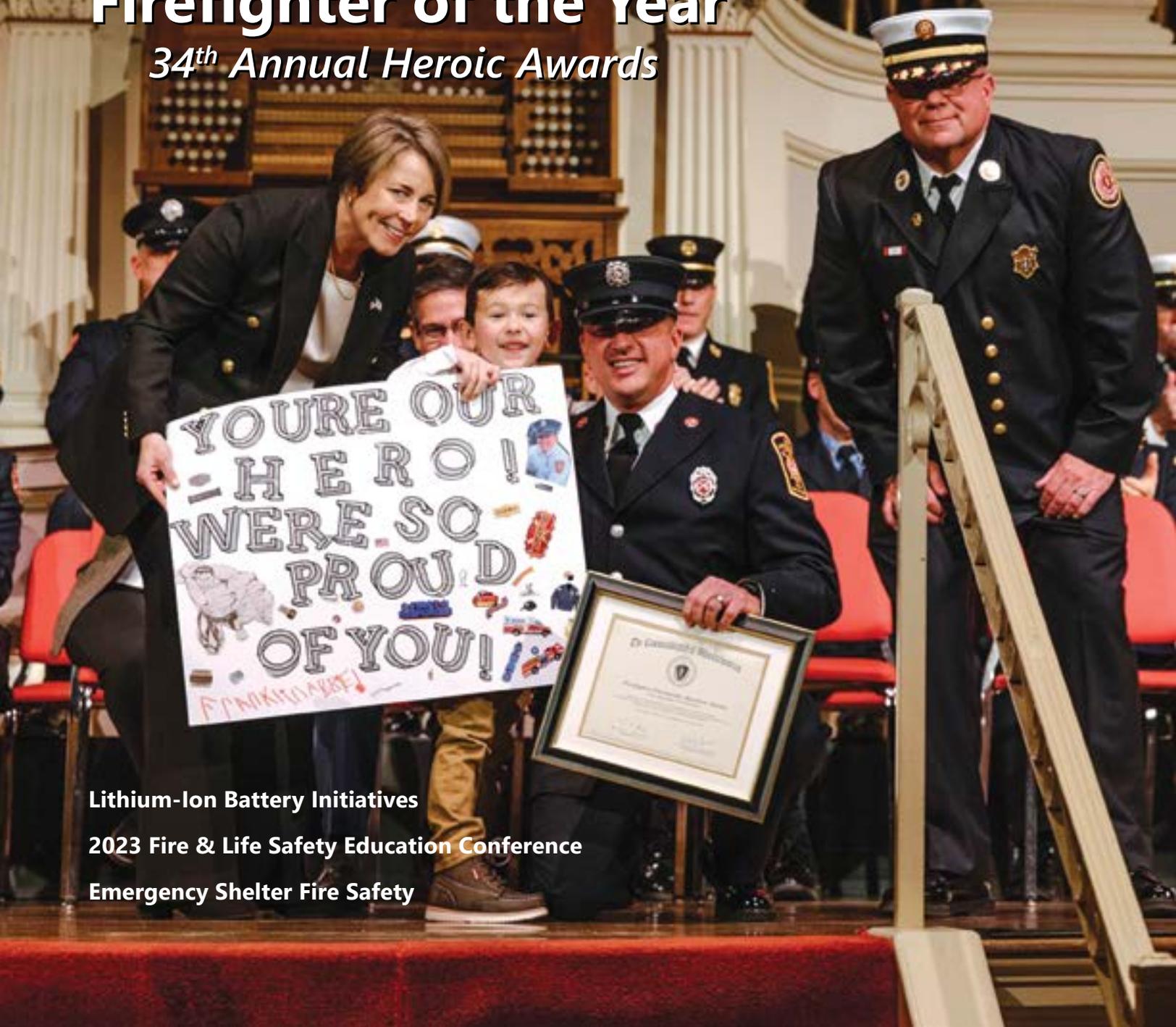


# All Hands Herald

Massachusetts Department of Fire Services

January 2024

## Firefighter of the Year *34<sup>th</sup> Annual Heroic Awards*



Lithium-Ion Battery Initiatives

2023 Fire & Life Safety Education Conference

Emergency Shelter Fire Safety

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The *All Hands Herald* is published three times a year by the Department of Fire Services. Our title incorporates the traditional fire service meaning of all hands working to extinguish a fire. In this publication, all hands is DFS staff providing information, training, and assistance with issues that affect all levels of the fire service.

Let us know how you like the *All Hands Herald* and what we can do to make it even more useful to you – our dedicated fire service members and customers.

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Photos by DFS staff.

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In September, fire and life safety educators gathered to share knowledge, build partnerships, and recognize the Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year.

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Thanks to Abby Baker, Cathleen Case, Scott Cluett, Derryl Dion, Paul Horgan, Brad Kwatcher, Tim Moore, Yarmouth Deputy Chief Jonathan E. Sawyer, Mark McCabe, Samantha Turco, and Julie Weinstein for their contributions to this issue.

# From the Fire Marshal

## Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month

Of all the hazards we face in the fire service, the greatest risk to firefighters' health and well-being is occupational cancer. DFS is observing Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month in January and I want to encourage all firefighters—call, volunteer, and career, active duty or retired—to take advantage of the screening services we offer. Early detection is crucial to our health, wellness, and survival. Learn more about our occupational cancer program, including the new mammograms and ultrasounds we offer, on page 10.

## A Thank You to Staff

Each fall, DFS coordinates two major events for the Massachusetts fire service: the Public Fire & Life Safety Education Conference in September and the Firefighter of the Year Awards in November. The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Pub Ed Conference was a valuable experience for nearly 230 fire safety educators and a well-deserved recognition for the Educator of the Year Award winner and runners-up, while the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Firefighter of the Year Awards ceremony was a wonderful opportunity to honor acts of extraordinary bravery, heroism, and service by Massachusetts firefighters.

Both of these events required months of planning and labor by staff across the agency, as well as coordination with many outside vendors, participants, and organizations. These efforts truly paid off. I've spoken to many people about both events over the past few months, and all of them were as impressed as I was. In particular, I would like to recognize the hard work and contributions of the Crib Room, Fire Safety Division, and Executive Office in making both the conference and ceremony so successful. You can read more about the Fire & Life Safety Conference on page 5 and Firefighter of the Year ceremony on page 2.

## Management Transitions

Speaking of DFS staff, please join me in welcoming two new members of our team and congratulating three more on their new assignments. At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, Joanne Gardiner is our new Deputy Director for Administration, while Dennis Ball has taken on the role of Deputy Director for Training. Joanne previously served as Director of the Municipal Police Training Committee's Boylston Regional Academy, and Dennis moved up from his prior role as the MFA's Recruit Program Coordinator. We have also been joined by Mike Duprez, formerly of the U.S. State Department and now our Deputy Director of Facilities, while Jeff Taylor has moved

from HVAC Technician to Facilities System and Preventative Maintenance Manager at our Stow campus. Finally, Jeff Winn has taken on a new role in the agency, departing the Academy to lead the Hazmat Division. Welcome to Joanne and Mike, and congratulations to Dennis, Jeff, and Jeff!

## ASHER Training

Last month, DFS and our colleagues at the Municipal Police Training Committee and the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center completed our fourth Active Attack Integrated Response train-the-trainer course. Some 50 law enforcement and fire/rescue instructors completed this course, which was held at Babson College in Wellesley. With support from the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, we have trained and certified 178 instructors from local and state agencies in the national standard for Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response during 2023. These instructors are now able to share their knowledge with responders in their departments and academies, including nearly 200 Massachusetts police officers and firefighters who have received the responder-level training. The AAIR courses are consistent with NFPA 3000 principles and represents the latest best practices in preparing for and responding to these devastating events. You can read more about our ongoing work in this area on page 8.

## Winter Fire Safety

The winter months are especially challenging for the fire service. Not only do we see an overall increase in fires starting in November, but the snow, ice, and freezing temperatures make fighting these fires more difficult and demanding. Please remember that DFS Rehab units are available to support you and your personnel as you face these conditions. Fire deaths also tend to rise in the winter: nearly 40% of last year's fatalities took place between January and March. Seasonal fire safety messaging can help residents take additional safety steps with home heating and other factors. Read more on page 16, and please stay safe this winter.



