

All Hands **Herald**

Massachusetts Department of Fire Services

January 2023

January is
**Firefighter Cancer
Awareness Month**

**33rd Annual Firefighter of
the Year Awards**

CSX Railcar Safety Training

**Rapid Intervention
Program Updates**

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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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From the Fire Marshal

January is Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month

Firefighting is an inherently dangerous calling, and the greatest danger facing firefighters today is occupational cancer. Almost 75% of the firefighters whose names were added to the IAFF Fallen Firefighter Memorial last year died after battling cancer, not fires.

January was declared Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month to draw attention to this major health issue in the fire service. Fire service agencies will be promoting cancer awareness, prevention, and early detection all month long, and we at the Department of Fire Services and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy will be taking part, as well. You can read about the cancer screening programs we offer on page 2. As a support agency for the Massachusetts fire service, we hope all our customers — call, volunteer, career, and retired — will take advantage of them.

Finally, if you or a colleague haven't taken part in the updated *Taking Action Against Cancer in the Fire Service* presentation we offer through the Academy, please consider doing it this month. Developed by our friends at the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN), the program was enhanced in 2021 to include new statistics, videos, additional information on early detection, and more. In addition to in-person delivery, it will be presented on January 10 and January 25 in the Virtual Classroom, where you can view it from the comfort and convenience of your home or firehouse.

Firefighter Safety Equipment Grants Support NFPA 3000

The Commonwealth's Firefighter Safety Equipment Grants support cancer prevention in the fire service by helping to fund new turnout gear, washer-extractor units, and other purchases. They support fire suppression, interoperable communications, and rescue operations. And more than ever before, they're now supporting firefighter safety at the scene of an active shooter or other hostile event.

Last year, Massachusetts adopted NFPA 3000 as the statewide Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) framework. To promote access to ballistic protective equipment and related items in the warm zones where firefighters may be called to act in rescue task forces, the Department of Fire Services designated helmets, vests, and medical equipment as high-priority purchases that could be reimbursed through this year's Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program. As a result, the number of approved

applications for ballistic helmets and vests rose from 90 in FY22 to 1,104 in FY23 — an increase of more than 1,000%.

Active shooter incidents in the United States more than doubled between 2019 and 2021. We are grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration and the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security for helping to ensure that our firefighters are prepared when they respond to one.

Home Heating Fire Risks

As we enter the coldest time of the year in a season of historically high energy costs, many residents will be turning to alternative heating sources. Fireplaces, wood stoves, space heaters, and other appliances may be put into service after years of disuse, or they may be used unsafely by people unfamiliar with their operation. Circumstances like these have led to too many tragedies, including the one that killed a mother and four children in Warwick six years ago.

Fire service professionals can help prevent devastating incidents like these by educating the public. Some messages are important year-round, such as the need for smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and home escape planning. For seasonal messaging, please feel free to use the tools we offer on the DFS website's Winter Home Heating Safety page: www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe. You'll have access to printable flyers in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Russian, and Vietnamese; our Keep Warm, Keep Safe brochure, which can be downloaded or ordered in bulk through the Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse; video clips; and other resources.

We will continue to promote home heating safety, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and home escape planning on our social media channels, and you are always welcome to share our posts or customize them for your communities. Let's help residents keep warm and keep safe this winter.

New MFA Director

Please join me in welcoming Jeffrey P. Winn to our team as the new director of the Massachusetts Firefighting



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DFS and MFA OFFER Cancer Awareness, Prevention, & Early Detection Programs



Occupational cancer is the leading cause of death in the fire service, and January is Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. Between 2015 and 2020, 75% of the firefighters added to the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial died from occupational cancer.

Through the Massachusetts Fire Academy (MFA), the Department of Fire Services (DFS) offers a variety of cancer awareness, prevention, and early detection programs to address this unique occupational hazard. These programs are available to all Massachusetts firefighters, whether they are retired, call/volunteer, or career. Few other states — if any — offer their firefighters the range of cancer screenings that we do.

