



Robert L. Quinn
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 - June 2021 Report

(For the period of May 1 through May 31, 2021)

ADMINISTRATION: (Assistant State Fire Marshal, Max Schultz)

Personnel:

We are in the process of hiring several positions within the division, including:

- Full time Fire Investigator- Oral Boards completed, Director Interviews soon
- Part time NFIRS Program Coordinator- will be posted soon
- Part time State Building Inspector
- Part time State Building Permit Coordinator
- Part time Fire Protection Specialist (Inspector)

We are hopeful that filling these positions will allow us to better serve the needs of our constituents.

Website: We continue to update our new website. The new site link is: Firemarshal.dos.nh.gov

2021 Legislation:

We are following a number of bills, including:

- HB 72 – Ratifying the amendments to the 2015 fire code by the BFC
Status: Passed/Adopted with Amendment House, Rereferred in the Senate
- SB 15 - Ratifying the amendments to the 2015 fire code by the BFC
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar
- HB 208 – Repealing the lightning rod program
Status: Signed by the Governor, effective January 1, 2022
- SB 106 – Establishing a committee to study the adoption of the 2018 fire code
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar
- SB 106 – Repealing the voluntary fire equipment certification program
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar
- HB 377 – Relative to the FMO issuing variances to recovery residences
Status: Signed by the Governor, effective July 5, 2021
- SB 133 – Relative to the FMO issuing POA permits
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS: (Deputy Keith Rodenhiser)

New/Active cases: Seven (7) calls for service in the month of May; our 6 investigators and 2 district chiefs are actively working 19 criminal cases.

- On May 6, 2021, investigators assisted the Tilton Police Department with a fire set on the pavement in the parking lot behind the Tilton Touchless Car Wash at 64 E Main Street in Tilton. It is believed the fire was caused by an adult and two juveniles. The investigation is ongoing.
- On May 11, 2021, investigators responded to the Scamman Farm at 69 Portsmouth Avenue in Stratham to assist the Stratham FD and PD with a fire investigation at a large barn. At this time, the fire remains under investigation.
- On May 14, 2021, investigators responded to 13 Clark Avenue in Amherst to assist the Amherst FD and PD with an investigation into a residential explosion with fire and injury. One victim was transported to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA for treatment of burn injuries. At this time, the incident remains under investigation but does not appear to be criminal in nature.
- On May 16, 2021, investigators responded to 108V Varney Road in Wolfeboro to assist the Wolfeboro FD with an investigation into a motor vehicle fire. At this time, the fire remains under investigation, but there does appear to be criminal indicators.

Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams: Our two IGL Canine Teams were deployed one time in the month of May. A joint training day was conducted with the IGL Canine Team from the Manchester Fire Department. Our canine teams also completed recertification, which is done on an annual basis.

Public Outreach: Investigators are assisting with youth firesetter assessments in multiple communities throughout the state. Our youth firesetter coordinator/investigator is also preparing presentations for school resource officers and child advocacy centers around the state.

Training/Committees: Investigators and/or Supervisors attended several trainings in the month of May, some to include: ICS-300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents, Firearms Instructor, Mental Health First Aid, Thermal Runaway in Stored Battery Systems, Domestic Terrorism/Racially Motivated Violent Extremists, and Fire Sprinkler Systems for the Fire Investigator.

Court Actions: Mary Elizabeth Corliss was arraigned on charges of Arson (Class A Felony), Reckless Conduct x2 (Class B Felonies) and Endangering the Welfare of a Child x2 (Misdemeanors) as a result of a fire in Webster on 02/24/21. The defendant and her two young children had to be rescued from the burning house and were admitted to various hospitals in Boston for treatment of their injuries sustained during the fire. Corliss's trial is expected to begin in November.

BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION: (Deputy Sean Toomey)

State Building Permit System: We processed 20 building permit applications in the month of May.

Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews: Our staff remains available for technical code assistance. We initiated 3 healthcare plan reviews in the month of May.

Variance Requests: We processed 3 variance requests in the month of May.

