cancer disease and establishing a commission to study the implementation of optional annual cancer screenings.
- SB 78 relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements
- SB 170 relative to small group child day care centers

Board of Fire Control:

The Board of Fire Control and the SFMO staff have started the review of the 2021 editions of NFPA 1 and NFPA 101. The goal is to have a package ready for legislative action in 2024.

The Board of Fire Control approved the following amendment to the State Fire Code following a public hearing on January 18, 2023:

- Food trucks
 - Requirement for LP gas system certification for mobile food service vehicles has been removed (NFPA 1 50.7.2.3.4)
 - Modified NFPA 1 50.7.2.3.2 as follows: All mobile and temporary cooking operations equipped with a propane appliance and an electrical system shall be equipped with a propane detector listed and marked on the device as being suitable for use in the vehicles under the requirements of UL 1484, and installed according to the terms of its listing.
 - Modified NFPA 1 50.7.2.3.3 as follows: The LP gas leak detection system shall be tested monthly.

Foam Take-back Program:

We continue to work with DES to launch the foam take-back program. Due to contracting and permitting challenges the launch of this program is delayed into 2023. An important consideration in the program is the best and safest disposal methods to destroy the PFAS chemicals. The latest inventory is approximately 9,600 gallons.

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:

In the month of January, we received 16 incident notifications resulting in 7 scene responses. The Bureau of Investigations currently has 11 active arson or suspected arson investigations.

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

- On January 6, investigators responded to a structure fire in Jefferson and determined that the fire started in a living room, likely from a person smoking while on oxygen. One patient was transported to Boston for burns and inhalation injuries while another was treated for smoke inhalation at a local hospital and released.
- On January 16, investigators responded to Wolfeboro for a fire that destroyed a grocery store. The cause was undetermined due to extensive damage and collapse.
- On January 31, investigators responded to Epsom for a structure fire at a vacant house. The cause is suspected to be incendiary because the house was unoccupied and did not have an active electrical connection. This criminal investigation is ongoing.

Fatal Fire/CO Incidents:

- The BOI investigated 3 fatal fire incidents in January.
 - A woman died from injuries sustained in a fire in Langdon on January 5. This fire appears to have been accidentally caused by a wood stove.
 - A woman died from injuries sustained in a fire in Woodstock on January 8. This fire was an accidental cooking-related fire.
 - A man died in a fire in Milford on January 21. The cause is undetermined but not suspected to be incendiary.
- On January 1, 2023, the FMO investigated a suspected carbon monoxide poisoning that resulted in the death of a man in Northwood. Autopsy found that it was not a carbon-monoxide death.

Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams:

- There were two IGL canine deployments in January.
- An IGL canine team performed a demonstration in January for the New London Fire Department's junior firefighter program.

Court:

- An investigator testified at an evidence suppression hearing for a past tense arson case that occurred in Hill in November 2021.
- An investigator testified at a Merrimack Grand Jury, which indicted Derrick Poirier for a June 20, 2022, arson in Canterbury. The BOI had arrested him on June 22, 2022.

Training/Committees:

- Two BOI personnel completed "Leading with Compassion" training in January.
- FMO personnel attended live burn training in East Kingston on January 7.
- Many of our investigators completed mandatory training to maintain our police certifications.

BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:

State Building Permit System:

We processed the following permits in the month of January:

- Building: 41
- Electrical: 34
- Plumbing: 16
- Mechanical Fuel Gas: 8
- Mechanical Non-Fuel Gas: 5
- Fire Protection: 3
- Fire Alarm: 1

Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:

We initiated 5 educational and 9 healthcare plan reviews, completed 89 inspections and 92 technical consults in the month of January.

Variance Requests:

We processed 6 variance requests in the month of January.

BUREAU OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION:

Hazardous Materials:

Hazardous Materials response, coordination and consultation is available through the on-call FMO 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 January, our Quarterly SERC meeting was held, where we reviewed and awarded HMEP Grants for Hazardous Materials Training and Planning.