# 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Firefighter of the Year Awards

## 130 Firefighters from 22 Departments Recognized

On November 21, 2023, Governor Maura T. Healey and Public Safety Secretary Terrence M. Reidy joined State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine for the 34<sup>th</sup> annual Firefighter of the Year Awards ceremony. WCVB's Doug Meehan emceed the event at Mechanics Hall in Worcester.

“Each year, the Firefighter of the Year Awards recognize acts of bravery, heroism, and service that are truly remarkable—even by the remarkable standards set by

Massachusetts firefighters,” said Governor Healey. “From structure fires to rushing waters, this year’s recipients defied grave danger to protect lives and preserve property. It’s an honor to celebrate them as individuals and teams. They represent the very finest in a tradition of helping others in times of danger and crisis.”

“Massachusetts firefighters have an extraordinary capacity for bravery, technical knowledge, and kindness toward those in their greatest moment of need,” said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. “As a former mayor now serving in statewide office, my admiration of the fire service has only grown when I consider the varied, complex scenes they respond to every day across our 351 cities and towns. Congratulations to this year’s award recipients, and continued safety to those who do this work.”

“The Firefighter of the Year awards recognize and honor the heroes who serve our communities with unwavering courage, sacrifice, and compassion,” said Public Safety and Security Secretary Reidy. “These distinguished awards are reserved for those individuals who demonstrate exceptional bravery, risking personal safety and delivering life-saving service to rescue strangers from harm.”

“The firefighters we recognize today used every physical, mental, and technical skill available to them under some of the most extreme conditions imaginable,” said State Fire Marshal Davine. “They relied on their training, their teamwork, and their determination to get the job done. It’s my great honor to thank them for their service to the Commonwealth and their communities, and to congratulate them on this well-deserved recognition.”

Governor Healey, Secretary Reidy, and State Fire Marshal Davine presented eight medals of valor, 11 individual citations for meritorious conduct, 10 group citations for meritorious conduct, two Stephen D. Coan Fire Marshal’s Awards, and one Norman Knight Award for Excellence in Community Service to members of 22 Massachusetts fire departments. In total, 130 firefighters were recognized, primarily for lifesaving rescues performed individually and collectively by on- and off-duty firefighters at structure fires and crash sites.



Stephen D. Coan Fire Marshal Award recipient  
Dep. Chief David Levenson of Hingham.



Stephen D. Coan Fire Marshal Award recipients Dep. Chief  
Scott Albanese, Dep. Chief Jeff Marchetti of Brockton.



Norman Knight Award  
recipient Lt. Matthew Morin  
of Sunderland.

The Fire Marshal's Awards were presented in connection with two lengthy and complex operations. Brockton Deputy Chiefs Scott Albanese and Jeff Marchetti were recognized for their work at the February 7, 2023, 10-alarm fire at Signature Brockton Hospital, the largest response in that city's history. Hingham Deputy Chief David Levenson was recognized for his work overseeing and performing rescue operations during a mass casualty incident at the Apple Store in Hingham on November 21, 2022.

The Norman Knight Award for Excellence in Community Service was named for the philanthropist who raised and coordinated benefits for the families of countless fallen firefighters and police officers. The award was presented to Lieutenant Matthew Morin of the Sunderland Fire Department who helped develop a first responder training program that sets professional standards for respectfully and professionally interacting with members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

### Medals of Valor

- Holbrook: Lt. Andrew Johnson, FF/EMT Edward F. Baker Jr, FF/Paramedic Patrick Campbell, FF/Paramedic John M. Holland, FF/Paramedic David Martineau
- Lawrence: FF Paul King
- Nantucket: Capt. Nate Barber
- New Bedford: Lt. Steven Torres

### Individual Citations for Meritorious Conduct

- Chelmsford: FF Josh Abbott
- East Longmeadow (with West Springfield): FF/Paramedic Matthew Adams, FF/Paramedic Bryan Drury
- Everett: FF Michael O'Donnell, Private Ian Tweeddale
- Longmeadow: Dep. Chief Gerald Macsata
- Lynn (with New Bedford, Somerville, and Whitman): Lt. Mathew Reddy
- New Bedford (with Lynn, Somerville, and Whitman): FF William Cabral
- Somerville (with Lynn, New Bedford, and Whitman): Lt. Jay Colbert
- West Springfield (with East Longmeadow): FF/Paramedic Nick LaPalme
- Whitman (with Lynn, New Bedford, and Somerville): FF/Paramedic Richard MacKinnon

### Group Citations for Meritorious Conduct

- Ashland (With Hopkinton): Lt. Anthony Duca
- Brockton: Capt. Michael McKenna, Lt. James Dubeau, FF Ryan Doherty, FF Elisha Eleyi, FF Corey Lacey,



Medal of Valor recipients Lt. Andrew Johnson, FF/EMT Edward F. Baker Jr, and FF/Paramedics Patrick Campbell, John M. Holland, and David Martineau of Holbrook.



Medal of Valor recipient FF Paul King of Lawrence.



Medal of Valor recipient Lt. Steven Torres of New Bedford.

- FF Edward Lee,
- FF James Nee
- Chelsea: Capt. Michael Gurska, FF Cristian D. Avellaneda, FF Steven Waxman
- Chicopee: Dep. Chief Peter Jerusik, Capt. Robert McQueen, Lt. Robert M. Tetreault, Lt. Kirsten Therrien, FF Adam Anischik,



Medal of Valor recipient Capt. Nate Barber of Nantucket.

Continued on page 12

# Lithium-Ion Battery Fires

## Resources for the Fire Service



Derryl Dion of DFS addresses the Symposium.

Firefighters across the country are responding to more and more fires that start with lithium-ion batteries. In New York City alone last year, 17 people lost their lives in fires that started with these high energy density batteries.

In Massachusetts, the Department of Fire Services is taking steps to address these fires.

Massachusetts fire departments report their fire data to DFS using the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS), which mirrors the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). The NFIRS tool gathers data on battery fires but does not distinguish between various types. Fires may also be coded by the type of device rather than the type of battery, missing the factor that makes lithium-ion battery fires particularly dangerous. To address this, the DFS Fire Safety Division developed a resource guide for coding lithium-ion battery fires and Hazmat incidents in MFIRS.

The Fire Safety Division also created a checklist known as Form FP-031 for use when fire investigations reveal that

The Department of Fire Services is taking steps to address fires that start with lithium-ion batteries through increased education and data collection.

a lithium-ion battery may have been involved in a fire incident. The form helps track the make and model of the device, where it was purchased, whether it was charging at the time of the fire, and information on the battery itself. The State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office has begun using the checklist and State Fire Marshal Jon Davine has requested that local fire investigators use it as well.

The FP-031 was announced at a day-long Lithium-Ion Battery Symposium held at DFS headquarters in Stow on October 13, 2023. The event brought a dozen federal, state, and local subject matter experts together to discuss data collection and reporting, code enforcement, fire investigation, environmental concerns, fire suppression, and other relevant topics. About 100 chief officers attended the event, which can be viewed on the DFS YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/DFSOSFM](http://www.youtube.com/DFSOSFM). In November, DFS hosted NFPA Northeast Regional Director and Fire Investigator Bob Duval, who delivered a presentation

on lithium-ion battery-powered micromobility devices, electric vehicles, and battery energy storage systems. And in December, Hazard3 delivered classroom and hands-on training at all three DFS campuses to prepare firefighters for emergencies involving lithium-ion batteries and related devices.

"We intend to continue supporting the fire service with lithium-ion battery training and data collection resources in the months and years ahead," said State Fire Marshal Davine.

To review the lithium-ion battery fire investigation checklist, MFIRS coding tips, and public education resources, visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *Lithium-Ion Battery Safety*.

**Lithium-Ion Battery Fires: Investigation Checklist (FP-031)**

Fill out this form with the most probable information based on the initial results of the investigation.

