



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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[www.nh.gov/firesafety](http://www.nh.gov/firesafety)



Paul J. Parisi  
State Fire Marshal

## **NH State Fire Marshal's Office – November 2020 Report**

*(For the period of October 1 through October 31, 2020)*

### **ADMINISTRATION:** (Assistant Director Max Schultz)

The FMO is working hard to maintain our customer satisfaction while operating at a 25% reduction in force due to a decrease in revenue in our state. We have shifted resources into the Building Safety and Construction Bureau where 50% of the vacancies exist. We will do our best to answer municipal inquiries as they come in, but please understand that they may be delayed. We appreciate your patience and understanding. If you have any questions or are running into a problem, please do not hesitate to contact FM Parisi directly at (603) 931-9538.

### **Micro-website:**

We are currently building a COVID-19 specific micro-website for the FMO. The new site will have mobile device compatibility, which our main site lacks. It will have easy to use menus and dropdowns for first responder access to important COVID-19 related information through ESF-4. We are excited to bring this customer friendly informational tool to the fire service. We hope to have it up and running in the coming weeks.

### **Personnel:**

The Governor's office authorized two part-time positions to be filled; an inspector position and a modular building program specialist. We anticipate filling this position in November.

Below is the link to the modular position.

### **Part time position posted until 12/3/20**

**PROGRAM SPECIALIST IV - TMPPT5888 (MODULAR BUILDING PROGRAM MANAGER) (JOB ID: 18611)**

**PART TIME**

Position #TMPPT5888

Labor Grade 25

\$26.13 - \$31.01 per hour

<https://www.indeed.com/rc/clk?jk=9436f227382e56fb&fccid=933636124ef375c8&vjs=3>

**2021 Legislation:** The FMO legislative requests have been forwarded to the Commissioner's office for review. These include legislation that was not adopted from the 2020 session including the FMO as an issuing agency for POA permits, recovery residence language, the elimination of the voluntary fire suppression equipment certification program, and the adoption of the 2018 Uniform Fire Code and Life Safety Code which is being considered by the Board of Fire Control.

Members of the Command Staff participated in several meetings of the Legislative Committee to Study State and Municipal Authority Governing Recovery Housing. The committee is working to develop a final report (due 11/1/20) that is likely to include provisions similar to HB 311 that was introduced last session.

**BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:** (Deputy Keith Rodenhiser)

**New/Active cases:** 10 Calls for Service in the month of October; our 5 investigators and 2 district chiefs are actively working 22 Criminal Cases.

- On 10/01/20, an investigator responded to 133 Cherry Hill Rd. in Grafton to assist the Grafton FD with a fire investigation in a new, under construction, single family dwelling. The fire may have started by self-heating (or spontaneous ignition) of wood finishing products. At this time the fire is still under investigation but it does not appear to be criminal in nature.
- On 10/13/20, an IGL Canine Team responded to 203 N. Main St. in Concord to assist the Concord Fire Department's Fire Marshal's Office with a fire investigation in a vacant commercial building that was previously a Friendly's Restaurant. At this time the fire is still under investigation by Concord FD and Concord PD.
- On 10/28/20, investigators and an IGL Canine Team responded to 47 Tall Timbers Dr. in Grantham to assist the Grantham FD and PD with a fire investigation in a mobile home. There were reports that the Town of Grantham had legal proceedings with the owners of the property. The investigation is ongoing by all three agencies.

Our newest investigator of the BOI, Steve Dennis, has been deployed with the Air Force to the Middle East since May. He is scheduled to return home in November; and with quarantine, out processing and family leave, it is anticipated that he will be starting with us in the middle of December. The BOI and the entire FMO is really excited to have him back and have him begin his new career with us.

**Court Action:** There has been some trial prep conferences with various County Attorney's Offices and the AG's Office regarding scheduled hearings and trials in the future. There has also been some conversations of possible plea deals with defendants in some of our cases.

Joshua Cahill was sentenced to one year in the Cheshire County Jail, plus suspended prison time for a burglary and arson he committed. He drove to Keene with three other men in a stolen vehicle, committed the burglary and then lit the motor vehicle on fire in Nelson. The three other men involved were sentenced on other crimes related to the incident.

**Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams:** In the latest edition of NFPA 921 (Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations), the term Accelerant Detection Canine (ADC) Teams is being replaced with Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams (IGL Canines). The reason for this is because canines cannot determine a person's intent when ignitable liquids are being used. If an ignitable liquid is used as an accelerant in a fire, then it may be understood that the fire is incendiary in nature. There are many plausible reasons why ignitable liquids are found in fire scenes that do not lead one to believe the fire would be incendiary in nature.

Our two IGL Canine Teams were deployed twice in the month of October. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus, we were unable to take part in any fire prevention canine demonstrations. This is always a busy month for our office regarding public education and our canine teams really look forward to this time of year and doing our part in promoting fire safety.

