



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 – April 2024 Report

(For the period of March 1 through March 31, 2024)

ADMINISTRATION:

Personnel:

We currently have 2 part-time vacancies that we are actively recruiting for at this time:

Part-time Building Code Review Board Administrative Secretary

Part-time Accreditation Manager

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

HB 1065 Relative to fire sprinkler requirements in residential buildings

Status: Passed House with Amendment

HB 1215 Relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements and the regulation of building permits

Status: Passed House with Amendment

HB 1332 Relative to prohibiting electric vehicles from parking in parking garages

Status: House ITL

HB 1352 Relative to firefighting personal protective equipment

Status: Passed House with Amendment

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

HB 1387 Relative to revisions to the state building code

Status: Passed House with Amendment

HB 1396 Relative to prohibiting municipal inspections of owner-occupied units of multi-unit housing

Status: House ITL

HB 1498 Establishing a state short term rental registry

Status: House ITL

HB 1510 Establishing a commission to identify barriers to and solutions for electric vehicle sales

Status: House ITL

HB 1635 Relative to the definition of short term rental

Status: House ITL

SB 365 Relative to the sale or use of lithium-ion batteries for electric bicycles, scooters, or personal electric mobility devices

Status: Passed Senate

SB 373 Relative to the state building code

Status: Senate holding bill, amendment was passed in committee

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

SB 437 Relative to local authority to amend the state building code

Status: Passed Senate with Amendment

SB 599 Relative to the state fire code

Status: Passed Senate

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.

Strategic Planning Initiative:

Our office has worked over the past few months to develop an updated strategic plan which will be part of an overall Department of Safety plan. The high-level goals for the office include accreditation, development of a statewide community risk reduction program, employee development, development of a statewide hazmat strategic plan, and facility/office space enhancement.

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:

In the month of March, we received 22 incident notifications resulting in 11 scene responses. The Bureau of Investigations currently has 15 open arson or suspected arson investigations.

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

- On March 1, investigators responded to Bradford for a tent fire of undetermined cause.
- On March 4, investigators responded to Thornton for a structure fire, the cause is undetermined.
- On March 4, investigators, and an IGL K9 team responded to Milton for a structure fire, the cause is under investigation.
- On March 5, investigators responded to a separate structure fire in Milton. The cause is undetermined.
- On March 5, investigators responded to Northwood for an unattended death suspected to be related to carbon monoxide poisoning. After further investigation it is believed that the person died of natural causes.
- On March 11, an investigator assisted the North Conway Fire Department with a room-and-contents fire suspected to have been caused by a broken vape pen.

- On March 13, investigators responded to Atkinson for a structure fire. The cause is undetermined.
- On March 18, investigators responded to Loudon for a camper fire. The cause is undetermined but suspected to be from an electrical failure.
- On March 20, an investigator responded to Meredith to assist MPD collect evidence related to incendiary brush fires.
- On March 24, investigators responded to Chesterfield for a structure fire, the cause is undetermined.

Fatal Fire/CO Incidents:

- There was one fatal fire in March. On March 22, investigators responded to Gilford for a tent fire. One deceased male victim was found in the tent. The cause is currently under investigation but suspected to be from the use of propane space heaters in the tent.

Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams:

- There was one IGL canine deployment in March.

Youth Fire Setter:

- There was one youth fire setter inquiry in March.

Court:

- A former Bradford Firefighter was indicated on 7 counts of arson by a Merrimack County Grand Jury.
- An Investigator testified in a deposition, and at an arson trial, in the Merrimack County Superior Court for a 2021 fire that happened in Hill. The trial resulted in a hung jury and is planned to be retried in the fall of 2024.

Training/Committees:

- Two investigators finished a Fire Inspector 1 class.
- One investigator took an evidence technician class.

BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:

State Building Permit System:

We processed the following permits in the month of March:

- Building: 7
- Electrical: 10
- Plumbing: 7
- Mechanical Fuel Gas: 7
- Mechanical Non-Fuel Gas: 2
- Fire Protection: 1
- Fire Alarm: 0

Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:

We initiated 9 educational and 8 healthcare plan reviews, completed 231 inspections and 185 technical consults in the month of March.

Variance Requests:

We processed 5 variance requests in the month of March.

Fireworks Safety and Enforcement Program

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

- Proximate Licenses Issued: 0
- Display Certificate of Competency Issued: 0
- Consumer Fireworks Retail Store Licenses Issued: 0
- Explosive Magazine Inspections: 3
- Proximate Audience Inspections: 2
- Technical Assistance: 3

Modular Building Program

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

- Inspections: 8
- Audits of Manufacturers: 0
- Audits of Educational Facilities: 0
- Labels Issued to Manufacturers: 85
- Units Shipped to New Hampshire: 20

Tramway and Amusement Ride Safety

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

- Amusement Registrations: 51
- Amusement Inspections: 73
- Amusement Incidents: 0
- Tramway Registrations: 0
- Tramway Inspections: 11
- Tramway Incidents: 3

BUREAU OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION:

Hazardous Materials:

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

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

In the month of March, our Hazardous Materials Coordinators attended the Southeastern NH Haz Mat Team training, FEMA Resource Typing training, and provided PEAC Training to the Keene Fire Haz Mat team and Respiratory Protection Policy training to our Bureau of Investigations. They also met with the Twin State Haz Mat Team coordinating committee and attended the Twin State Mutual Aid Meeting.

Also, in the month of March, we received 122 Tier II reports from NH facilities. We also responded to 16 questions from facilities regarding Tier II reporting.

Regional Outreach/Chief's Roundtables:

We continue to partner with the Commissioner's Office, other Department of Safety Leadership and the NHAFC to conduct regional outreach/Chief's Roundtables. The next meeting is scheduled at the Burton Fire & EMS Training Facility in Bethlehem on April 11th at 10 am.

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 March, engaging with just over 1,000 people at a variety of events across the state. Members attended the Manchester Home Show, the Law Enforcement Winni Dip, and the CHaD Battle of the Badges. They also provided Steps for Safety (fire and fall prevention program for older adults) presentations in Kingston, Franklin and Concord. Our K-9 teams provided two demonstrations in the month of March.





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 April is "Create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan." Wildfires are becoming more extreme; larger, spread faster, and occur in areas that have never experienced fire. These fires create cascading effects like damaged water supplies, infrastructure, economies, watersheds, and ecosystems. Because of this, it is important to help your community prepare for a wildfire. One of the best ways to prepare is by creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Learn how to create a CWPP here: [Create a WUI action plan \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov)

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)

Did you know the 2024 Arson Awareness Theme was just recently announced? This year's theme is "Protecting Houses of Worship – Fire as a Weapon" and runs from May 5-11, 2024. 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:

Upcoming SFMO Led Classes:

Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

6:00PM-9:00PM

Jaffrey 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 his designee a better understating of how to navigate these codes and standards.

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

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 his designee a better understating of how to navigate these codes and standards.

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, inspection 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, a past or future session, or would like to suggest a future training topic.