Fire Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Time: \_\_\_\_\_ FID # \_\_\_\_\_  
Incident # \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Number \_\_\_\_\_ Street/Highway \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_

**Equipment Information**

Laptop Computer  
 Micromobility Device (hoverboard, scooter, bike)  
 Cellphone, Tablet, or eReader  
 Power Tool  
 Uninterrupted Power Supply  
 Toy (RC car, drone)  
 Vehicle (car, truck, boat, plane)  
 Energy Storage System  
 Battery Charger  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the battery charging at the time of the fire? Yes  No

**Battery Information**

Brand: \_\_\_\_\_  
Size (Voltage): \_\_\_\_\_  
Did the battery cause the fire? Yes  No   
Where was battery or equipment purchased? \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the battery or equipment purchased online? Yes  No

**Casualties**

Civilian: Injuries \_\_\_\_\_ Deaths \_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Service: Injuries \_\_\_\_\_ Deaths \_\_\_\_\_  
FD Case # \_\_\_\_\_

Report by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rank, Name, Department or Agency

Submit the form by email, FAX or mail.  
Email to: [fireinvestigation@dfs.state.ma.us](mailto:fireinvestigation@dfs.state.ma.us)  
FAX to: (978) 567-3299  
Mail to: Department of Fire Services, P.O. Box 1025, State Road, Stow, MA 02775, Attn: Fire Safety Division

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Form FP-031



Speakers from local, state, and federal agencies presented on a wide variety of topics at the Lithium-Ion Battery Symposium held at DFS headquarters in Stow on October 13, 2023.

# 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire & Life Safety Education Conference

The Department of Fire Services held the 28<sup>th</sup> Public Fire & Life Safety Education Conference September 20 and 21, 2023, at the Southbridge Hotel & Conference Center in Southbridge, Massachusetts. About 230 fire and life safety educators, fire prevention officers, teachers, care specialists, and others gathered to share knowledge, build partnerships, and recognize the Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year. This year's theme was "Reaching for Safety, One Person at a Time," reminding participants that educators need to reach everyone to create truly safe communities.

The conference included 30 hours of workshops and presentations covering topics from safety for older adults to lithium-ion battery fire hazards. Attendees heard from speakers including Jim Pauley, president and CEO of the National Fire Protection Association about fire prevention and public education; Hillary Dubois Farquharson, Amanda Sandoval, and Gabrielle Sullivan from High Rock Treatment Center about substance use prevention; Lieutenant Matthew Morin of the Sunderland Fire Department about diversity, equity, and communicating effectively with members of the LGBTQ+ community; and Deputy Chief Dan Murray of the New York City Fire Department about adapting to an electrified future. Additionally, DFS coordinated a Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) train-the-trainer course at the Southbridge conference site the day before the conference opened.

## Educator of the Year Award

The Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year Award honors an individual or a team for their commitment to making our world safer from fire and other preventable injuries. It recognizes those who have shown excellence in educating



Left to right: Sunderland Lieutenant Matthew Morin, Maynard Fire Chief Angela Lawless (representing Maynard Fire Captain Mike Parr), State Fire Marshal Jon Davine, Nantucket Captain Joseph Townsend, and Billerica Captain William Paskiewicz.

their community and demonstrated outstanding leadership, teamwork, creativity, and perseverance.

This year's award was presented to Maynard Fire Captain Mike Parr. He was one of five fire and life safety educators nominated for the award. Captain Parr launched a YouTube channel for the Maynard Fire Department to reach residents with fire and life safety messages during the COVID-19 pandemic. He wrote, produced, and published five episodes of *This Old Firehouse*, which covered fire and life safety tips as well as an introduction to department operations.

Captain Parr also revised Maynard's fire safety presentations for schoolchildren, switching from a large-group format to smaller, classroom-sized presentations that provided age-appropriate safety lessons and maximized communication with students. Maynard Fire Chief Angela Lawless, who accepted the award on Captain Parr's behalf, said that he also increased the Department's visibility and accessibility to older adults by collaborating with the Council on Aging and senior housing complexes. His presentations to these groups addressed accident and injury prevention as well as fire safety. This year's nominees also included:

- Captain William Paskiewicz, Billerica Fire Department
- Captain Joseph Townsend, Nantucket Fire Department
- Firefighter Stephen Joyce, Sturbridge Fire Department
- Lieutenant Matthew Morin, Sunderland Fire Department

## Presenters Wanted for Conference 2024

DFS is recruiting workshop presenters for the 2024 conference. Are you or someone you know interested in sharing your knowledge and experience with fire and life safety educators from across the Commonwealth? Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *Annual Fire and Life Safety Education Conference* to submit your proposal.



# New Emergency Shelter Fire Safety in 8 Languages

English • Cape Verdean Creole • Chinese • Haitian Creole • Portuguese • Russian • Spanish • Swahili

## Emergency Shelters

Fire safety is vitally important for everyone, including people living in hotels and other emergency shelters. To support the safety of newcomers who might have limited English proficiency, the Department of Fire Services has developed a new printable flyer geared specifically to people living in these occupancies. The flyer covers smoke alarms, cooking safety, and escape planning, and it's available in eight languages: English, Cape Verdean Creole, Traditional Chinese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swahili. Fire prevention officers and safety educators are encouraged to share the flyers with those living in or operating these occupancies. You can find the flyers at [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs). Search for *DFS Fire Safety Education Flyers* or *Emergency Shelter Fire Safety*.

## Fire Safety for Newcomers

Many Massachusetts residents outside the shelter system speak languages other than English. For these communities, DFS has general fire safety tips available in many languages. Our booklet *Fire Safety for Newcomers* includes English, Traditional Chinese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Single language, printable flyers with the same information are available in these languages and in Farsi, Khmer, Kinyarwanda, Pashto, Swahili, and Vietnamese. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs). Search for *DFS Fire Safety Education Flyers* or *Fire Safety for Newcomers*.

## Smoke Alarms, Cooking, and Escape Planning

### Smoke alarms are important, life-saving devices.

- Smoke alarms do not have cameras and are not used for surveillance.
- Smoke alarms warn people if there is a fire. If you hear the alarm, leave the building immediately.
- Smoke alarms help keep you, your family, and your neighbors safe. Never disable a smoke alarm.



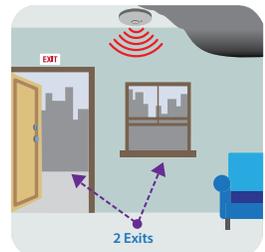
### Cooking in a bedroom is dangerous because it could start a fire.

- Do not use hot plates, pressure cookers, slow cookers, or other electric cooking devices except in a kitchen.
- Bedding, clothing, and other materials can catch fire if they are too close to these items.
- If you do not have a kitchen, you may use a microwave to heat food.
- Plug the microwave directly into a wall outlet, not an extension cord or power strip.
- Do not put anything made of metal into a microwave.



### Get out, stay out, and call 9-1-1 if a fire starts.

- You could have less than three minutes to escape a fire.
- Have an exit plan for your building. Look for two ways out. One of these may be a window if you are on the ground floor. Set a family meeting place outside.
- Everyone in your family should know both ways out of the building and where to meet.
- If there is smoke, crawl on the ground where the air is clearer.
- Once you are outside, call 9-1-1 for help.



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11/23

Images courtesy of the U.S. Fire Administration

To support people living in hotels and other emergency shelters with limited English proficiency, DFS developed a printable flyer on fire safety. It covers smoke alarms, cooking safety, and escape planning.



# Code Compliance and Licensing News

## Fireworks Shooter's License Permanently Revoked

A Boston man's fireworks certificate of competency was permanently revoked after he stored dozens of boxes and trash bags full of fireworks in two cars for weeks on end last summer.

"Massachusetts has among the lowest rates of fireworks injuries in the nation because we strictly regulate these dangerous devices," said State Fire Marshal Jon Davine. "Every year, fire service leaders urge residents to leave fireworks to the professionals. This was not professional conduct."

The Department of Fire Services' Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit referred Frederick P. Barbetta for an administrative licensing hearing last year. The case was brought forth after authorities in Boston recovered hundreds of fireworks from his vehicles, which were parked in a dense residential section of Charlestown. The explosive devices were contained in nearly five dozen cardboard boxes and trash bags piled haphazardly upon one another in the backs of a van and minivan.

The October 11, 2023, hearing established that Barbetta violated two provisions of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code. Specifically, the hearing officer determined that Barbetta improperly kept fireworks on and around his property despite a requirement that they be stored securely in a fixed or portable storage magazine. The hearing officer also determined that Barbetta kept these fireworks for personal use and not for use in a properly permitted display.

DFS code compliance officers testified that the improper storage of the devices posed a grave risk of personal injury, property damage, and worse to Barbetta, his neighbors, and first responders.