**Public Outreach:** BOI investigators assisted with one youth fire setter assessment in October.

**Training:** BOI members attended a virtual training on 2021 NFPA 921 – Chapter 18, Active Fire Protection Systems which was presented by the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI). This is part of a live monthly training series that started in May and runs through November and touches upon various aspects of fire investigations to include: NFPA 921 updates, fire patterns, safety, cause determination/classification, physical evidence/K9 handler teams and basic methodology/basic fire science. If anybody is interested in attending these trainings the information can be found at [www.firearson.com](http://www.firearson.com). There is a nominal

fee associated with each class and they can be taken as tested or untested. The modules that have already been delivered can be taken, just not in a live setting.

Investigators also participated in an in-service training on White Zone Hazmat requests and response and our unknown package transport protocol. Several on-line CFI Trainer modules were completed by our investigators and two members presented at the 183<sup>rd</sup> Police Recruit Academy. Our two investigators that are paramedics continue to maintain their continuing education hours for their certifications.

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

**State Building Permit System:** We processed 39 permit applications in the month of October.

**Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:** Our staff remains available for technical code assistance. We initiated 7 educational plan reviews and 5 healthcare plan reviews in the month of October.

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

**State Fire Code Update:** The evaluation of the substantial changes between the 2015 and 2018 editions of NFPA 1 and 101 has started. Our office is working with the Board of Fire Control and interested stakeholders to determine the impacts and determine and necessary amendments. Additional information is available on our website. We welcome input via [fmo@dos.nh.gov](mailto:fmo@dos.nh.gov)

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

**ESF-4**

Deputy Danielle Cole has been continuing to oversee SEOC ESF-4 desk operations. This emergency support function is dedicated to supporting first responders in providing the most up to date unprotected exposure information, member testing location information, transportation of specimens, alternative lodging requests and inquiries of specimens at the Public Health Lab.

Since the beginning of the state of emergency, the ESF-4 (Firefighting) desk has:

- Answered 1,140 calls for assistance
- Assisted 93 first responders with alternative lodging accommodations
- Provided 1100 front line workers with exposure/quarantine/testing guidance

- Documented 1857 activities performed in WebEOC. These activities include, fulfilling requests for PPE from first responders, answering questions related to exposures, quarantine, housing, code related questions and more
- Produced and distributed (18) first responder informational documents

**The ESF-4 desk phone number is 223-3718 and is answered 24/7 during the State of Emergency. If you have members that need to be tested and you want first responder priority through the Public Health Lab, please be sure to use the PHL Requisition form and transport the specimen via your agency to the lab.**

**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](mailto:James.H.Stone@dos.nh.gov). If you are from a smaller department please try to partner with a neighboring community for this training.

Our part time Hazardous Materials Coordinator will be available in a response capacity to advise the North Country area chiefs should there be an incident. In the event that an asset response is required in that area the FMO on-duty supervisor will contact an established team to respond. The FMO will cover the cost of the response. This MOU has been approved and will be presented at the next Governor and Council meeting for the final step in the process in December.

**Public Education:**

WMUR's Chronicle episode about fire safety aired during fire prevention week and reinforced several simple, but life-saving messages. We would like to express our appreciation to the Tilton-Northfield Fire Department and WMUR for allowing us to collaborate with them on this project.

Our Public Education Section will be hosting a side-by-side sprinkler trailer burn, sponsored by NFSA at noon on Wednesday November 18<sup>th</sup>. The event will take place at the NHFST drill yard, this is an outside event, however masks and social distancing is required on all DOS property.

**Fireworks:**

The annual Permissible Fireworks Advisory Committee meeting was held with the licensed NH retail stores in the state. The current emergency removal order of the Excalibur product remains in effect by the DOS Commissioners office until a determination has been made by the CPSC. There were no firework product recalls this

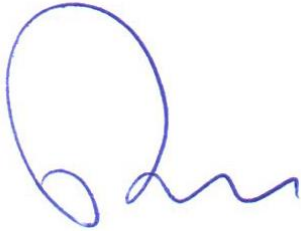
year, and the storeowners did not bring forward any issues to be discussed. There was positive feedback from the stores and a committee member in reference to their interactions with the new personnel as well as new inspection procedures that are being used.

The restrictions placed on outdoor burning have been lifted recently, as well as the use of fireworks being temporarily banned in some municipalities. The state continues to monitor the weather conditions as they pertain to outdoor burning.

We continue to license fireworks operators, as well as conduct required inspections to all retail stores and as well as explosives product storage. We are available by phone, drop box, email and standard mail, at this time the building is not allowing public entry.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report. If you have any questions about our office, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at (603) 931-9538. Be careful out there.

Yours in fire and life safety,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul J. Parisi', with a large loop at the start and a wavy tail.

Paul J. Parisi  
State Fire Marshal