

All Hands Herald

Massachusetts Department of Fire Services

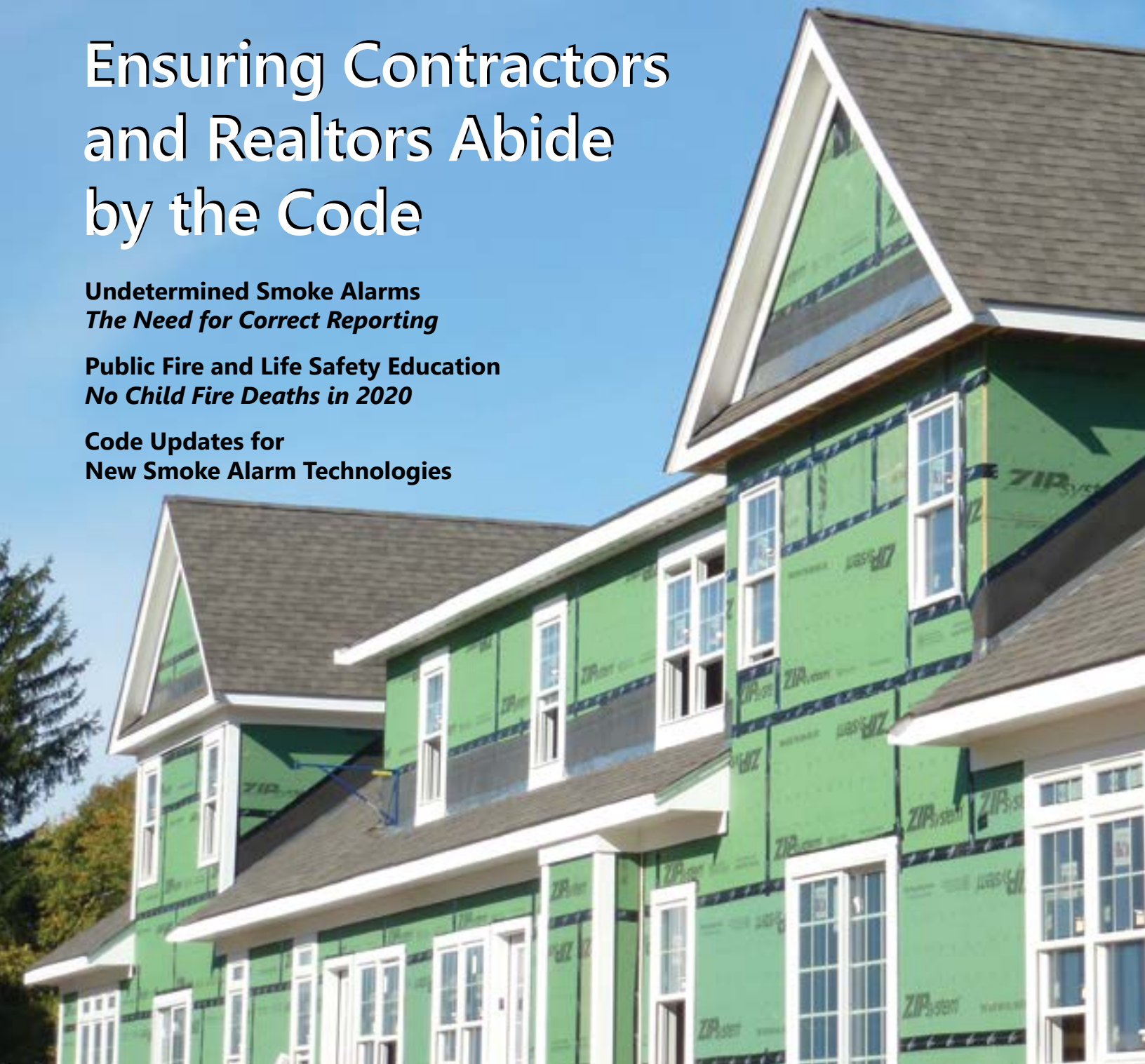
February 2021

Ensuring Contractors and Realtors Abide by the Code

Undetermined Smoke Alarms
The Need for Correct Reporting

Public Fire and Life Safety Education
No Child Fire Deaths in 2020

Code Updates for
New Smoke Alarm Technologies



Editor
Jennifer Mieth

Chief Copy Editor
Art Director
Julie Weinstein

Copy Editor
Timothy Moore

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 fire service issues which 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.

If you have suggestions, ideas, questions or want to make a contribution to the *All Hands Herald*, contact:

Jennifer Mieth
Public Information Officer
Department of Fire Services
1 State Road
Stow, MA 01775
Jennifer.Mieth@mass.gov
978-567-3189

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From the Fire Marshal

FirstNet

Do you have an AT&T device and find you can't make a call or download MFA coursework documents at the Stow campus? The state's FirstNet plan identified installing infrastructure for network connectivity at the DFS Stow as a critical need.

FirstNet (FirstNet.gov) is a federal project that provides a stronger public safety communication system than consumer cellular service. It gives priority access for public safety and pre-emption. One of the lessons learned from the 9-11 plane crash in Shanksville, PA, and the Boston Marathon bombing was that public safety can get squeezed out of the wireless bandwidth during a major event. FirstNet will provide true coverage across the nation, especially in underserved areas like western Massachusetts. This FirstNet spectrum will be shared with the public most of the time, but in a public safety emergency, first responders will have primary access to the secure network. As part of the FirstNet nationwide build-out, work is taking place on the Stow campus to install FirstNet infrastructure. The campus has been inaccessible to AT&T users. But soon, people will be able to access both Verizon and AT&T from Stow. The network extenders and repeaters should be in place this winter. The lack of connectivity is not as much of an issue at our other campuses, but if the need arises, they can be included in future phases of the plan.

This is the first stage of the FirstNet build-out. The second stage will include applications to aide interoperability on FirstNet enabled devices. This infrastructure will provide secure, reliable communications in rural areas or after disasters and will lead to innovations in applications for managing public safety responses and sharing crucial information in real time.

Public Fire Education Grants

Even in these tough fiscal times, the Administration and the Legislature are supporting public fire and life safety education. The Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and Senior SAFE grant programs have remained in the state budget. Fire education is a cost-effective investment in community risk reduction, as we know from the significant reduction in child fire deaths since the S.A.F.E. Program started. In 2020, for the first time on record, no children (no one under the age of 18) died in a fire in Massachusetts. This is an amazing accomplishment, the

result of more than 25 years of teaching children and their families how to be safe from fire.

Fire Equipment Grants

DFS will soon award \$5 million in grants to fire departments across the Commonwealth for safety equipment. This grant program puts tools directly in the hands of the fire service. It allows fire departments to make requests based on local needs. The Legislature provided \$25 million in a bond bill to fund the program for five years. This is a watershed moment that provides sustained support to the Massachusetts fire service. I know this money will be used to fill critical and long-standing needs in many fire stations, and am thankful for the support of the Baker Administration and the Legislature that made this happen during such challenging financial times.

Cancer Awareness Training Restarting

In the last fiscal year, the Baker Administration supported a washer-extractor grant program for local fire departments to aide cancer prevention in the fire service. Helping fire departments buy specialized cleaning equipment reduces firefighter exposure to cancer-causing toxins from fire residue or soot on protective gear.

Since 2016, DFS has offered a cancer awareness training program called Taking Action Against Cancer in the Fire Service, from the Firefighter Cancer Support Network. The training was often paired with skin and oral cancer screenings from medical and dental professionals. We are now offering a virtual version of the training. In 2021, DFS is offering free chest CT scans to eligible firefighters to detect chest health issues early. See page 21 for more information on the program.

Firefighter of the Year

Many firefighters were nominated for heroic acts this year by their fire chiefs. These compelling incidents and acts of bravery were reviewed by the Heroic Awards Committee. Because the pandemic precludes the traditional ceremony with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, we will recognize these devoted public servants in a virtual



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Ensuring Contractors and Realtors Abide by the Code

Don't Be Bullied



"I have never done that before." Every fire prevention officer and fire official that conducts 26F/26F½ inspections, fire protection system inspections, or acceptance testing has heard a realtor or contractor say it. Or maybe the realtor or contractor says: "I have been doing this for decades and have never heard of that," or "XYZ Fire Department does not require that," or "XYZ Fire Department allows that," or "The Professional Engineer said it was ok and has stamped off on it." For seasoned fire officials, these statements are mildly infuriating because they are often used to avoid a code requirement. For an inexperienced official, these statements create uneasiness, hesitancy, and sometimes the relaxation of the requirement – just what the statement was intended to do. But taking the word of a realtor or contractor without further research can create issues for fire prevention officers conducting inspections in the future, or create future liabilities for the community or owner.