Modular Home Construction: We are working through an issue with the NH Building Officials Association and DOS Legal relative to the interpretation of the stair geometry requirements for modular homes. There is a concern that the Modular Building Code and International Residential Code conflict for stair geometry and the amendment relative to a steeper stairs for modular homes that has been in place since 1996 shouldn't apply.

Manufactured Homes versus Modular Homes: We have recently received some inquiries on the differences between manufactured homes and modular homes. Both homes are built off-site and transported for final assembly at the home site.

Manufactured homes, sometimes referred to as mobile homes are built to HUD Manufactured Construction and Safety Standards. The applicable laws and rules are RSA 205-D, Manufactured Housing Installation Standards and Inst 100-700, Manufactured Housing Installation Standards. It is important to note that manufactured housing installed in accordance with RSA 205-D shall be exempt from all state or local standards or regulations which regulate the same matters. What this means is the inspectional role within the new home is limited as the home is built to the HUD standard and not the state building and fire codes. All utility, or exterior utility installations shall conform to the state building and fire codes. It is also customary for inspections by the building official for the foundation/anchoring system.

Modular homes are built to the Modular Building Code. Our office administers the modular building program in New Hampshire. The Modular Building Program has been in effect since July 1, 1993. The program was established in conjunction with various modular building manufacturers, third party inspection agencies, local and state code enforcement officials. The goal of the program is to assure modular construction is built in accordance with the codes and standards adopted at the state level. Compliance with the program is witnessed by the application of New Hampshire modular labels on each unit. The applicable laws and rules are RSA 205-C, Modular Building Standards and the Saf-C 3300, Modular Building Administrative Rules. Modular homes are required to meet local permitting and inspection requirements.

Sober Living/Recovery Residences: With the signing of HB 377 Relative to the FMO issuing variances to recovery residences we anticipate an increase in variances and questions. The goal of HB 377 was to define a consistent process and reasonable accommodation for recovery residences. The bill was a result of efforts between many stakeholders to include the fire service, legal community and recovery community. What this typically means is a reduction in the fire protection features in these homes to include the omission of an automatic sprinkler system in most instances and the allowance of a monitored residential fire alarm system for residences with more than 8 people. The intent is to allow a properly operated recovery house to function as if they are a single family dwelling instead of meeting all the requirements of a lodging and rooming house.

BUREAU OF PLANNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES: (Deputy Danielle Cole)**Hazardous Materials:**

Hazardous Materials coordination and coverage remains a priority despite the state of emergency. Personnel are ready to deploy if needed and may be contacted through the on-call FMO supervisor for consultation purposes.

If you would like to virtually attend a one-hour training on the newly released suspicious unknown package protocol, please reach out to our Hazardous Materials Coordinator Jim Stone at James.H.Stone@dos.nh.gov. If you are from a smaller department please try to collaborate with a neighboring community for this training.

Fireworks:

Firework stores have been seasonably busy as many residents and visitors are looking to enjoy fireworks during this time of year. We have updated the Permissible Community Restrictions List and will be posting it on our website soon. Unsafe fireworks usage can result in injury, death, property damage and wildland fires. Be sure to check out our website where we have provided information and safety tips about fireworks usage.

As social distancing and group gathering restrictions have changed, we have seen an increase in the amount of fireworks shows that are being scheduled throughout the state, this also includes concert venues. Our staff will be also be out during the 4th of July weekend to assist municipalities with display shows. Please contact us if you have questions related to fireworks shows, permits and licensing requirements.

Mechanical Inspectors:

Our mechanical inspectors are once again able to offer in person training sessions at for local departments, during the day or for night sessions. The following topics are available:

- Municipal Inspectors Course

- 2009 to 2015 Code update course on NFPA 54

- 2009 to 2014 Code update course on NFPA 58

- 2009 to 2015 Code update course on International Plumbing Code (IPC)

- 2009 to 2015 Code update course on International Residential Plumbing Code (IRC)

Please email Chief Mechanical Inspector Marc Prindiville to request a training Marc.Prindiville@DOS.NH.GOV.