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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 – January 2023 Report**

*(For the period of December 1 through December 31, 2022)*

### **ADMINISTRATION:**

#### **Personnel:**

We currently have 7 full-time vacancies and 4 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 Fireworks Inspector/Program Manager
- Full-time Hazmat Coordinator
- Full-time Administrative Assistant
- Part time State Building Inspector
- Part-time State Building Permit Coordinator
- Part-time Building Code Review Board Administrative Secretary
- Part-time Outreach & Education Specialist

Roxie Beall has been promoted to Administrative Supervisor effective January 13, 2023.

Erin Newnan has joined our staff as the 91-A & Rules Coordinator effective December 30, 2022.

Zach Coburn has resigned his position as State Building Permit Coordinator effective January 12, 2023.

#### **Legislation:**

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

- HB 265 relative to municipal property tax relief for installation of fire suppression systems
- HB 296 relative to local authority for granting driveway permits
- LSR 271 relative to ratification of amendments to the state building code and state fire code
- LSR 806 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 has received inquiries on two possible code amendments to the 2018 edition of NFPA 1. A public hearing notice will be posted for a January 18, 2023 at 1:30 pm. The possible amendments are:

- Sprinkler Systems for Fire Stations: Consider aligning the sprinkler system requirement for new fire stations with the State Building Code which would be sprinkler systems are required for fire stations greater than 5,000 square feet.
- Food trucks: Consider removing the requirement of an LP gas system certification

### **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.

### **2022 Year in Review:**

#### **Investigations**

- 100 scene responses
- 22 death investigations (9 fire, 6 CO)
- 29 K9 calls
- 31 criminal cases with 6 arrests

#### **Inspections**

- 1,191 plan reviews
- 684 permits issued
- 1,352 inspections completed
- 1,614 technical consults
- 91 fire code variances

#### **Tramway & Amusement**

##### Amusement Rides:

Registrations: 578

Inspections: 1047

Incidents: 6

##### Tramways:

Registrations: 163

Inspections: 320

Incidents: 20

#### **Outreach & Education**

- 38 educational classes delivered
- 44 outreach events
- 41 K9 Demonstrations

## **BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:**

In the month of December, we received 19 incident notifications resulting in 6 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 December 4, 2022, investigators responded to a structure fire in Rochester and determined that the fire started in a bedroom at an overloaded electrical outlet.
- On December 11, 2022, investigators responded to a structure fire in Newport. The cause was undetermined but suspected to be due to overloaded extension cords in a shed.
- On December 11, 2022, investigators responded to Rye to investigate a structure fire. The origin and cause were undetermined due to the extensive damage.
- On December 20, 2022, an investigator responded to a structure fire in Gilford. The origin appeared to be in a bedroom but the cause was undetermined due to several possible accidental causes.
- On December 22, 2022, investigators responded to a motor vehicle crash and fire in Hooksett. The driver died due to the crash, which also caused the fire.
- On December 24, 2022, an investigator responded to a structure fire in Amherst. The cause was undetermined but likely electrical.

### **Fatal Fire/CO Incidents:**

- The BOI is investigating a suspected carbon monoxide death from December 18, 2022, that is believed to have been a suicide.

### **Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams:**

- There were no IGL canine deployments in December.

### **Public Outreach:**

- The BOI conducted one youth firesetter assessment in December.
- An investigator presented about youth firesetters at a School Resource Officer class on December 7, 2022.

### **Training/Committees:**

- Two investigators taught warrant and complaints training at the fire academy in December. This training is required for non-law enforcement personnel seeking citation authority.

## **BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:**

### **State Building Permit System:**

We processed the following permits in the month of December:

- Building: 8
- Electrical: 1
- Plumbing: 4
- Mechanical Fuel Gas: 0
- Mechanical Non-Fuel Gas: 1
- Fire Protection: 1
- Fire Alarm: 1

### **Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:**

We initiated 1 educational and 5 healthcare plan reviews, completed 74 inspections and 108 technical consults in the month of December.

### **Variance Requests:**

We processed 4 variance requests in the month of December.

## **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 December, our Hazardous Materials Coordinator attended the Hazardous Materials Collaborative meeting and provided training to the Bureau of Investigations on air monitoring at incidents. He also worked with Homeland Security and Emergency Management on updating the State Hazard Mitigation Plan and continued working with the Regional Haz Mat Teams and HSEM on planning a Wide Area Air Monitoring Exercise for the spring of 2023.

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

### **Swiftwater Rescue Working Group:**

Further discussions and work is ongoing to evaluate the swiftwater 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 is scheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm and an Ossipee Area Roundtable is scheduled for February 8<sup>th</sup> 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 \(nh.gov\)](#).

Can you believe 2023 is already here? As 2022 draws to a close, we ask that fire departments please submit their NFIRS data as soon as possible so we can close out the year in a timely fashion.

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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

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](mailto:NHFIRS@dos.nh.gov).

### **Training Opportunities:**

Program preparations are in the works, and we anticipate additional trainings beginning again in early 2023. Please reach out to Deputy Stacey Dubois at [stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov](mailto:stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov) if you are interested in hosting a program or would like to suggest a future training topic.