Consider the following situation. When the new construction of a company's world headquarters was completed, a sprinkler contractor project manager sent an emphatic email to the owner, architect, and building and community officials stating that in his 20-year career he had never heard of the NFPA sprinkler requirement that the fire department cited. The fire prevention officer was nervous about this aggressive tactic but was able to rebut the email with help from the Fire Safety Division. Research revealed documented evidence of the project manager personally citing this requirement on five different projects in the last two years. Also, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) staff ruled that the requirement was being enforced properly. The sprinkler contractor quickly, and without question, complied with the requirement upon receiving the rebuttal.

In another recent situation, a fire department was badgered by the installing electrician for not allowing a certain battery-operated wireless smoke alarm in a new home. The electrician named four neighboring

communities' fire prevention officers who had recently allowed these alarms. Quick calls to the named fire prevention officers revealed that none of them had allowed the device. The officers also shared the code citation prohibiting its installation.

How can fire officials and fire prevention officers give more confident responses when they hear one of these statements? First, no one knows everything, so keep it professional. Make sure you understand exactly what the realtor or contractor is saying.

If you are not absolutely familiar with the requirement and exactly what it says, inform them that you will need to research it, and then will respond back in writing with your decision and the code citation. Be sure to use the official edition of the code books for your research. Requirements do change between editions and only the cited requirements in the official edition can be enforced. If you have trouble finding the correct code citation, consider contacting a fellow fire prevention officer, or the Fire Safety Division for assistance. After you find the citation, read it closely to make sure you understand the exact requirements. Also, check for any Annex material and the code commentary.

Attending fire prevention, building code, or NFPA classes, participating in fire prevention organizations, and extra-curricular reading will build your knowledge and your confidence. And knowledge and confidence are what you need when confronted with excuses from contractors and realtors.

For concerns, questions, and more information call the Fire Safety Division Code Compliance Helpdesk at 978-567-3375. You can also reach the fire protection engineers. For communities north of the Turnpike, contact Kristen McDonough, P.E. at 978-273-7367 or Kristen.McDonough@mass.gov. For communities south of, or on the Massachusetts Turnpike, contact Jake Nunnemacher at 978-273-7366 or Jacob.Nunnemacher@mass.gov.

Undetermined Smoke Alarms

The Need for Correct Reporting

Why does the fire service want to know if smoke alarms were present, if they operated, and if they alerted residents to a fire? Why do we ask if the smoke alarms alerted residents for confined fires?

The reason for collecting fire data is to determine who is getting hurt in fires, how and why. As a society, we have decided that everyone must have smoke alarms to give them early warning of a fire. Since most homes do not have fire sprinklers, smoke alarms are the only device that gives people a chance to save themselves.

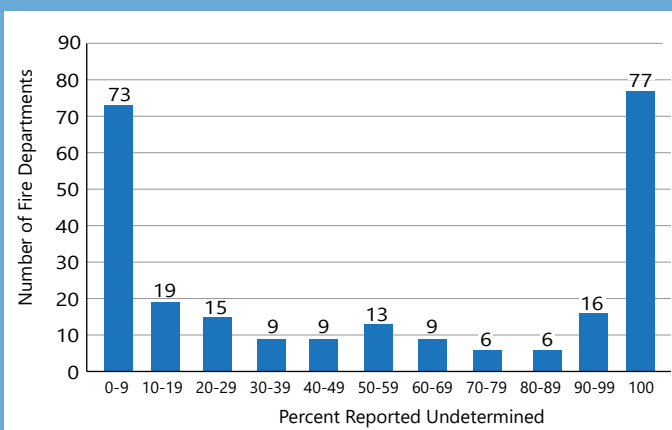
The fire service knows that people disable their alarms or fail to maintain them. Or do we? How do we really know that? Massachusetts fire departments have been installing smoke alarms in people's houses for years. Are the alarms still working, no matter how small or large the fire? How do we know they are working?

While researching and writing the *2019 Annual Report of the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS)*, we found that many incident reports listed the presence of smoke alarms as 'undetermined'. The most common type of building fire call is a confined cooking fire - Incident Type = 113 on the Basic Module. It is easy to determine if smoke alarms are sounding when you arrive on these scenes. Despite the ease of determining whether the alarms sounded, we are not completely documenting these incidents when 61% of Massachusetts fire departments report 'Undetermined' in the *Detector Alerted* field in more than one-quarter of these types of calls.

A closer look at this data reveals that some departments consistently report whether smoke alarms were working or not, but far too many departments rarely collect this information. A majority of the residential building fires in 2019 were cooking fires contained to non-combustible containers. Two hundred fifty-two (252) fire departments and districts reported at least one of these fires.

- 73 (nearly 1/3) fire departments report *Detector Alerted* as 'Undetermined' in only 10% of these calls. These departments seem to be collecting the data 90% of the time.
- 154 (or nearly 2/3) fire departments report *Detector Alerted* as 'Undetermined' in more than 25% of these calls.
- 77 (or 1/3) fire departments report *Detector Alerted* as 'Undetermined' 100% of the time. It seems they are not even trying.

Fire Department Percent of Undetermined Alarms Alerted in Confined Cooking Fires, 2019



This makes it difficult to determine:

- If smoke alarms were installed or removed;
- If the alarms were working;
- If fire departments are correctly identifying smoke alarm performance.

From 2015 – 2018, the S.A.F.E. Program's End of Year Reports show that fire departments installed over 28,500 smoke alarms in the Commonwealth. This is a great investment in community risk reduction.

Some of these fire departments are the same ones who report 'undetermined' in the *Detector Alerted* field for a majority of confined cooking fires. The missing data is critical to understanding the success or failure of their smoke alarm installation programs.

Detector Alerted information is also important to determine smoke/CO alarm performance. If fire departments are finding smoke alarm failures, manufacturers and fire code officials need to know. The reasons for failure are also important. Are they malfunctioning? Not maintained? Disabled? Expired? Why? Since there are a limited number of homes with sprinklers, people need their one protective device to be working.

Quality Control Report: Tools to Improve Data

Last November, the Fire Data & Public Education Unit distributed the *2020 Mid-Year Quality Control and Feedback Reports* to the head of every fire department in Massachusetts. One of the quality control reports is *Detector Status by Incident Type in Building Fires*. The report details the number and percentage of reported

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Public Fire and Life Safety Education

It Takes a Village



January is not only the beginning of a new year, it's also the beginning of a new cycle of fire prevention and public education. Fire educators tie fire prevention messages to particular seasons, holidays and weather because the public experiences different types of fires in different seasons. In October, we talk about Fire Prevention Week and we promote having working smoke alarms when we change our clocks. We promote cooking safety around Thanksgiving because so many cooking fires happen during the holidays. Each month, we publicize a particular aspect of fire prevention in a variety of ways. We use social media, videos, press releases, message boards and many publications. Often, we wonder if we are doing enough. Are the messages and warnings we publicize helping to prevent deaths, injuries and loss of housing and possessions? Public educators wrestle with this on a daily basis. How can we tell if we are being successful?

Twelve years ago, the Department of Fire Services (DFS) launched the Keep Warm, Keep Safe campaign. Keep Warm, Keep Safe is promoted across the Commonwealth during the winter heating months, and not just by the fire service. Other agencies and the media help get the message out. DFS analysts looked at the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) data and found that heating fires declined across the state in 2019. It takes a village to prevent fires, and in 2019, DFS released a cooking fire safety campaign before Thanksgiving (the day with the most fires of any single day during the year). Analysts found a reduction in cooking fires on Thanksgiving 2019 and expect to see that continue for Thanksgiving 2020. The village of public educators, and all

of their many partners, spread the DFS cooking and heating campaigns far and wide and made an impact in 2019.

A new cycle of fire safety and prevention begins in 2021. In January we continue to promote heating safety messages. The last week of January is typically the coldest week in Massachusetts and a time when many people have run out of heating oil and fuel assistance grants.

The first full week of February we focus on burn prevention. Since the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (M-BIRS) was created in 1984, young children have been the most frequent victims of scald burns. In 2019, 42% of the 151 scald victims were under five years old, and most were less than one year old. Children under five were 7.5 times more likely to be scalded than any other age group. Hot beverages pose the greatest risk to these young children. We continue to work at reducing these numbers. There are easy steps caregivers can take to prevent scalds including: keep children 3-feet away from the stove, move cups of hot tea and coffee away from the edge of a table, and use a travel mug. We need the village to promote burn safety messages. February 7-13, 2021 is Burn Awareness Week across the county. Fire educators can make an impact on burn injuries if we all speak with one voice, as we have with winter heating and cooking fire safety messages.

In March and April fire safety education focuses on open burning, mulch, and smoking and porch safety as people start to move outdoors. On March 28, 2021, we have another opportunity to remind people to Change Your Clock, Check Your Alarm. This twist on the Change Your Clock, Check Your Battery message recognizes that



newer alarms have sealed 10-year batteries. Our campaign focuses on checking the age of alarms and replacing expired 10-year-old alarms.

May is Electrical Safety Month. Data shows that electrical fires are the second leading cause of fire deaths in Massachusetts. Electrical fires have been either the leading, or second leading, cause of structure fire deaths for each of the past six years. Over 75% of electrical fires happened in residential buildings. The leading area of origin was the kitchen. What are the public safety messages that can reduce these fires? Plug heat generating appliances directly into an outlet, not a power strip or extension cord; charge laptops and phones only on a hard surface; have a licensed electrician review your home's electrical service; and don't overload power strips. Our village of educators and partners can promote these life-saving messages.

The public education messaging cycle continues in each month of the year. But we promote smoke and carbon

In 2020, for the first time on record, no children (no one under the age of 18) died in a fire in Massachusetts.

monoxide alarms, sprinklers, and a practiced home escape plan in the event of a fire every month of the year. These are the messages we give daily, weekly, monthly and annually. Fire safety professionals never get tired of these messages. When we learn that a family escaped a burning house because their smoke alarms worked and they used their home escape plan, we can celebrate and thank our entire village for the save. And we can thank people for changing their behaviors to create a fire safe community. In 2020, for the first time on record, no children (no one under the age of 18) died in a fire in Massachusetts. This is an amazing accomplishment, the result of more than 25 years of teaching children and their families how to be safe from fire. What a great village!

Undetermined Smoke Alarms, *continued from page 3*

Detector Status and Operation in building fires broken down by Incident Type. The purpose of this report is to detect high percentages of 'Undetermined' in these fields, and high percentages of non-functioning detectors. The feedback reports for all of 2020 will be available by March of 2021. The data can help you analyze detector status and operation in your community.

Train Your Firefighters to Listen for Smoke Alarms

We encourage all departments to train firefighters to make it a habit to notice if alarms are sounding when they

arrive at a fire incident. Also, train everyone to report the information correctly in MFIRS. This is critical information in a fatal fire investigation. It is also very important data for policy makers, code officials, and alarm manufacturers so they can respond to the reality of smoke alarm use in their communities.

Paying attention to smoke alarm status allows everyone to have an accurate picture of smoke alarm performance in Massachusetts.

Code Updates for New Smoke Alarm Technologies

The Board of Fire Prevention Regulations (BFPR) met and discussed changes to UL 217: Standard for Smoke Alarms (8th edition) and UL 268: Smoke Detectors for Fire Alarm Systems (7th edition) on December 3, 2020. The original implementation date of the updated standards was June 1, 2020 but was changed to June 1, 2022 due to manufacturing delays and COVID-19. Any device manufactured after June 1, 2022 must meet the new standard. All devices manufactured under the previous standard can be sold or used until they are required to be replaced (i.e. smoke alarms after 10 years). However, smoke alarms and detectors meeting the new standards are currently available with UL or ETL certifications and are equipped with more reliable sensing technology.

The new editions of these two UL Standards incorporate over 200 changes and the addition of three completely new tests. UL found that none of the smoke alarms and detectors currently listed to the UL 217 (7th Edition)/UL 268 (6th Edition) will pass the new standards. The technology needed to pass the new standards consists of a multi-criteria device, or another new technology. These new technologies are not categorized as “photoelectric” or “ionization”. It is unlikely that legacy detection technologies will ever pass the new standards.

All devices manufactured under the previous standard can be sold or used until they are required to be replaced.

However, devices meeting the new standards are available with UL or ETL certifications and are equipped with more reliable sensing technology.

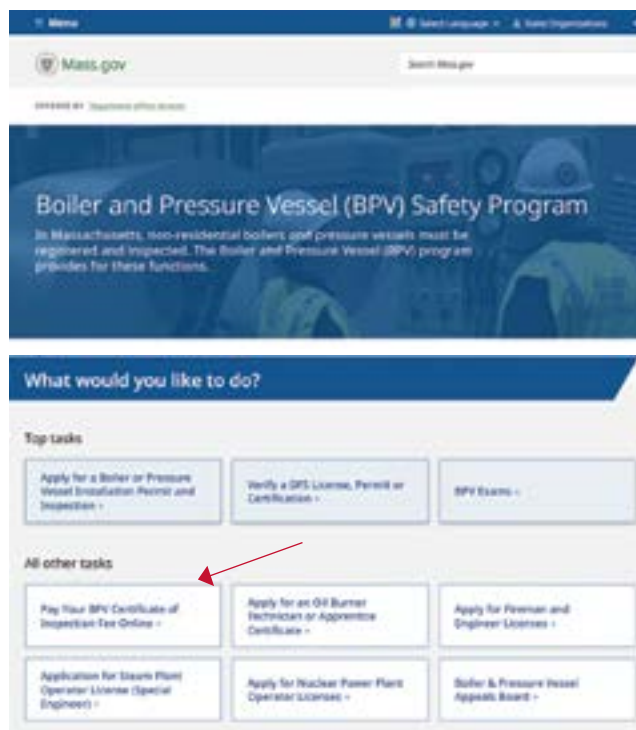
In order to anticipate the changes in manufacturing and the emergence of these new sensing technologies, BFPR has taken under consideration a code change to remove the term “photoelectric.” Instead, the code will reference the UL 217 and UL 268 standards to determine compliance of a device’s ability to sense smoke. If you are faced with the acceptance of a new device during the time it takes for the code change to be promulgated, 527 CMR 1.00: 1.4.1 allows the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) to accept equivalent or superior devices or technology, with proper supporting documentation. If you encounter these new devices, please do not hesitate to contact the Code Compliance Helpdesk at 978-567-3375. We can evaluate the supporting documentation and compile a list of manufacturers and products that are producing smoke alarms and detectors that comply with the new UL standards.

BPV Now Accepting Online Payments

The Massachusetts Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspection Program (BPV) has a new online portal for paying some fees: [BPV Invoice Payment Portal](#). The portal was introduced to make the payment of open invoices more convenient, and to make the process of getting certificates of inspection easier and faster.

Also, users need to file a permit and inspection application form with the BPV Inspection Program before installing non-residential boilers and pressure vessels. All boilers and pressure vessels must also be inspected and have a valid Certificate of Inspection before they can be used.

Visit [BPV Permit and Inspection Applications](#) to find applications for installation permits and inspections. Users download a form and send it in with a payment to apply for a permit. Next, users are contacted by a state inspector to set up a date/time to perform the inspection of the new equipment. After the inspection, users are billed for the inspection certificate fee. Users can visit the new portal to pay this fee. Users can still mail payments to the BPV program. After the BPV program receives the payment, the certificate of inspection is sent out.



ceremony. In addition, the honorees and families will be recognized at the next in-person event.

Massachusetts Firefighting Academy

The pandemic has altered many business and learning models. This includes the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA). In addition to using hybrid models for recruit training, the MFA has other courses available on our virtual learning platform: Advanced Firefighting Skills II, Fire Officer I, II and III, Emergency Vehicle Operator, Aerial Ladder, Flashover Train-the-Trainer, Flashover, Cancer Awareness for the Fire Service, Juvenile Firesetter, Fire instructor I, Live Fire Qualification, and Incident Command System for Structural Collapse Incidents (ICSSI). More than a dozen additional course are in development.

Life in the Pandemic

We are all tired of life in the pandemic, with spikes in cases, overwhelmed intensive care units, and so much death and loss. As vaccines become available we must continue to be careful and vigilant. Healthcare workers and vulnerable populations will get the first vaccines. Public safety will also be included in the first phase, but it will take a while before enough people are vaccinated to provide good community protection. It is hard to constantly wear masks and keep our distance in the firehouse. We are close to our group and it feels like family, but these are our co-workers. Think of this winter as the final push; keep strong, keep healthy, and protect your family at home.

The Department of Fire Services is taking every precaution to prevent COVID-19 from entering campus, but there have been cases of people on campus who then test positive. Community spread is such that we cannot keep it completely off campus. DFS is using the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center Guidance for Healthcare Personnel: Occupational Exposure & Return to Work Guidance, Revised May 7, 2020, which covers first responders (www.mass.gov/doc/return-to-work-guidance/download). The guidance has helped us manage possible exposures among staff and students and to continue fire training and other essential agency operations. Just as firefighter/EMTs don't quarantine after they transport every suspected COVID-19 patient, DFS is following these protocols for when to quarantine, isolate or return to work. So far, the guidance has been effective in preventing outbreaks after someone who has been on campus has been exposed or tests positive. Training and operations have been able to continue. These same guidelines are being used in fire stations, hospitals, and grocery stores across the Commonwealth.

Staff Changes

Detective Captain Paul T. Zipper retired as commander of the Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) and head of the State Police Clandestine Laboratory Enforcement Team (CLET) this winter. He first joined the F&EIU in the mid-1980s and worked on a large multi-agency arson task force in Lawrence that made over 100 arrests. When he was first promoted to Lieutenant, he was reassigned out of the unit, but six years ago returned as unit commander. His leadership in training fire investigators, advocating for the team concept of fire investigation, promoting youth fire setting intervention, and collaborating with all the other DFS units has been unparalleled. He has professionalized fire investigation in our state more than any other single person. Thank you Paul.

It was with great sadness that we said good-bye to David Evans as MFA director at the end of 2020. The pandemic forced many of us to reflect on what is most important to us and what we want to do most with our time on Earth. David has decided that he wants to return to direct service to his community. His experience as an educator greatly informed his tenure as academy director and enabled us to transition to virtual platforms successfully.



David Evans

We lost another educator at the end of the year to retirement, Cynthia Ouellette, who has managed the Fire Data and Public Education Unit for the past eight years. She began working with the DFS Public Fire and Life Safety Education Task Force as a North Attleboro health educator, after she lost three students in a tragic Christmas Eve fire. Her energy and bright ideas breathed new life into the public education conferences, created a strong focus on educational materials for English as a second language learners, and streamlined the public education grant process.

We also gained a new educator, Sara Praguski Walsh, Ed. D. She is the new instructional design and curriculum development specialist. She will help DFS instructors expand their skills as educators, and help us effectively use online learning. Even when we can return to in-person learning, online learning will remain an important tool that allows us to reach so many students.

Detective Captain Paul T. Zipper Retires

Detective Captain Paul T. Zipper retired as commander of the Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) and head of the State Police Clandestine Laboratory Enforcement Team (CLET) this winter. He first joined the F&EIU in the mid-1980s and worked on a large, multi-agency arson task force in Lawrence that made over 100 arrests. During the recession in the 1980s, many building owners walked away from their properties, leaving them for the city and banks to deal with. And some engaged in arson-for-profit. Unsecured, vacant buildings were easy and frequent targets for arsonists and trespassers. Then Trooper Zipper played basketball with bi-lingual kids and was kind to prostitutes. His contacts all provided him with information. He was a driving force behind the city holding absentee landlords – including banks – accountable, securing buildings, and through arrests, making it clear people would be caught for setting fires. These actions left the city a better place to live and to have a business.

Zipper is well-known for telling spell-binding stories about his cases. That made him a good instructor for other fire investigators. But he always saw the humanity in the people he arrested. It became clear to Zipper that the serial arsonists he arrested always started setting fires as children and were never stopped and never helped. He saw that many children and youth set fires as a cry for help when they are abused or neglected. Zipper is well-known for his work in youth firesetting intervention. He knew that children and youth who get appropriate intervention for their firesetting behavior can become well-adjusted adults instead of prison inmates.

When Zipper was first promoted to Lieutenant, he was reassigned out of the F&EIU, but six years ago he returned as unit commander. His leadership in training fire investigators, promoting youth fire setting intervention, and collaborating with other DFS units has been unparalleled. He has worked with the Mass. Fire-fighting Academy to ensure training and credentialing for fire investigators. He has worked closely with the Special Operations Unit to use the Incident Command Unit and Rehab Units to manage major incidents. He



Paul's leadership in training fire investigators, promoting youth fire setting intervention, and collaborating with other DFS units has been unparalleled.

has worked closely with the Hazardous Materials Response Division to develop the Joint Hazard Incident Response Team (JHIRT) of cross-trained State Police bomb technicians and hazardous materials technicians. The JHIRT collaboration made him a natural choice to lead the Mass. State Police Clandestine Laboratory Enforcement Team (CLET). Many bomb squad and HazMat team members were already working together as part of the CLET and the JHIRT.

Captain Zipper has made major contributions to professionalizing the fire investigation unit, the bomb squad, and the "clan lab" team in Massachusetts. Thank you Paul.



10 WAYS FIRSTNET WILL HELP PUBLIC SAFETY SAVE LIVES AND SECURE COMMUNITIES

Across the country, public safety personnel bravely serve their communities every day, answering the call when emergencies strike and risking their lives to secure and protect others. FirstNet is developing the first nationwide public safety broadband network to provide them the advanced communication and collaboration technologies they need. Here are ten ways FirstNet will help public safety save lives and secure communities:



1. Improving communications through an interoperable network

Today, first responders rely on more than 10,000 separate, incompatible, and often proprietary radio networks to communicate with each other during emergencies. Sometimes it's hard, or even impossible, for public safety to communicate and work together to save lives. To help address this challenge, the FirstNet network will be a single, nationwide, interoperable LTE network dedicated to public safety communications.



2. Connecting responders in rural America

Emergencies don't happen only in highly populated areas – which is why reaching rural America is one of FirstNet's top priorities. FirstNet is addressing rural coverage needs in multiple ways to deploy the network in places where coverage may be difficult. High-power towers can cover more rural space with less total infrastructure, as can deployable and satellite solutions.



3. Enhancing situational awareness in emergencies

FirstNet will carry high-speed data, location information, images, and video that can mean all the difference when seconds count. Just as smartphones have created a new era of real-time information and connectedness for individuals, the FirstNet network, devices, and applications will enable the awareness and collaboration the public safety community needs to save lives.



4. Giving public safety true priority

During emergencies, public safety needs to be able to communicate without interruption – lives depend on it. It is vital that our nation's law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics, and other responders have true priority for their daily and emergency communications needs. This is why FirstNet is deploying a wireless broadband network dedicated to public safety.



5. Offering vital capacity for planned events, large crowds

Emergencies aren't the only times when public safety needs capacity to communicate and send data. Planned events – like concerts, festivals, and sporting events – draw crowds to a single location, making it difficult for public safety to get the robust network capacity they need to do their jobs. That's where FirstNet will help, by providing needed bandwidth to coordinate public safety resources and respond to any incidents.



info@firstnet.gov | www.firstnet.gov | 571-665-6100

(revised October 2016)



FirstNet™

10 WAYS FIRSTNET WILL HELP PUBLIC SAFETY SAVE LIVES AND SECURE COMMUNITIES



6. Delivering actionable data via innovative apps, devices

Public safety needs data communications in the field and innovative public safety communications technology. That's why the FirstNet network is designed to deliver applications, devices, and services tailored to the needs of public safety. FirstNet will be a resilient, reliable network, enabling everything from smartphones to laptops, tablets, dongles, and specialty devices to work when public safety needs them the most.



7. Providing reliability and security when disaster strikes

First responders in every state face the challenge of preparing for and responding to natural disasters. Having reliable communications is an integral component of any plan or response effort. FirstNet can help public safety save lives and secure communities by ensuring a reliable communication system is in place to assist public safety and rescue crews before, during, and after a natural disaster.



8. Ensuring coordinated response to man-made disasters

In the face of man-made attacks or natural disasters, the ability to communicate is essential to first responders. Incident commanders need to convey vital data to every first responder—fast. They need to know if resources from neighboring jurisdictions can be available. FirstNet is working to deliver a broadband network with interoperability built-in from day one to enhance public safety's ability to protect and serve.



9. Driving innovation in life-saving, public safety communications technology

With the potential for millions of users on a single LTE network, FirstNet hopes to foster creation of a new ecosystem in which entities compete to deliver applications and other services through the FirstNet network. The nationwide scale brought by FirstNet will maximize the value of every public safety dollar spent by allowing public safety end-users to take advantage of an increasingly competitive marketplace.



10. The network first responders need to keep our communities safe

FirstNet is taking a "for public safety, by public safety" approach to planning and deploying the network. Through its consultation and outreach program, FirstNet has worked hand-in-hand with the public safety community to understand the capacity, coverage, service, and other public-safety-grade features they need to communicate and use 21st-century tools on the job.



info@firstnet.gov | www.firstnet.gov | 571-665-6100

(revised October 2018)

MIRT Team Training Becomes a Rescue Mission

On October 20, 2020, the DFS Hazardous Materials Response's Maritime Incident Response Team (MIRT) hosted a multi-agency maritime training drill on Onset Bay, in Wareham. The goal of the training was first to conduct ship boarding, search procedures, and then two exercises. The first exercise was identification of an unknown hazardous material released on a ferry. The second exercise was to find radioactive material hidden on a vessel and keep the vessel from escaping by using passage choke points until they located on which vessel it was stowed. The radioactive material was a training source that posed no hazard to people but was detectable by meters.

Just before the start of the choke point evolution, the Wareham Department of Natural Resources (DNR) received a report that a person had jumped off a bridge into the waterway about a half mile from the training location.

Vessels participating in the training from Wareham DNR, Bourne Fire, Bourne DNR, Mass. Environmental Police, and Mass. State Police, staffed with MIRT hazardous material technicians all immediately responded to the scene. Additional boats from Wareham and Onset Fire Departments engaged in a DEP oil spill exercise in the same area also responded.

Within minutes the rapid response fleet was on scene. The Wareham DNR boat was first to reach the man and pulled him safely from the water while surrounded by all the other responding vessels. The victim was brought to shore, transferred to Bourne Fire ambulance, and taken to the hospital with no reported injuries. Given that so many vessels with trained first responders were in the area at the time the man jumped, this may just be one of the fastest, full strength responses in Massachusetts history.



New Downrange Cameras

for HazMat and Bomb Squad

The DFS Hazardous Materials Response Division, together with the Massachusetts State Police Bomb Squad applied for, and was awarded, a grant to purchase 11 Vorbeck downrange camera system kits. These camera kits will be deployed in the six HazMat districts in Massachusetts.

Each Vorbeck system has six nodes. Each node creates its own mobile ad hoc network (MANET) capable of audio and visual monitoring in a hot zone. The system is controlled from a safe distance from the hot zone. The system is self-healing. This means that if one node cannot transmit or receive a signal to incident command, the

other nodes reconfigure to open a pathway to continue transmitting. Additional kits can be added to expand the network to assure a continuous signal.

The Vorbeck downrange camera system expands capabilities on scene with reliable communications that can be live-streamed. The Vorbeck kits allow incident command and subject matter experts to monitor hot zone operations performed by HazMat technicians and state troopers from a safe distance. These tools are a valuable new asset in incident investigations.

Fire Investigation News

Explosive and Fireworks Removals and Incidents

Fireworks and Explosives Removed from Ludlow Home

On July 8, 2020, the family of a former police officer asked the Ludlow Police Department to remove weapons from a home. The former officer was found dead earlier in the day by a home health aide. While searching the home for the weapons, police found a large supply of homemade fireworks and component materials, consumer grade fireworks, and possible M-class devices (homemade explosive devices). They notified the State Police Bomb Squad. The fireworks filled a small room in the basement and were spread throughout the basement. There was evidence of an illegal distribution operation. The Bomb Squad determined that the fireworks, the M-class devices and commercial grade fireworks had to be disposed of immediately to protect public safety. It took nearly 24 hours to assess the items, determine which items needed immediate disposal and to transport and destroy them in a safe location.

Turners Falls Man Summoned for Unlawful Possession of Fireworks

A Turners Falls man was seriously injured while lighting off fireworks in his yard on July 18, 2020. There were no other injuries or property damage as a result of this incident. The man was issued a summons to court on one count of unlawful possession of fireworks.

The incident was jointly investigated by the Turners Falls Fire Department and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The Colrain Volunteer Ambulance Association, Inc. provided emergency medical care at the incident.

Mashpee Man Charged with Possession of Fireworks, Explosives and Explosive Device

Jeffrey D. Roberts, of Mashpee, was arraigned in Falmouth District Court on September 17, 2020 on charges of possession of fireworks, possession of an explosive device, and production of an explosive device.

The charges stem from an August 28, 2020 incident at 300 Falmouth Road in Mashpee when a person suffered burns from fireworks. Fireworks and evidence of making homemade explosive devices were found inside Mr. Roberts' apartment. The materials were removed to a safe location late that night and countercharged by the State Police Bomb Squad the next day.

The Mashpee Police and Fire, State Police Bomb Squad and fire investigators assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the case. A specially trained state HazMat Team assisted by identifying powders and chemicals in the home. The Massachusetts State Police Air

Wing and the Mashpee Department of Public Works provided assistance with the safe disposal of all materials.

The explosives found in Roberts' apartment posed a significant risk to other building residents. It is fortunate that only one person was injured.

Holyoke Man Charged with Possession of Explosive Devices

On September 15, 2020, the Holyoke Police responded to 91 Pleasant Street and discovered pipe bombs. After executing a search warrant, the police also found bomb-making materials. The State Police Bomb Squad rendered the items safe for evaluation and submitted evidence to the State Police Crime Lab.

Gregory Bennett, age 29, was charged with four counts of possession of an explosive device.

The response involved the Holyoke Police, Fire and Public Works Departments, the State Police Bomb Squad and Fire Investigation Unit assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, a special state Hazardous Materials team, State Police detectives assigned to the Office of Hampden District Attorney, State Police Crime Scene Services, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Joint Terrorism Task Force.

Explosives Removed from Monterey Home

The State Police Detective Unit assigned to the Berkshire District Attorney's Office, State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and Monterey Police executed a search warrant for a home on West Road on October 2, 2020. The investigation focused on illegal manufacturing and sale of homemade M-Class explosive devices.

The State Police Bomb Squad and State Police fire investigators secured dozens of completed destructive devices and explosive components. The materials were transported to a secure location and safely countercharged by the State Police Bomb Squad.

Gregory Murphy, 60, was summoned to court on October 22 to face multiple charges on the illegal possession, manufacture and sale of explosive devices.

Investigators do not believe that Murphy was a direct threat to the public. However, his large collection of WWII memorabilia, including Nazi material, was an initial cause for concern.

Multiple agencies assisted in the investigation and execution of the search warrant including: Monterey Police, Fire and Public Works Departments, the State Police Detective Unit, State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit, State Police Crime Scene Services, State

Police Joint Terrorism Task Force, State Fire Marshal's Office, Berkshire County Sheriff's Office, the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Connecticut State Police, HazMat technicians from the Joint Hazard Incident Response Team (JHIRT) and the Special Operations Unit of the Department of Fire Services (DFS) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Explosive Devices and Materials Found in Reading Home

On November 19, 2020, Reading Police conducted a well-being check on an elderly man in failing health. They found what appeared to be a grenade. When the State Police Bomb Squad arrived, they discovered two WWII MK2 hand grenades, a military smoke grenade and an M29 practice rifle grenade. The items were all inert. They also found over eighty M-Class devices and twenty-five pounds of gunpowder. The Bomb Squad removed and burned the powder and countercharged the M-Class devices at a safe location. The Reading Police Department is handling the case.

Solar Panel Power Cord Causes Medway House Fire

The cause of the fire at 6 Samoset Circle in Medway was a solar panel power cord. The damage was discovered by the homeowner on September 3, 2020 but the fire occurred in the past. The fire damaged the roof and attic of the home.

The solar panel power cord was in direct contact with asphalt roof shingles. Over a long period of time, the cord smoldered, melted into the shingles and heated the plywood of the roof and rafters below. Solar panel power cords should not be in direct contact with roofing materials because they generate a lot of heat.

The homeowner first noticed evidence of the fire when he was looking for the source of a roof leak. He notified the fire department. How long the heating process occurred before the fire started cannot be determined. The cord would have been energized during sunlight hours.

This was the second fire in two weeks in Medway from solar panel cords coming in direct contact with roofs.

The Medway Fire Department and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

Rooming House Fires

Smoking Cause of Spencer Rooming House Fire

The improper use and disposal of smoking materials caused the August 10, 2020 fire at 204 Main Street in



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ArsonWatch 
reward program

We'll pay you up to \$5,000 for any information which helps detect or prevent an arson fire. All calls are held in strict confidence. Amount of reward to be determined by the extent of information given.

ALL CALLS TOTALLY CONFIDENTIAL

Spencer. The 26-unit rooming house suffered an estimated \$80,000 in damage. No residents were injured but one firefighter was treated and released from a local hospital. Nineteen residents were displaced.

The fire started on a windowsill of the old balloon-frame building. Embers from smoking materials got inside the windowsill frame and traveled inside walls to the attic. The fire smoldered for a long time before breaking out.

Balloon frame construction was used in many New England buildings in the last two centuries. The construction includes few, or no, fire stops inside the walls. This allows fire to travel quickly, often before occupants are aware of danger.

The Spencer Fire and Police Departments, the District 7 Fire Investigation Team, and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

The building was equipped with a residential sprinkler system that is designed for life safety – to allow occupants more time to escape. The sprinkler system protected occupied areas only, but not the attic or concealed spaces. Because the fire was inside the walls and the attic, the sprinklers never activated. Fortunately, everyone escaped safely.

Lawrence Man Arrested for Rooming House Fire

Raymond Rivera, age 31, of 233 Jackson Street in Lawrence was arrested for setting a fire to the rooming house where he lived on November 16, 2020. The fire alarm in the 10-room building notified the fire department at 11:36 a.m.

Shortly before the fire alarm sounded, other building

Continued on next page

residents heard Mr. Rivera making a lot of noise in his room and then leave the building. Investigators determined that the fire started in Mr. Rivera's room and was set intentionally. Rivera was held overnight at the Lawrence Police Department and arraigned at Lawrence District Court on one charge of dwelling arson.

Lawrence police detectives, fire department investigators and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated this fire. The case will be prosecuted by the Essex District Attorney's Office.

Arrest Made in Lawrence Arson Fire

Investigators Thank Community for Coming Forward

Carlos Martinez, 43, of Lawrence, was arrested on October 28, 2020 for setting the October 24, 2020 fire at 358-360 Andover Street in Lawrence. He is charged with one count of attempting to burn a building, malicious destruction of property, breaking and entering in the nighttime to commit a felony, and larceny under \$250. He was held overnight at the Lawrence Police Department and arraigned at Lawrence District Court.

Lawrence police detectives, fire department investigators and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated this fire. Officials thanked members of the community who came forward confidentially to assist the investigation. Tips to the Arson Hotline were helpful in solving this case.

Propane Leak Focus of Nantucket House Explosion

A propane leak is the focus of the investigation into the November 12, 2020 house explosion at 11 Woodbury Lane in Nantucket. Three houses were damaged by fire and at least 15 more were damaged by the explosion. Damages are estimated at \$15 million. One man was injured. He was taken to a Boston hospital where he was in stable condition. His injuries were from the explosion rather than the fire.

Members of the Nantucket Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal are jointly investigating the explosion and ensuing fire. Code compliance officers from the state Department of Fire Services are assisting. Insurance investigators will be conducting separate but parallel investigations. Investigators will work to determine the source of the leak and how it traveled. Firefighters saw the ground on fire, indicating propane was leaking up through the soil. Given the damage, the exact ignition source may not be known. It may have been any pilot light, open flame or spark from a compressor.

Testing of tanks and piping inside and outside the affected homes should help to narrow down the source of the leak. This incident is likely to lead to a prolonged negotiations among insurance companies looking to subrogate the large loss.

Code compliance investigators immediately looked into whether a lack of odorant was a factor in the incident, as it was several years ago in a fatal Norfolk explosion and fire. That investigation uncovered a wide-spread issue with lack of odorant or insufficient odorant throughout Massachusetts and the entire East Coast.

Lack of odorant was not a factor in the Nantucket incident. Nor did there seem to be any connection between propane service providers. This information allowed fire officials to determine there was no connection between this incident and another propane explosion on the island on November 4 that caused two injuries. The only commonality is that both investigations are focused on propane leaks. The earlier incident remains under investigation in the hope that one of the victims recovers enough to speak with investigators.

No Working Smoke Alarms in Fatal Douglas Fire

A man died in a November 10, 2020 fire at 31 Glen Street in Douglas. The fire in the single family home was reported at 10:20 p.m. Members of the Douglas Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of the Worcester District Attorney jointly investigated this fire. Assistance was received from the Department of Fire Services Code Compliance Unit and the State Police Crime Scene Services. The home had no working smoke or carbon monoxide alarms.



Bondi's Island fire.

Spontaneous Combustion Cause of Agawam Fire

A fire on Bondi's Island in Agawam was caused by spontaneous combustion in a large brush pile that included leaves, stumps and logs. High winds fanned the flames and spread the fire quickly. It started shortly after 1 p.m. on October 15, 2020 and took firefighters five days to bring under control. They managed to keep it from spreading to populated areas of West Springfield, the landfill, trash incinerator and the water treatment plant that are also located at the Bondi's Island facility. There were no injuries.

The fire was jointly investigated by members of the Agawam Fire Department and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

A state Hazardous Materials Response team provided fire ground air monitoring. The Statewide Fire Mobilization Plan activated tanker task forces to bring in teams of firefighters from other communities to provide additional staffing and water capacity for the multi-day operation. The Department of Fire Services Special Operations Unit also provided resources to help the Agawam Fire Department manage the large-scale incident.

Fatal Southbridge Fire was Accidental

The October 15, 2020 fatal fire at 217 Dennison Lane in Southbridge will remain officially undetermined, but is considered accidental. Sandra L. Provost, age 74, the sole resident of the single-family home, did not survive the fire.

The fire originated in an upstairs bedroom of the split-level home. The official cause of the fire will remain undetermined because none of the potential ignition sources in the area of origin could be ruled out. The likely cause of the fire is either discarded smoking materials, an energized hot plate, or an overloaded power strip.

Members of the Southbridge Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of the Worcester District Attorney jointly investigated the fire. The Department of Fire Services Code Compliance Unit and State Police Crime Scene Services provided assistance.

Cambridge Fatal Fire Accidental

Fire Prevention Week Tragedy Underscores Need for Working Smoke Alarms

The October 7, 2020 fatal fire at 34 Buckingham Street in Cambridge was accidental. The fire was reported by neighbors at 5:22 a.m. and went to 3-alarms. Blanca Colannino, 77, the sole resident of the single-family home, was rescued by firefighters but she succumbed to her injuries at a local hospital. Three firefighters were injured. They were treated

and released from a local hospital. Damage to the home was extensive.

The fire originated in a second floor bedroom. An electric blanket was found on the floor, plugged in and an extension cord was plugged into a wall air conditioner. An electrical malfunction of the blanket, the extension cord or the outlet are possible causes of the fire. The resident often used candles in her room and that cannot be eliminated as a possible cause. There is no indication that the fire was intentionally set. Because there are several possible causes that cannot be ruled out, the fire will remain officially undetermined but is considered accidental.

The first firefighters on the scene did not hear smoke alarms sounding and none were found in the debris. It appears the fire had been burning for a while before it broke out of windows and was noticed by neighbors.

Members of the Cambridge Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of the Middlesex District Attorney jointly investigated the fire. The Department of Fire Services Code Compliance Unit and State Police Crime Scene Services provided assistance.

Framingham Fatal Fire Started in the Kitchen

The September 29, 2020 fatal fire at 15 Clark Street in Framingham was accidental. The early morning fire took the life of the sole resident of the apartment, Harold Anderson Jr., age 29. There were no other injuries and damages are estimated at \$60,000. The fire started in the kitchen on or near the stove. Whether there was a cooking accident, a malfunction of the stove or an electrical malfunction cannot be determined due to the damage. There is nothing to suggest an intentionally-set fire.

Members of the Framingham Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of the Middlesex District Attorney jointly investigated the fire.

Sandwich Garden Center Fire Accidental

The September 26, 2020 fire at Russo's Cape Cod Bark and Landscape at 145 Route 30 in Sandwich was accidental. The fire started in an antique Model A pick-up truck being worked on inside a garage. A fire in the engine compartment ignited nearby gasoline vapors. The fire quickly spread to 60 bales of hay and the retail area of the garden center. The building is a total loss and damages are estimated at \$600,000. One firefighter suffered minor injuries. The antique truck and other vehicles inside the garage were destroyed along with the building.

Continued on next page

The Sandwich Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire. Explosions heard during the fire were from aerosol cans exploding. A state HazMat team responded to monitor fire ground air quality because of the materials stored in the garden center. No hazards were detected.

Illegal Marijuana Grow Fires

Electrical Fire in Home Altered to Support Marijuana Grow

The cause of the July 8, 2020 fire at 26 Vine Street in Andover was electrical. The fire caused an estimated \$350,000 in damage to the single-family home. It is a total loss. There were no injuries.

The fire originated in a breezeway where a window air conditioner was plugged into a 4-way extension cord. Propane tanks stored in the area fueled the fire.

Members of the Andover Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

The electrical system in the home had been altered significantly to support an elaborate marijuana grow in the garage. The garage was equipped with numerous subpanels, heavy electrical wires, and a domestic water line, which were drilled through the walls & floors to supply energy/water from the basement. No marijuana plants were on the property at the time of the incident.

These are exactly the sort of unpermitted modifications that fire and building officials are concerned will lead to more fires and injuries. DFS has a one-page flyer to educate people on how to grow marijuana safely at home. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *Cannabis Fire Safety*.

Improperly Installed Solar Power System for Illegal Marijuana Grow

The cause of the November 9, 2020 fire at 717 Bernardston Road in Greenfield was an improperly installed solar power system used, in part, to power an illegal marijuana grow. The Greenfield Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire. Because of concerns about possible hazardous chemicals in the building, a state Hazardous Materials Response Team conducted fire ground air monitoring for the fire department at the scene. A Joint Hazard Incident Response Team (JHIRT), made up

Fire and building officials are concerned that unpermitted building modifications will lead to more fires and injuries. DFS has a flyer to educate people on how to grow marijuana safely at home. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for Cannabis Fire Safety.

of cross-trained State Police Bomb and state HazMat technicians, responded to assess the home and garage for hazardous or explosive items. None were found.

Arson of Hay Bales Painted with a Campaign Sign

On October 9, 2020, a political sign made of wrapped hay bales in Dalton was intentionally set on fire. The hay bales were painted with two American flags and the words: USA, Biden, Harris, Vote, and 2020.

Lonnie Durfee, age 49, was arrested the next day, arraigned on October 13 and held pending a dangerousness hearing. Investigators determined he used gasoline and motor oil to set the bales on fire.

Fortunately, the farmer was nearby when he was alerted to the fire. He and his staff were able to put the fire out quickly. Hay is an important part of his operation. He was able to create a new display with the words: Love, Unity and Respect.

The fire was jointly investigated by members of the Dalton Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

Jacob's Pillow Theater Destroyed

Sprinkler System Not Functioning

Jacob's Pillow, a beloved and nationally-known dance performance venue in Becket, had a fire on November 17, 2020. The fire destroyed the Doris Duke Theatre, one of two theaters on the property. The insurance company is investigating issues with the fire suppression system which was not functioning. The fire is being jointly investigated by the Becket Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The investigation is ongoing and no cause has been determined. Examination of the fire scene was extremely limited because an excavator was used to help extinguish the fire.

2021 License Examination Schedule

COVID-19 State of Emergency and License Renewals

Any state license, permit or registration that expired between March 18 and July 10 had to be renewed by October 9, 2020. The Governor's Order that provided extensions has ended. Please submit your renewal materials as soon as possible.

Any license, permit or registration that expires now must be renewed on time. We continue to process license renewals on a daily basis.

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. Search for *DFS Licensing*. For questions, contact the Licensing Desk at 978-567-3700 or at dfs.licensing@state.ma.us.

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. Search for *BPV Exams*. For questions contact the Boiler & Pressure Vessel Program at (978) 567-3780 or at BPV.Exams@MassMail.State.MA.US.

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 and search for *DFS licensing*.

Examination Schedule	Examination Dates	Deadlines for Applications
FSD Exams	Exams start at 10:00 a.m.	
Fire Suppression	January 20, 2021	January 1, 2021
Commercial Hood Cleaning	March 10, 2021	February 19, 2021
	May 12, 2021	April 23, 2021
Cannon/Mortar, Fireworks, Special Effects, Blasting, Blasting R&D	February 17, 2021	January 29, 2021
	April 21, 2021	April 2, 2021
	June 9, 2021	May 21, 2021
BPV Exams	Exams start at 9:00 a.m.	
Oil Burner, Fireman & Engineer (all classes)	March 31, 2021	February 26, 2021
	April 28, 2021	March 26, 2021
	May 26, 2021	April 30, 2021
	June 30, 2021	May 28, 2021
	July 28, 2021	June 25, 2021
	August 25, 2021	July 30, 2021
	September 29, 2021	August 27, 2021
	October 27, 2021	September 24, 2021
	November 24, 2021	October 29, 2021
	December 29, 2021	November 26, 2021

Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations



Class #BW04



Class #285



Class #S17



Class #BW05

Career Recruit Firefighting Training

In the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighting 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 mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Career Recruit Program all students have met the 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 new Bridgewater campus.

Training Safely During the Pandemic

In response to the pandemic, the 10-week curriculum was reorganized to take advantage of online learning technology while ensuring plenty of practical skill experience on-campus with instructors. Students alternated between the virtual classroom for two weeks, on campus for practical training (using special safeguards and social distancing) for four weeks, back to the virtual classroom for a week, returning to campus for two weeks and finishing the final week in the virtual classroom.

Class #BW04

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW04 graduated on October 9, 2020. The 16 graduates represent the ten fire departments of Avon, Belmont, Bourne, Dennis, Marshfield, Sharon, Somerset, Wrentham, Whitman and Yarmouth.

Class #285

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #285 graduated on October 9, 2020. The 15 graduates represent the six fire departments of Ashland, Devens, Littleton, Plymouth, Wilmington, and Winthrop.

Class #S17

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S17 graduated on October 9, 2020. The 15 graduates represent the six fire departments of Chicopee, Dudley, Holyoke, Ludlow, Springfield, and Wayland.

Class #BW04 trained at the Bridgewater campus, Class #285 trained at the Stow campus, and Class #S17 trained at the

Springfield campus. The joint ceremony was held at the Department of Fire Services Bridgewater campus.

Class #BW05

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW05 graduated on November 6, 2020. The 18 graduates represent the nine fire departments of Bourne, Franklin, Hanover, Hingham, Hopkinton, Milton, Newton, Seekonk, and Stoughton.

Class #286

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #286 graduated on November 6, 2020. The 17 graduates represent the 11 fire departments of Framingham, Lexington, Nantucket, Natick, North Attleboro, Plymouth, Reading, Swampscott, Wilmington, Winchester, and Winthrop.

Class #S18

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S18 graduated on November 6, 2020. The 13 graduates represent the four fire departments of Athol, Longmeadow, Springfield, and Westfield.

Class #BW05 trained at the Bridgewater campus, Class #286 trained at the Stow campus and Class #S18 trained at the Springfield campus. They graduated together in a ceremony at the Department of Fire Services Springfield campus.

Class #BW06

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW06 graduated on December 4, 2020. The 17 graduates represent the nine fire departments of Blackstone, Mashpee, Medfield, Norfolk, Norwell, Revere, Sandwich, Scituate, and Walpole.

Class #287

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #287 graduated on December 4, 2020. The 18 graduates represent the ten fire departments of Andover, Billerica, Boxborough, Dedham, Framingham, Methuen, North Attleboro, Springfield, Weston, and Woburn.

Class #S19

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S19 graduated on December 4, 2020. The ten graduates represent the eight fire departments of Acton, Agawam, Amesbury, Holden, Ludlow, Pittsfield, Westfield, and West Springfield.

Class #BW06 trained at the Bridgewater campus, Class #287 trained at the Stow campus and Class #S19 trained at the Springfield campus.



Class #286



Class #S18



Class #BW06



Class #287

Continued on next page



Class #S19



Class #BW07



Class #288



Class #86

Class #BW07

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW07 graduated on January 8, 2021. The 15 graduates represent the 12 fire departments of Abington, Canton, Dennis, East Bridgewater, Harwich, Hingham, Hull, Marlborough, Mashpee, Newton, Walpole, and Weston.

Class #288

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #288 graduated on January 8, 2021. The 12 graduates represent the eight fire departments of Acton, Billerica, Cambridge, Foxborough, Natick, Shrewsbury, Templeton, and Tewksbury.

Class #BW07 trained at the Bridgewater campus and Class #288 trained at the Stow campus.

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. Graduates complete 240 hours of training. Bringing the training closer to the firefighters often means more firefighters can participate. The program uses an online format that has students doing more work outside of class and taking quizzes online. This allows students more time to practice training skills with instructors and to better control their own workloads and time commitments. Upon successful completion of this program, all students have met the standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001.

Class #86

Members of Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Class #86 graduated on November 5, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Stow campus. The 38 graduates represent the 25 fire departments of Athol, Ayer, Barre, Berlin, Carlisle, Dover, Dunstable, Groton, Harvard, Holden, Hopedale, Leicester, Millville, Oxford, Pepperell, Princeton, Sherborn, Shrewsbury, Southborough, Stow, Tyngsborough, Upton, Uxbridge, West Boylston, and Weston.

Class #87

Members of Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Class #87 graduated on November 4, 2020 at the Fall River Fire Department headquarters. The 33 graduates represent the 14 fire departments of Avon, Berkley, Dartmouth-District 1, Dartmouth-District 3, Dighton, Freetown, Halifax, Lakeville, Marion, Mattapoisett, Plympton, Raynham, Wareham, and Westport.

Continued on next page

New Cancer Screening Program

Firefighters are at greater risk for certain types of cancer than the general public. Studies have shown that low-dose CT screening detects many health issues at early stages, when treatment can be more effective. The Department of Fire Services (DFS) is launching a program of free chest CT scans for eligible firefighters.

To be eligible for a free chest CT scan, a firefighter must meet the following criteria:

- be a resident of Massachusetts;
- have been a Massachusetts firefighter for at least 10 years;
- be at least 40 years old;
- have attended a Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA) skin cancer screening (SCA), or a *Taking Action*

Against Cancer in the Fire Service (422) class in the past three years (after 07/01/2017);

- provide MFA with the name, phone and FAX number of their primary care provider (PCP);
- register through the Learning Management System (LMS);
- answer truthfully and electronically sign a waiver.

Firefighters can apply for the free screening through the LMS. Eligible firefighters will receive a voucher to use with the approved vendor. The LMS has information about the application process.

More detailed information about the program has been sent to all fire chiefs. For questions, contact DFS.Cancerscreening@mass.gov.

E-K9 Re-Certification

On December 15, 2020, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) came to the DFS Bridgewater campus to re-certify explosive detection canine (E-K9) Nancy and her handler Trooper Michael Rockett of the Bomb Squad. They passed the re-certification with flying colors.

E-K9 Nancy is an ATF dog. She and Trooper Rockett are part of a program where they work for both the Massachusetts State Police and the ATF. The pandemic prevented Trooper Rockett from traveling to Virginia for the re-certification exam this year. Nancy can detect the odor of numerous explosive compounds accurately with a nose that is many times more sensitive than a human nose.



MFA Graduations, *continued from previous page*



Class #87

Class #88

Members of Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Class #88 graduated on December 16, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Springfield campus. The 27 graduates represent



Class #88

the 17 fire departments of Adams, Agawam, Belchertown, Blandford, Bondsville, Grafton, Granby, Great Barrington, Hampden, Hancock, Huntington, Leverett, North Adams, Palmer, Shelburne Falls, Sunderland, and Warren.



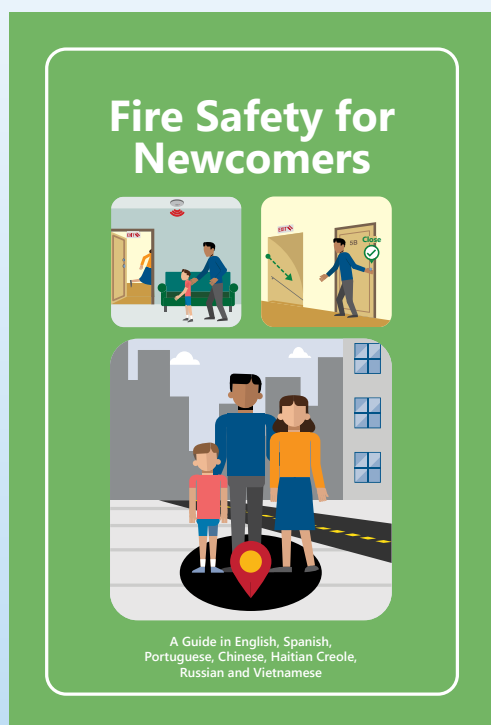
Department of Fire Services
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
978-567-3100

www.mass.gov/dfs



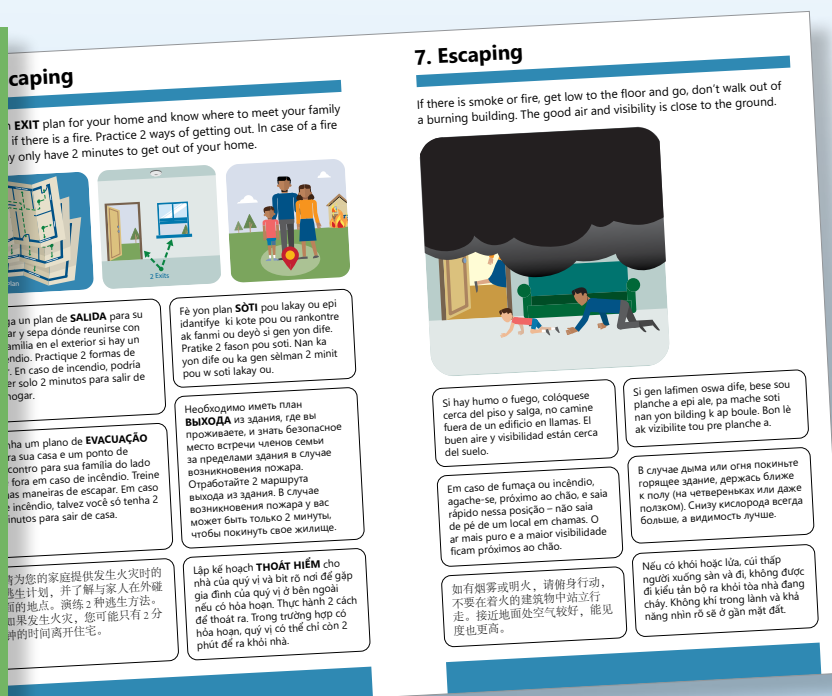
Fire Safety for Newcomers Available Now

26 Fire Safety Tips in 7 Languages



The Department of Fire Services (DFS) has revised its *Fire Safety for Newcomers* booklet designed for recent immigrants and everyone who speaks languages other than English. This user-friendly guide has low-literacy illustrations that reinforce understanding of each fire safety tip. The booklet covers everything from smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, to calling 911. Other tips include cooking and electrical safety topics, home escape plans, smoking and space heater safety, burns, and matches and lighters.

This is a major revision of the booklet first created in the mid-1980s. The updated illustrations come from the U.S.



Fire Administration's series of low-literacy pictographs. Some have been edited or created in their style, with their permission, to fit the particular message. The Mass. FAIR Plan has generously donated the printing of this new revision, as they did for the previous version. DFS is extremely grateful to them for this support.

Newcomers is available online at www.mass.gov/dfs. Search for *Fire Safety for Newcomers*. You can request hard copies of the guide to distribute in your community by contacting the Department of Fire Services' Fire Data and Public Education Unit at (978) 567-3387 or 3388.