Anyone aware of fireworks displays being conducted under Barbetta's former certificate, FW-004459, is asked to contact the DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit at 978-567-3375.

## Unlicensed Hood Cleaners Believed to be Working in Southeastern Massachusetts

The State Fire Marshal's office is asking local fire departments, restaurant owners, and community members to be aware of two unlicensed commercial kitchen exhaust cleaners who may be working in southeastern Massachusetts. Fire prevention officers are encouraged to remind businesses that they can check the status of any DFS licensee at <https://madfs.mylicense.com/verification>.

### Antonio Borges

Antonio Borges of Fall River, who previously did business



Hundreds of explosive devices packed into a van parked in a dense residential section of Charlestown.

as Borges Cleaning Pro, permanently surrendered his certificate of competency on September 9, 2022, following multiple investigations and licensing actions against him. The actions included a six-month suspension in 2019 after a significant buildup of grease was observed in a Wareham restaurant's cooking exhaust system; another six-month suspension in 2021 for similar conditions in a North Attleboro restaurant; and a four-year suspension in February 2022 for performing regulated work in Mashpee, Swansea, and Wareham while the 2021 suspension was in effect.

In September 2022, fire officials learned that he was continuing to perform regulated work in violation of his suspension. At least eight incidents of unauthorized work were documented in Dedham, Fall River, and New Bedford, leading to a cease-and-desist order from the Department of Fire Services. The Fall River Police Department filed a criminal complaint against him, but the status of his Bristol County prosecution was unavailable at press time.

On September 29, 2022, Borges admitted to the violations and surrendered his certificates of competency and registration rather than proceed to a hearing. The Department of Fire Services permanently prohibited him from performing any hood cleaning or inspection work and from applying for any reinstatement of his certificates.

In November 2023, however, DFS began receiving information from local fire departments, police, and license holders that Borges was again servicing commercial cooking exhaust systems using other parties' service tags. These reports remain under investigation at this writing. Anyone aware of commercial kitchen hood cleaning or inspection being conducted under Borges' former certificates, HC-000096 or HCI-000058, or by Borges under any other certificate number, is asked to contact the DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit at 978-567-3375.

### Jose Gomez Gutierrez

Also in November, DFS received information that Jose B.

*Continued on page 9*



In 2022, Secretary Terrence M. Reidy of the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security directed Massachusetts' public safety training facilities to adopt NFPA 3000 as our framework for Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) training. With the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response (ALERRT) Training Center and our EOPSS partner agencies, the Department of Fire Services made great progress in meeting this mandate in 2023.

### Active Attack Integrated Response (AAIR)

The Active Attack Integrated Response curriculum is designed to improve the survivability of an active shooter incident by stressing collaboration among police, fire, EMS, and dispatch personnel during the hostile event. The AAIR trainings are delivered at two levels. The train-the-trainer courses are for instructors at local and state agencies, from police and fire departments to statewide academies, while the responder-level courses are taught by certified AAIR instructors to front-line police, fire, and EMS personnel.

Throughout 2023, DFS coordinated with the ALERRT Center and the Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC) to deliver four AAIR train-the-trainer courses across Massachusetts. These five-day courses have helped more than 175 law enforcement and fire/rescue instructors develop the knowledge and skills necessary to teach the AAIR curriculum to their fellow firefighters, police officers, and EMTs. Most recently, fire/rescue personnel from the MFA, Boston, Lynn, Massport, Norwood, Rockland, Sutton, and Wellesley were certified as AAIR instructors following a December delivery in Wellesley.

After completing the 40-hour train-the-trainer course, certified AAIR instructors can then go on to teach the 16-hour responder-level course. Nearly 200 firefighters and police officers were certified as AAIR responders in 2023. In the most recent delivery, public safety personnel from Granville, Southwick, Westfield, West Springfield, and Barnes Air National Guard participated in a November responder course at the Powder Mill School in Southwick. To accommodate call and volunteer personnel, this class was conducted over two weeknights and one weekend day.

### Other Recent Developments

In June 2023, the DFS ASHER program acquired a former Special Operations trailer that was repurposed by DFS Engineering staff to accommodate training equipment such as wound kits, extrication devices, ballistic protective equipment, and classroom supplies. This unique trailer has a small incident command office which can be utilized to support dispatchers and communication specialists for training scenarios. Look for the ASHER Trailer this year as it supports upcoming program deliveries across the state.

In September, DFS coordinated a delivery of the ALERRT Center's Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) train-the-trainer program in advance of the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire & Life Safety Education Conference in Southbridge. CRASE is designed for delivery by local first responder agencies to community partners, and the Southbridge course trained more than 60 instructors to provide their civilian partners with guidance on what to do if faced with an active attack threat.

Also in September, the MFA launched an updated online ASHER awareness course through the DFS Learning Management System (LMS). This 90-minute course, which is open to all LMS users, carries 1.5 hours of OEMS credits and educates first responders on ASHER roles and responsibilities while operating under the National Incident Management System.

And in October, ASHER representatives from EOPSS, DFS, MPTC, State Police, and MEMA traveled to the ALERRT Center's annual conference at Texas State University to share their experience in building a statewide ASHER program from the ground up. The team met with ALERRT leadership to discuss building a command-level incident management program. Working with experts across the nation, the ASHER team hopes to develop a curriculum that will support local efforts to mitigate large-scale hostile events, from the first arriving personnel to whole community recovery.



Graduates of the fall 2023 AAIR train-the-trainer course in Southwick included public safety personnel from Granville, Southwick, Westfield, West Springfield, and Barnes Air National Guard.

# DFS Awarded Homeland Security Funds

## for Preparedness and Resiliency Projects

Last fall, the Healey-Driscoll Administration awarded more than \$21 million in FEMA funding to state agencies and regional homeland security advisory councils to enhance the Commonwealth's preparedness and resiliency. Through the Office of Grants and Research, DFS was awarded more than \$300,000 for three important projects: homemade explosives and post-blast investigation training, rapid deployment robots, and situational awareness drones.

### Homemade Explosives and Post-Blast Investigations

The Homeland Security grants will fund training on homemade explosives and post-blast investigations. Twelve one-day courses will train approximately 480 Massachusetts first responders to identify and disrupt the manufacture of homemade explosives and respond safely and effectively in a post-blast environment. An additional three-day course will train about 25 students in forensic investigation skills for a post-blast environment, including documenting the scene, processing evidence, and presenting findings in courtroom testimony.

### Rapid Deployment Robots

The grants will also finance five rapid-deployment robots for the Massachusetts State Police Bomb Squad, four of which will replace existing units that are 15 years old. These robots are used for initial assessment and

investigation of potentially explosive or hazardous devices. Unlike the more complex robots that the Bomb Squad uses, these rapid deployment units need no setup. They can be thrown through doorways or over barriers to get close to a perceived threat quickly.

These robots are used for observation only in rapid situational assessment. They allow Bomb Squad technicians to make fast decisions about how to protect themselves and the public, and what additional resources are needed. The robots work well in small or crowded spaces, including Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response. They will be deployed on Bomb Squad vehicles, providing the shortest possible response time to every area of the state.

### Situational Awareness Drones

Finally, the grants will fund three new drones and two command center screens for viewing drone footage remotely. The State Police Bomb Squad will use them to maintain situational

awareness in complex or dynamic situations involving hostile actors or potentially explosive devices. They will allow personnel to maintain a secure perimeter and gather information about an area and/or obstacles before K-9s or robots are deployed. The drones and viewing screens will be located strategically on the service vehicles of Bomb Squad technicians who are certified drone pilots and deployed as needed across the Commonwealth.



## Code Compliance and Licensing News, continued from page 7

Gomez Gutierrez of North Providence, RI, may be servicing commercial kitchen exhaust systems without a license. Gutierrez has never held a hood cleaning certificate of competency or registration in Massachusetts. Based on reports from the North Attleborough Fire Department, DFS code compliance officers believe he may be using tags that bear the certificate number of a



now-deceased license holder.

Anyone with information on regulated work conducted by Gomez Gutierrez, possibly under the business names DJM Kitchen Hood, DJM Hood Cleaning, DGZ Hood Cleaning, and/or DGZ Hood Service Cleaning, is asked to contact the DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit at 978-567-3375.

# January is Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month

## *Mammograms and Ultrasounds Added to Screening Program*

January is Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month, and the Department of Fire Services has added mammograms and ultrasounds to the complement of free, early-detection cancer screenings available to Massachusetts firefighters.

State Fire Marshal Jon Davine announced the new mammogram option in October 2023, marking the beginning of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. These and other screenings are currently available at five locations across Massachusetts, and mobile options are also available for certain tests.

“Firefighters are at greater risk of developing cancer, developing it at younger ages, and receiving a late diagnosis than the public they protect,” State Fire Marshal Davine said. “This includes the growing number of women firefighters in Massachusetts and across the nation.”

An April 2023 article in *Frontiers in Public Health* found that breast cancer accounted for more than 25% of cancer diagnoses among women firefighters who took part in a 2019–2020 survey. Most of these cases were



*Needham Fire Department cancer screening event.*

discovered when seeking medical care for symptoms rather than during routine or cancer-specific screening.

In 2022, nearly 75% of the names added to the IAFF Fallen Fire Fighters Memorial represented occupational cancer deaths. Firefighter health insurance often does not cover cancer screenings at the age or frequency appropriate to their risk, if at all. To address this serious health concern, DFS works with volunteers and contracted

## Yarmouth Deputy Chief Jonathan E. Sawyer's Story

I had an annual physical with my primary care doctor in July 2023. I shared my concern that as a firefighter, I was at increased risk for many cancers, and I had never been to a dermatologist. I told the doctor that I was signed up for skin cancer screening through the MFA. My doctor offered to check me for skin cancer on the spot. He found nothing suspicious after a quick body exam.

On September 1, I went to my MFA skin cancer screening appointment at the Brewster Fire Department. I filled out a short form, met Dr. Kannler, and had a quick education session about the program. Dr. Kannler scanned my skin and circled two moles on my back. She took pictures of them with my phone and told me to have them removed.

On October 5, my primary care doctor removed both moles. Ten days later, my doctor called to say that both



moles were melanoma. The next day I met with my new dermatologist who explained the pathology reports and gave me an education about melanoma. Both of my moles were shallow, and for melanoma this is good news. On November 15 a surgeon removed more skin from the area of the moles. Pathology reports later showed that they removed all the cancer. I will see my dermatologist every three months for a year, then twice a year and once a year after that.

I am so grateful for the work Dr. Kannler does and equally grateful to the MFA for sponsoring this important screening!

To my fellow firefighters, this screening is free and it took less than an hour from my day. It is available to active and retired firefighters. I urge you to sign up today!



vendors through the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy to provide skin cancer and oral cancer screenings to any interested firefighter, and chest computed tomography (CT) scans, prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood tests, mammograms, and ultrasounds to eligible firefighters.

DFS staff are wearing lavender each Thursday in January to promote awareness of occupational cancer and show support for survivors during Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. MFA Program Coordinator Abby Baker is organizing screenings at local fire departments with volunteer dermatologists and a nurse practitioner, and they hope to screen about 250 firefighters.

“Cancer awareness, prevention, and early detection are key survival tools for firefighters,” State Fire Marshal Davine said. “If you’re working in or retired from the fire service, talk to your primary care provider about your increased risk of cancer. And if you’re a medical professional, please familiarize yourself with the grave risk that occupational

cancer poses to your firefighter patients.”

To learn more about cancer awareness, prevention and early detection, including upcoming skin cancer screenings and information on occupational cancer for fire service and medical professionals, visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *Occupational Cancer in the Fire Service*.



DFS staff wore pink to promote Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, when DFS added free mammograms to its occupational cancer screening program.

## Nurse Practitioner Cathleen Case – Volunteer

*Nurse Practitioner Cathleen Case has been volunteering with the DFS occupational cancer program since January 2023. Over the course of a year, she has become instrumental in the program's success and efficiency. She described her experience for us.*

After working as a nurse practitioner for 27 years, I found myself thinking about how to contribute to society in my next chapter. My husband, former Littleton Fire Chief Alex McCurdy, showed me the January 2023 edition of the *All Hands Herald* where Dr. Christine Kannler received the Fire Marshal's Award for her work spearheading firefighter skin cancer screenings through the Department of Fire Services and the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy. Since dermatology was my specialty for the last 23 years, I was very interested in joining such a meaningful project. Alex reached out to the State Fire Marshal's office, I received a call a short time later, and I had my first screening assignment the next week.

The screenings I do are with physician partners, including Dr. Kannler and others I know and trust. This work is important because the fire service community faces an especially high occupational cancer risk. Helping the people who help us every day is something I can do with pride and



Abby Baker of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, Nurse Practitioner Cathy Case, Dr. Hyemin Pomerantz, and Firefighter Joanie Cullinan are flanked by Ashland firefighters at a DFS skin cancer screening last year.

satisfaction. Fortunately, I have not found any melanomas, but other more common skin cancers have been noted and addressed. I enjoy sharing my knowledge and experience, teaching and reinforcing sun safety awareness, and talking to all the firefighters.

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to share my expertise in skin cancer screening and detection, and I encourage every firefighter to take advantage of the Academy's cancer programs. They could save your life!

# Busload of Young Heroes Honored

*in Lynnfield*

On November 29, 2023, State Fire Marshal Jon Davine joined leaders from the Lynnfield Fire and Police Departments and Lynnfield Middle School to recognize a busload of Young Heroes. On October 7, students on Bus E were on their way home from school when their bus driver was stung by an insect and had a reaction. The driver pulled over safely and asked the students for help. Several students calmly called 9-1-1 from their cell phones, providing the information that first responders needed to give medical aid and assist with family notifications. Great job, kids!

The Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) helps firefighters teach important life safety lessons to school-age kids across Massachusetts. Do you know a youngster who has made a difference by putting those



lessons to use in an emergency? Help us recognize them! Contact Fire Data & Public Education Coordinator Sheryl Hedlund at [sheryl.hedlund@mass.gov](mailto:sheryl.hedlund@mass.gov).

## Firefighter of the Year, *continued from page 3*

- FF Preston Bailey, FF Joe Berge, FF Drew Brzoska, FF Nathan Carvalho, FF Rember Wildami Parada, FF John Skaza, FF Matthew Turgeon, FF Tyler R. Vaccaro
- Hingham (with Rockland and Weymouth): Dep. Chief David Levenson, Dep. Chief Louis Lachance, Capt. Nathaniel H. Winnie Sr, Lt. Chris DiNapoli, Lt. Michael Giese, Lt. Tom Jacintho, Lt. Sarah Joy, Lt. Dave Nickerson, FF Alex Bailey, FF/Paramedic Thomas Betschart, FF Angela Clancy, FF Tim Holmes, FF/Paramedic Kevin McMasters, FF Nichole Pinkus, FF Pat Sheridan, FF Ryan Twombly
- Hopkinton (with Ashland): Dep. Chief Gary Daugherty Jr, Lt. John Sheridan, FF Jim Gosselin, FF Maxwell Hoadley, FF Douglas R. Lewis III, FF Jarrod Taranto
- Nantucket: Dep. Chief Robert G. Bates Jr. (Ret.), Dep. Chief Sean Mitchell, Capt. Jeffrey Allen (Ret.), Capt. Nate Barber, Call Capt. Earl C Eldridge, Capt. Francis M. Hanlon, Capt. Charles Kymer, Capt. Kevin Ramos, Capt. Joe Townsend, FF Dave Angelastro, FF Beau Barber, FF Jason Barker, FF Ivo Baychev, FF Mario Cameron, FF Matthew J. Canty, FF Germano Chatti, Call FF Mac Davis, FF Ethan Fey, FF Michael Finnegan, FF Christopher Gould, FF Chris Holland, FF Scott Holmes, FF Alana Macey, FF Mack McGrath, FF Shawn Monaco (Ret.), FF David Pekarcik, FF Shane Perry, FF Corey Ray, FF Alex Rezendes
- New Bedford: Capt. Michael Dillon, Lt. Ernest Letendre, FF Kyle Martin, FF Jonathan Parkin, FF Renald Russo III
- New Bedford: District Chief Steven Beaulieu, District Chief Gary Raposa, Lt. Jason Beaulieu, Lt. Kevin

- Farnworth, Lt. Daniel Jackson, FF Jason Barker, FF Nicholas Corvi, FF Jesse Andrade, FF Bryce Fortes, FF Kenneth Letourneau, FF Mark Pacheco, FF Derek Santos
- New Bedford: District Chief Scott Gomes, Capt. Kenneth A. Silva Jr, Temp Lt. Marco Delima, Temp Lt. Brandon Medeiros, Lt. Louis Miranda, Lt. Steven Torres, FF Moises Rodriguez
- Rockland (with Hingham and Weymouth): Dep. Chief Thomas L. Heaney
- Stoneham: FF Andrew Chabak, FF Mike Paone, FF Nick Rolli
- Weymouth (with Hingham and Rockland): Dep. Chief Steven Murray, Lt. James Patrick Marcella, FF Jimmy Irrizarry, FF Eric Murray, FF Brad L. Sherrick

### Stephen D. Coan Fire Marshal Award

- Brockton: Dep. Chief Scott Albanese, Dep. Chief Jeff Marchetti
- Hingham: Dep. Chief David Levenson

### Norman Knight Award for Excellence in Community Service

- Sunderland: Lt. Matthew Morin

Since their inception in 1990, the Firefighter of the Year Awards have grown from a simple ceremony to the premier annual event for the Massachusetts fire service, honoring truly remarkable acts of courage, service, and sacrifice by the Commonwealth's firefighters and recognizing their invaluable contributions to the communities they serve.

# Structural Collapse Rescue Technician Training

*Two-day Modules Now Available*

In October 2022, the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy debuted its Structural Collapse Rescue Technician (SCRT) course at the Department of Fire Services' Bridgewater campus. The eight-day curriculum has attracted wide interest from fire/rescue personnel across Massachusetts, going far beyond the technical rescue community.

Students have noted that they use the skills from the SCRT program in their everyday work. But not every interested student can attend an eight-day program. To accommodate those with strong interest but limited time and flexibility, the MFA's Technical Rescue Training Program developed three modular programs focused on specific aspects of structural collapse rescue.

## Three Modular Programs

Each of these two-day modules includes half a day of lecture and one and a half days of practical work.

**1. Shoring.** Shoring includes using lumber and mechanical struts to hold up partially collapsed walls, floors, ceilings, doors, and windows, reducing the risk of further collapse and allowing responders to conduct search and rescue safely. Tools include electric and gas-powered saws and manual and pneumatic palm nail guns.



- 2. Breaching and Breaking.** This program includes breaking up large pieces of concrete, and cutting and burning through steel to access the inside of a simulated collapsed structure. Students gain experience with tools including heavy-duty drills, saws, rebar cutters, Petrogen and oxygen/acetylene torches, and hydraulic jackhammers.
- 3. Lifting and Moving.** This program includes calculating the weight of heavy objects, learning proper techniques for moving different sized objects, and determining which of several techniques (including levers, air bags, and cranes) is appropriate for moving objects. Students also learn to secure a load of debris with concrete bolts, shackles, and rigging material so that a crane can safely move debris away from a search area. Instruction on working with crane operators is included.

## Technical Rescue is for Every Firefighter

Has your department removed people trapped under a motor vehicle or heavy machinery? Has your department responded to a vehicle into a building? Technical rescue has become a fundamental part of the modern fire service mission. These two-day modules make technical rescue skills accessible to every firefighter, especially those with limited time and resources or who need a skill refresher.

While the two-day modules present some of the same skills taught in the eight-day Structural Collapse Technician curriculum, they do not count toward the full program or certification. The eight-day Structural Collapse Technician Training, which is also available for every firefighter, includes important material not available in these modules.

## Module Delivery

The first structural collapse module, Shoring, was introduced at the DFS Bridgewater campus in May 2023. Breaching and Breaking was introduced in September 2023, and Lifting and Moving will be offered in the spring of 2024. Register for the programs in the DFS Learning Management System (LMS).

# Fire Investigation News

## Incendiary Fires

### Peabody

Two people were injured and about 20 people were displaced after a fire in a Lowell Street apartment building on the night of August 8, 2023. The Peabody Fire Department extinguished the fire, and a joint investigation with Peabody Fire, Peabody Police, and State Police fire investigators assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office determined that it had been intentionally set. A State Police K-9 alerted to accelerants in several locations at the scene. A suspect was identified and charged with arson of a dwelling and two counts each of assault with intent to murder, kidnapping, and assault and battery on a household member.

### Westfield

The Westfield Fire Department responded to a fire on a freight train car on the night of August 15, 2023. Firefighters had to cut their way into the car to fight the fire. They were able to contain its spread, but the contents were destroyed. Investigators found signs of forced entry and further property damage elsewhere at the scene. A joint investigation by Westfield Fire, Westfield Police, and State troopers assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office determined that the fire was intentionally set. With assistance from the public, two suspects were identified and charged with breaking and entering into a railroad car, burning a railway car, malicious destruction of property, and trespassing on railroad property.

### Holyoke

The Holyoke Fire Department extinguished a motor vehicle fire on the afternoon of August 17, 2023, and requested support from the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office. The fire was contained to the back seat of a Jeep Grand Cherokee, where a State Police K-9 alerted to the



Arson Watch Hotline  
1-800-682-9229

presence of ignitable liquids. Based on evidence at the scene, surveillance footage of the area, and interviews with various parties, a suspect was identified. In the course of an interview with investigators, he made admissions that he had set the fire and put forth a motive for doing so.

### Dalton

On August 27, 2023, a witness reported seeing flames coming from a shed on East Street. The Dalton Fire Department responded to the scene and extinguished the fire. Personnel smelled a strong odor of gasoline and requested State Police fire investigators assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office. The joint investigation revealed that the fire was intentionally set by a worker hired to demolish the structure. The worker, who suffered burn injuries, was charged with setting open air fires under MGL Chapter 48, Section 13.

### Plainville

In the early morning hours of September 23, 2023, the Plainville Fire Department extinguished a fire that badly damaged a motor vehicle. Firefighters and police officers detected a strong odor of gasoline in the area and witnesses reported seeing a person walking away from the scene with a large red container. That person was detained by Plainville Police, and State Police fire investigators assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office were requested for assistance. A red gasoline container was located in a nearby wooded area. A State Police K-9 alerted to the presence of ignitable liquids at the fire scene and on articles of clothing collected as evidence. The suspect was charged with burning a vehicle and other offenses in Wrentham District Court and waived a rendition hearing as a fugitive from justice out of Rhode Island, where he faces murder charges.

### Westborough

On the night of November 26, the Westborough Fire Department responded to a fire in the lobby of the Westborough Police station on West Main Street. Firefighters responded in minutes and extinguished the fire, which caused a heavy smoke condition but was contained by the station's sprinkler system. The fire was investigated by Westborough Fire, Westborough Police, State Police fire



Athol

# Public Education

## Cooking Safety



investigators assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and the ATF, who collectively determined that it had been intentionally set and found evidence of an attempt to start a second fire in the same location. One suspect, an adult woman, was identified during a search of the area and transported to an area hospital for evaluation.

### Fatal Fires

#### Athol

A residential fire on the morning of September 7, 2023, claimed the life of a 62-year-old woman. The fire quickly went to three alarms and caused catastrophic damage to the single-family home. One resident made it out safely, but the other attempted to rescue pets from inside and was unable to escape. The fire was jointly investigated by Athol Fire Department, Athol Police, State Police assigned to the offices of the State Fire Marshal and Northwestern District Attorney, and District 8 fire investigators. They were supported by the Department of Fire Service' Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit. Investigators determined that the area of origin was in the kitchen, and specifically the gas stove.

#### Springfield

On the morning of October 19, 2023, the Springfield Fire Department responded to 118 Grover Street for a report of a fire. The first crews on scene observed heavy smoke and flames at the front of the single-family home and did not hear smoke alarms sounding. They made entry and rescued two people. An 18-year-old occupant succumbed to her injuries and two other occupants were transported to Boston for medical treatment. Another person was less seriously injured. An ongoing investigation led authorities to request that neighborhood residents check their home

*Continued on page 20*

Now is a great time to remind people in your community about cooking fire safety and the necessity of smoke alarms in every dwelling.

Cooking is the #1 cause of home fires and home fire injuries in Massachusetts. Each year, there are thousands of cooking fires in the Commonwealth. The fires result in deaths, injuries and millions of dollars in damages. Safety education can help.

To support local fire educators, the Department of Fire Services has a Cooking Fire Safety public awareness campaign that promotes two key messages: **Stand By Your Pan** to prevent cooking fires and **Put A Lid On It** as the best response to stove top fires. The campaign features two firehouse chefs and their recipes.

The toolkit includes:

- TV and radio spots in English and Spanish
- Cooking safety recipe cards in English and Spanish
- Logos
- Tri-fold pamphlet in 3 languages
- Newspaper ads
- Customizable local press release
- Lesson plan
- Bookmark artwork

In addition to the toolkit, DFS has kitchen props that can be used for hands-on teaching about preventing and responding to kitchen fires. Contact the Fire Data & Public Education Unit at 978-567-3381 to borrow one, or for advice on planning your program.

Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *cooking fire and burn safety*.



# Home Heating & Winter Fire Safety

Home heating equipment is the #2 cause of home fires in Massachusetts and the #1 source of carbon monoxide.

## Home Heating Fire Safety

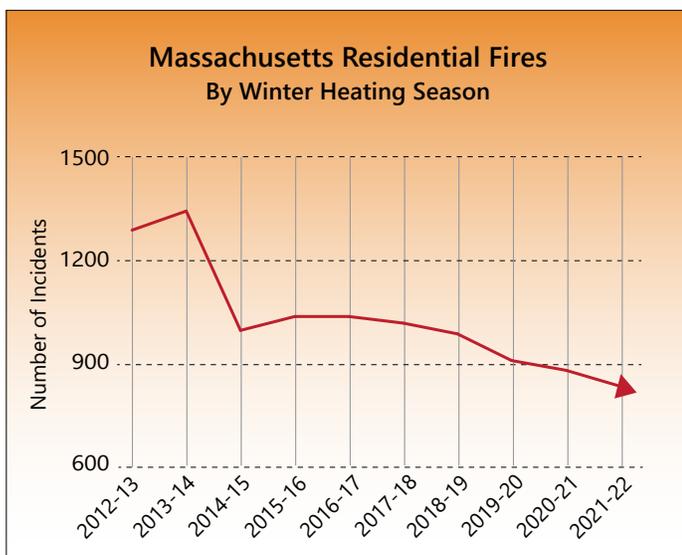
Home heating equipment is a leading cause of fires each year, especially in the winter months. Heating equipment was involved in 1,277 building fires in 2022, causing two deaths, 12 civilian injuries, 19 fire service injuries, and an estimated loss of \$9.2 million. January 2022 was by far the most common month for heating fires, with nearly 40% more than the next-highest month, February. Massachusetts fire departments reported 16,132 carbon monoxide (CO) incidents that same year.

The Department of Fire Services launched the *Keep Warm Keep Safe* campaign in 2008 to lower the high incidence of home heating fires. The hard work of hundreds of fire and life safety educators brought winter-season residential heating fires down to historically low levels since that time. However, there were still more than 800 Massachusetts heating fires in the winter of 2022–2023.

Everyone in the fire service can help to push these numbers even lower with more of the great work that was done over the last 15 years. Most of these fires can be prevented, so public education is the key. Use our KWKS toolkit to promote heating safety in your community. Visit [www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe](http://www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe).

## Home Heating Safety Tips to Share

- Have working smoke and CO alarms on every level of a home and test them every month.
- Have your home heating system checked each year. Keep anything that can burn away from furnaces, boilers, and other appliances that have a pilot light.



- If you use a fireplace or wood stove, have your chimney and flue inspected and cleaned annually. Use a fireplace screen or close the wood stove door to keep sparks and embers from escaping.
- If you use a space heater, plug it directly into a wall outlet, not a power strip or extension cord. Always turn it off when you leave the room or go to sleep.

## Burns and Scalds

National Burn Awareness Week is February 4–10, 2024. The week is an opportunity for fire and life safety educators to share critical burn awareness and prevention messages in their communities.



Hot liquid scalds to children under age 5 are the leading burn problem nationally and in Massachusetts. DFS has burn data and prevention resources. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *Burn and Scald Prevention* or *MBIRS*. The American Burn Association and the U.S. Fire Administration also have burn prevention resources. Visit [ameriburn.org/prevention](http://ameriburn.org/prevention) and [www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention).

## Ice and Cold Water Safety

Each winter, Massachusetts fire departments carry out ice rescues of both people and animals on a regular basis. Unleashed dogs and other animals sometimes fall through ice. In many cases, owners are also rescued from the water after they try to help their pets. DFS has flyers in English and Spanish to help educate the public about ice and cold water safety. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *Ice and Cold Water Safety*.

*Continued on next page*

# Ignitable Liquid Detecting K-9 Teams Graduate

## *Outgoing MPUIA President Jack Golembeski Recognized*

On October 30, 2023, the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Section's K-9 training team held a ceremony to recognize its latest graduates. Three ignitable liquid-detecting K-9 teams from Massachusetts State Police, Springfield Fire and Emergency Services, and the Manchester, NH Fire Department graduated.

All three teams completed many weeks of training at the Department of Fire Services' Bridgewater campus and other locations. Each team also passed a final Odor Recognition Test led by State Police chemists before being certified as Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams under New England State Police Administrators Conference standards. Command staff from all involved agencies, including State Fire Marshal Jon Davine and State Police Colonel John Mawn, were in attendance to recognize their accomplishments.

One of the graduating teams—Trooper Michael O'Connor and K-9 Grayson—is assigned to the MSP Fire Investigation Unit in Western Massachusetts. They are among 30 K-9 teams working in the Fire & Explosion Investigation Section: nine who investigate fires, 11 assigned to the Statewide Bomb Squad, and 10 currently working with the Bomb Squad at Logan Airport.

DFS leadership also took a moment to recognize Jack Golembeski, President and CEO of the Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association (MPIUA), who is retiring this month. Among many other honors during his 40 years leading MPIUA, Mr. Golembeski received the Fire Marshal's Award at the 2010 Firefighter of the Year Awards. Then-Marshall Stephen D. Coan noted at the time that "Jack had the vision to see that accelerant detection canines could vastly improve the ability to collect evidence that proves the crime of arson and sponsored our first dog." To date, all of the Fire & Explosion Investigation Section's K-9s have been generously funded by MPUIA.

Throughout his career, Mr. Golembeski has been a stalwart supporter of fire protection, fire investigation, fire safety education, and firefighter training. We are deeply



*Left to right: Col. John Mawn, Tpr. Michael O'Conner and K9 Grayson of the Massachusetts State Police, Lt. Jason Fitzgerald and K9 Greg of the Springfield Fire Department, Deputy Fire Marshal Greg Brown with K9 O'Lana of the Manchester NH Fire Department, and Massachusetts State Fire Marshal Jon Davine.*



*Left to right: Deputy State Fire Marshal Fournier, Vice President of the MPIUA Michael Reilly, Jack Golembeski, DLt. Michael Riley, OIC, MSP/FEIU, and State Fire Marshal Davine.*

grateful for his leadership and advocacy, and we wish him the very best in retirement.

### **Home Heating and Winter Safety**, *continued from previous page*

#### **Open Burning**

Open burning season is January 15 through May 1 in communities where it is allowed. Encourage residents to burn at the start of the season when conditions may be wetter, snowier, and less likely to cause brush fires than

conditions in late April. April was the #1 month for brush fires last year. Education can help your community reduce the risks. DFS has a flyer on open burning with safety tips at [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs). Search for *Open Burning*.

# Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations



## Career Recruit Firefighter Training

In the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program, students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires to mailbox fires. Upon successful completion of the Recruit Program, all students have met the national standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001 and are certified to the level of Firefighter I and II, and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operational Level by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications. Training is held at the Stow headquarters of DFS, the Springfield campus, and the Bridgewater campus.



## Class #S33

On August 25, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S33 graduated at the Springfield Campus. The 29 graduates represent the 15 departments of Auburn, Belchertown, Chicopee, Gardner, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Marblehead, Monson, Northampton, Norton, Pittsfield, Shrewsbury, Southbridge, Springfield, and West Springfield.



## Class #BW26

On September 1, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW26 graduated at the Bridgewater Campus. The 22 graduates represent the 13 departments of Bourne, Canton, Centerville-Osterville-Marstons Mills, Concord, Fairhaven, Hopkinton, Natick, Plainville, Revere, Rockland, Somerset, Westborough, and Yarmouth.



## Class #314

On September 29, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #314 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 24 graduates represent the 14 departments of Acton, Bellingham, Charlton, Gloucester, Lawrence, Littleton, Milton, North Andover, Orleans, Plymouth, Revere, Rockland, Tewksbury, and Weston.

## Class #315

On November 3, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #315 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 35 graduates represent the 17 departments of Ashland,

Attleboro, Beverly, Concord, Fitchburg, Harwich, Haverhill, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marlborough, Methuen, Orleans, Revere, Seekonk, Tewksbury, and Weston.

**Class #S34**

On November 10, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S34 graduated at the Springfield Campus. The 25 graduates represent the 14 departments of Attleboro, Charlton, Chicopee, Douglas, East Longmeadow, Falmouth, Longmeadow, Lowell, Northampton, Uxbridge, Ware, West Springfield, Westfield and Westminster.

**Class #BW27**

On November 17, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW27 graduated at the Bridgewater Campus. The 25 graduates represent the 12 departments of Barnstable, Centerville-Osterville-Marstons Mills, Cohasset, East Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Framingham, Hanson, Hyannis, Mashpee, Sandwich, Wellfleet and Yarmouth.

**Class #316**

On December 8, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #316 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 30 graduates represent the 17 departments of Amesbury, Bedford, Boxborough, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Middleborough, Nantucket, North Reading, Northborough, Norwell, Peabody, Revere, Sharon, Stoneham, Sudbury, and Winthrop.

**Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighting Training**

The Call/Volunteer Firefighter Recruit Training Program is unique in that it delivers a standard recruit training curriculum, meeting national standards, on nights and weekends to accommodate the schedule of firefighters in suburban and rural areas. Making the training more accessible means more firefighters can participate and allows them more time to practice training skills with instructors. The MFA, a division of the Department of Fire Services, has offered the program since 2003.

“First responders are on the front lines of any crisis and these newest firefighters are needed now more than ever,” said State Fire Marshal Jon Davine. “The rigorous training they’ve completed provides them with the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary to protect their communities safely and effectively.”



Class #S34



Class #BW27



Class #316



Class #107

*Continued on page 20*

# Rapid Intervention Training in Medway

In October 2023, the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's Rapid Intervention Program delivered its Sterling F4 Bail Out training at the Medway Fire Department. The Sterling F4 bailout kit is a pre-rigged system that allows firefighters to bail out of a window if they become trapped. The six-hour course includes classroom and hands-on components. Students learn how to properly pack the rope and bail out using the sill hook and remote anchor methods.

The MFA can deliver this training for your department. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *MFA Course Request Form*.



## Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations, *continued from page 19*

### *Class #107*

On November 1, 2023, members of Call/Volunteer Firefighting Class #107 graduated at the at Matthew J. Kuss Middle School in Fall River. The 25 graduates represent the 12 fire departments of Acushnet, Dartmouth Fire District 2, Dartmouth Fire District 3, Dighton, Fairhaven, Freetown, Halifax, Lakeville, Marion, Onset, Plympton, and Rehoboth.

### *Class #108*

On November 2, 2023, members of Call/Volunteer Firefighting Class #108 graduated at the Stow Campus of the Department of Fire Services. The 26 graduates represent the 15 fire departments of Ayer, Boxborough, Carlisle, Dunstable, Holliston, Hopedale, Hubbardston,



Lancaster, Oxford, Sutton, Townsend, Tyngsborough, Upton, West Boylston, and Weston.

## Fire Investigation News, *continued from page 15*

security cameras for footage of anyone in the area between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. Anyone with information on the fire is asked to contact the Springfield Police Detective Bureau at 413-787-6355. The fire remains under investigation by the Springfield Fire Department, Springfield Police, and State Police assigned to the offices of the Hampden District Attorney and State Fire Marshal. They are assisted by the Department of Fire Services' Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit.

### **Natick**

On the afternoon of October 26, 2023, the Natick Fire Department responded to John J. Lane Park in Natick for an outdoor fire. On arrival, they located an adult male who

had suffered fatal injuries. The investigation by Natick Fire, Natick Police, and State Police assigned to the offices of the Middlesex District Attorney and State Fire Marshal determined that the fire had been intentionally set in connection with a suicide. Pending a final determination by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, this appears to be the fifth fatal self-immolation in 2023—the highest number in more than a decade.

### **Taunton**

The Taunton Fire Department received a phone notification regarding a house fire on Linden Street on the night of November 2. The first arriving personnel, including an

*Continued on next page*

# 2024 License Examination Schedule

## New Email for FSD Licensing Division

The Fire Safety Division Licensing Office has a new email address: [DFS.FSDLicensing@mass.gov](mailto:DFS.FSDLicensing@mass.gov). The old address ([DFS.Licensing@state.ma.us](mailto:DFS.Licensing@state.ma.us)) is no longer in use.

## Fire Safety Division

The Department of Fire Services' Fire Safety Division issues licenses, permits, and certificates of competency (licenses) to people and companies engaged in fireworks, blasting, explosives, special effects, cannon and mortar firing, commercial cooking exhaust system cleaning and inspection, hood cleaning, special hazard systems, portable fire extinguishers, marine fueling facilities and above ground tanks. Register for exams and see detailed information at [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs). Search for *DFS Licensing*. For

questions, contact the Licensing Desk at 978-567-3700 or at [DFS.FSDLicensing@mass.gov](mailto:DFS.FSDLicensing@mass.gov).

## Boiler and Pressure Vessel Program

The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Program offers monthly license exams for oil burner technician and all classes of fireman and engineer licenses. Register for exams and see detailed information at [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs). Search for *BPV Exams*. For questions contact the Boiler & Pressure Vessel Program at (978) 567-3780 or at [BPV.Exams@mass.gov](mailto:BPV.Exams@mass.gov).

## Licensing Status

To see the licensing status of an individual or company, visit the DFS License Look Up at <http://elicense.chs.state.ma.us/Verification/> or go to [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *DFS licensing*.

Examination Schedule	Examination Dates	Deadlines for Applications
FSD Exams		
Exams Start at 10:00 a.m.		
Fire Suppression and Commercial Hood Cleaning	February 14, 2024 April 17, 2024 June 12, 2024	January 19, 2024 March 22, 2024 May 17, 2024
Cannon/Mortar, Fireworks and Special Effects, Blasting and Blasting R&D	January 24, 2024 March 13, 2024 May 1, 2024	December 29, 2023 February 16, 2024 April 5, 2024
BPV Exams		
Exams start at 9:00 a.m.		
Oil Burner, Fireman & Engineer (all classes)	January 31, 2024 February 28, 2024 March 27, 2024 April 24, 2024 May 29, 2024 June 26, 2024	December 29, 2023 January 26, 2024 February 23, 2024 March 29, 2024 April 26, 2024 May 31, 2024

## Fire Investigation News, *continued from previous page*

off-duty firefighter, observed flames in the basement extending upward and heard smoke alarms sounding. They immediately began suppression efforts and conducted an interior search, locating two older adults. Both were transported to an area hospital but succumbed to their injuries. A joint investigation by Taunton Fire, Taunton

Police, and State Police assigned to the Bristol County District Attorney and State Fire Marshal determined that the fire began on a gas stove in the basement and was most likely related to a cooking event. Investigators were assisted by the DFS Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit.



Department of Fire Services  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
978-567-3100

[www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs)

# DFS Licensing Email Update

## DFS.FSDLicensing@mass.gov.

The email contact for the Fire Safety Division's Licensing Office has changed!  
**Effective immediately, the new email address is [DFS.FSDLicensing@mass.gov](mailto:DFS.FSDLicensing@mass.gov).**  
The old address ([DFS.Licensing@state.ma.us](mailto:DFS.Licensing@state.ma.us)) is no longer in use.

The Licensing Office handles matters relating to licensure, permitting, and certification for:

- Aboveground Storage Tanks
- Blasting and explosives
- Cannons and mortars
- Commercial hood cleaning and inspections
- Fireworks and special effects
- Fire suppression systems
- Marine fueling
- Self-service gas stations

Please update your records and contact lists accordingly to ensure seamless communication moving forward. You may continue to reach the Licensing Office by phone at 978-567-3700 or by visiting [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) and searching for *Licensing*.