"Firefighters are more likely to be diagnosed with cancer, to develop it at a younger age, and to receive a later diagnosis," said State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey. "Please take advantage of the awareness programs and cancer screenings that firefighters in other states are fighting to get. Do it for yourself and your family today so you can enjoy a long and healthy retirement tomorrow."

"We know that taking part in these screenings can provoke some anxiety, but they could save your life," said Abby Baker, Firefighter Cancer Screening Program Coordinator for the MFA. "Please, just do it!"

Occupational Cancer Screening Program

Throughout Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month, the MFA is offering additional presentations of *Taking Action against Cancer in the Fire Service*, an informational program developed by the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN). It highlights cancer prevention and early detection. More than 8,000 Massachusetts firefighters have taken part. It's provided to all new recruits as part of training, and it's available online or in person at local firehouses for all active duty or retired firefighters.

An increased number of **free skin cancer screenings** will also be offered across the state during Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. Since 2018, DFS and the MFA have worked in partnership with Dr. Christine Kannler, a dermatologist, to provide free skin cancer screenings for Massachusetts firefighters. We have screened close to 3,500 firefighters at 150 locations. Nearly 16% of the screened firefighters needed follow up. This is significantly higher than the 10% follow-up rate needed in the general population, and it includes at least a dozen

firefighters whose screenings identified potentially deadly malignant melanomas.

MFA staff and volunteer dermatologists are working tirelessly to bring skin cancer screenings to every municipality across the state. Over the past year, the Academy has recruited 19 new dermatologists for the program to meet the demand. This has helped increase the number of screenings we can offer and decrease the number of departments waiting to host them.

Massachusetts is the only state that offers eligible firefighters free **chest CT scans**, which use X-rays and specialized software to create detailed internal images of the chest and upper abdomen to help identify cancer and other anomalies. Firefighters who receive these scans through DFS and the MFA may add an optional calcium score reading at a reduced rate, which can identify possible coronary artery disease before symptoms emerge.

"I know of several firefighters whose calcium scores showed that arteries around the heart were nearly blocked," Baker said. "In every case I'm aware of, the firefighter received a stent and is back on the job. We encourage all firefighters to get this cardiac reading. It can be life-saving for a nominal cost."

Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels are often higher in the blood of people with prostate cancer. Through DFS and the MFA, firefighters may be eligible for free **PSA blood tests** at an earlier age than many insurance companies will cover.

Finally, DFS and the MFA offer free **oral cancer screenings**, provided by a dental hygienist who is also a firefighter. She has traveled to several sites with the cancer screening team and talked to firefighters about oral cancer.

Additional cancer screenings to benefit firefighter health, including mammograms and ultrasounds, are also in the works. To learn more about the DFS/MFA occupational cancer program, including eligibility requirements, visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *occupational cancer*.

Raising Awareness

"Many primary care physicians aren't aware of the special care and earlier tests that firefighters need," Baker said.



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JANUARY IS Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month



Occupational cancer is the leading cause of death in the fire service. The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN) have designated January as Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month to help the fire service reduce the risk of occupational cancer through awareness and prevention.

Each week of Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month, the FCSN is focusing on a theme to build awareness among firefighters, their loved ones, medical professionals, state and federal lawmakers, and other stakeholders:

- Week 1 (1/3-1/8): The Scope of Cancer in the Fire Service
- Week 2 (1/10-1/15): Scientific Research Related to Occupational Cancer
- Week 3 (1/17-1/22): Occupational Cancer Prevention
- Week 4 (1/24-1/29): Survivorship, Leadership and Culture Change

Visit www.firefightercancersupport.org and www.iaff.org/cancer-awareness-month for information and resources.

Firefighter Mike Risacher's Story

North Andover Firefighter Mike Risacher went to a free cancer screening at the Newburyport Fire Department late last year. He learned about the screening in a weekly training update from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA). He has been a firefighter for 26 years. Mike spoke about his experience.

There was a dark spot in the center of my thoracic spine that I wanted to be evaluated. Dr. Christine Kannler did my screening in less than 10 minutes. She scheduled me for a biopsy in her office the next morning at 7:00 a.m. She administered local anesthesia for the biopsy which took about 10 minutes.