Our Hazardous Materials Coordinator attended a Southeastern NH Haz Mat Team training on the familiarization of a bulk propane facility. He also continues to work with the Regional Haz Mat Teams and HSEM on planning a Wide Area Air Monitoring Exercise for the spring of 2023. He presented NH Tier II reporting requirements as part of the EPA webinar on EPCRA and responded to 1 incident to assist a regional Haz Mat Team.

Further discussions and work is ongoing to evaluate the hazmat problem and funding sources.

Regional Outreach/Chief's Roundtables:

We continue to partner with the Commissioner's Office, Director Cutting and the NHAFC to conduct regional outreach/Chief's Roundtables. An Upper Valley Area Roundtable was held on January 24th and an Ossipee Area Roundtable is tentatively scheduled for March 20th at 6:00 pm.

Incident Reporting:

If you don't already have an account to securely transfer to and receive files from the SFMO, please register for free today! More info included in this link: [SFTP2020bulletin.pdf \(nh.gov\)](#).

If you have not submitted your 2022 NFIRS data yet, please do so as soon as possible so we can close out the year in a timely fashion. As a reminder, here is information on how to submit your data, which is due by the 15th of each month: [Incident Reporting | NH Division of Fire Safety](#)

Have you looked at your .err files lately? These are important files that you likely receive on a monthly basis that contain invalid incidents, a.k.a. error messages. We can help you through the process so that you can resubmit any invalid incidents and receive full credit. Please contact us at nhfirs@dos.nh.gov.

We continue to work with the team at the Fire Academy as departments implement the NHESR program, available free of charge, for incident reporting. If you are interested in giving a presentation on the program or would like to request one, please email NHESR@dos.nh.gov.

We are monitoring changes proposed by the USFA to the NFIRS system. We understand a substantial redo of the system as we know it is in the works. We anticipate more details will be available in late spring 2023.

We are aware that many fire departments across the state have recently experienced changes in personnel through promotions and/or retirements, and some are shifting their software providers.

If you have questions or you are having difficulties, please reach out to the NHFIRS data team using the following email: NHFIRS@dos.nh.gov.

Public Education and Outreach:

Super Bowl Sunday - Sunday, February 12

Add Fire Safety to Your Super Bowl Sunday Lineup. (Cooking Safety)

<https://www.nfpa.org/~ /media/files/public-education/resources/safety-tip-sheets/cookingsafety.pdf>



Valentine's Day -Tuesday, February 14

Keep you and your loved one safe this Valentine's Day (Candles, Fireplace & Cooking – List of safety tips)



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Training Opportunities:

Fire Investigation for the First Responder

March 9, 2023

Raymond S. Burton Training Facility, Bethlehem, NH

6:00-8:30PM

This training familiarizes students (fire, police and EMS) with the roles and responsibilities of first responders and how they relate to the basic principles of arson detection and the proper procedures for scene security, evidence preservation and documentation.

Registration Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BurtonMarch9>

Small Town, USA – State v. John Gates

NHFMO Bureau of Investigations Case Study

March 23, 2023

NHFA Auditorium

1:00-4:00PM

Join the NHFMO on a journey into an arson case set in a small New Hampshire town, filled with unexpected twists and turns, and involving local, state, and federal agencies. This presentation shows the ins and outs of a complex arson investigation and how the crime of arson can be just the tip of the iceberg.

Registration Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StateVGates1-4pm>

Small Town, USA – State v. John Gates

NHFMO Bureau of Investigations Case Study

March 23, 2023

NHFA Auditorium

6:00-9:00PM

Join the NHFMO on a journey into an arson case set in a small New Hampshire town, filled with unexpected twists and turns, and involving local, state, and federal agencies. This presentation shows the ins and outs of a complex arson investigation and how the crime of arson can be just the tip of the iceberg.

Registration Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StateVGates6-9pm>

An additional offering in the north country is in the works, along with a variety of training opportunities to be held around the state this year.

If you are interested in hosting a program or would like to suggest a future training topic, please reach out to Deputy Stacey Dubois at stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov.