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JON M. DAVINE
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

To: Chiefs of Departments
From: State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine
Date: October 13, 2023
Re: Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Investigations

Across the country, and most visibly in New York City, fires caused by or involving lithium-ion batteries are on the rise, and often with deadly consequences. Massachusetts is not immune to this problem.

One of the greatest challenges in addressing the increase in lithium-ion battery fires is quantifying them. The National Fire Incident Reporting System, on which our Massachusetts data reporting system is based, does not currently capture information specific to these events. As a result, there is a strong likelihood that lithium-ion battery fires are underreported, both here and elsewhere.

Better data will assist the fire service in assessing the true scope of the issue and guiding future regulations and legislation. Toward that end, the Massachusetts State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit will now gather certain additional information whenever they respond to an incident in which lithium-ion batteries may have played a part. I am also asking you, as the Commonwealth's fire chiefs, to adopt a similar policy for fires you investigate locally.

To assist you in this effort, the Department of Fire Services' Fire Safety Division has created the attached investigation checklist, known as Form FP-031. This document was created with the option to submit the completed form directly to the Fire Safety Division. If for some reason that is not possible, you may also email, fax, or send a hard copy. The information we gather using this form will be used in conjunction with MFIRS reports to develop a better data set than is currently available.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and your continued partnership in protecting our communities.

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