She told me she would send the sample out for testing and that I could expect results in approximately 6 days. Three days later, on a Friday afternoon, Dr. Kannler called me with the results. The biopsy was positive for melanoma. She scheduled further extraction for the following Monday, which was a holiday.

Only 1 ½ weeks passed between the day I was screened and the extraction. I am still in the healing stage. I was evaluated 2 weeks after the procedure and will have additional follow-ups. The plan moving forward is skin exams with Dr. Kannler every three months for two years, then every six months for two years, then annually.

I am grateful that the MFA offers the free screenings to firefighters. Since my diagnosis, the North Andover Fire Department is scheduling cancer screenings. I recommend that everyone take advantage of the free screenings. The screening saved my life.



DFS and MFA Offer Cancer Programs, *continued from previous page*

"We're lucky to have partners like Dr. Kannler and Dr. Michael Hamrock, who are working so hard to raise awareness of these issues in the medical community. But firefighters can also help guide their doctors using

information and handouts posted to our website. If you, a friend, or a family member are a firefighter, please visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *occupational cancer* today."

33rd Annual Firefighter of the Year Awards

Individuals and Groups Recognized for Bravery, Heroism, and Service



Medal of Valor recipients Capt. John Lynch and FF John Moloney of Lynn.



Medal of Valor recipients Senior FF Frank Anthony Pappalardo and FF Matthew Cauty of Nahant.

Governor Charlie Baker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, and Public Safety Secretary Terrence M. Reidy joined State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey to honor firefighters from across Massachusetts at the 33rd annual Firefighter of the Year Awards ceremony, held on November 18, 2022, at Worcester's Mechanics Hall. WCVB's Doug Meehan emceed the event.

"Over and over again, we see firefighters putting themselves in harm's way or even life-threatening danger to rescue strangers from harm," said Governor Baker. "These awards reflect selfless acts of courage, compassion, and service by truly remarkable public servants."

"Even by the high standards we see in the fire service every day, certain actions rise above and beyond the call of duty," said Lt. Governor Polito. "The Firefighter of the Year awards recognize those heroes who rush to help whenever that bell rings. On duty or off, they're the ones we can always count on to risk everything so that others might live."

"Across the Commonwealth, professional and volunteer firefighters use their training and expertise to deliver life-saving service in their greatest hour of need," said Public Safety and Security Secretary Terrence Reidy. "We honor today's recipients for their extraordinary acts of bravery and service and extend our sincere gratitude to fire safety personnel who work selflessly and tirelessly to keep our communities safe."

"The common theme in these awards is heroic action to protect vulnerable people from harm," said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey. "It may be pulling a trapped person through the window of a burning home. It may be protecting a distraught person on the ledge of a building. It may be providing education, services, and crisis resources in their communities. And it may be protecting firefighters from the grave threat that occupational cancer poses to

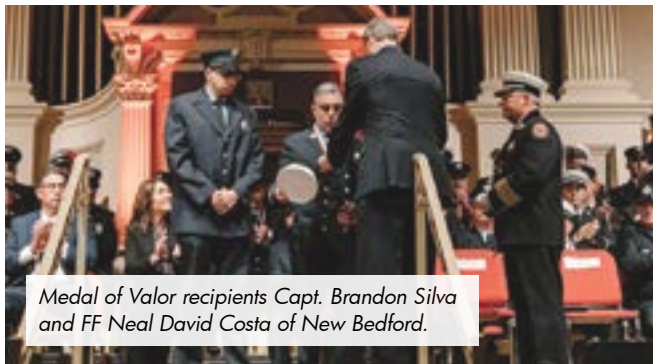


Medal of Valor recipients FF/Paramedic Matthew Higgins and FF/Paramedic Michael Salvucci of Natick.

their health and safety. Regardless of the circumstances, each of them is a true hero."

Governor Baker, Secretary Reidy, and State Fire Marshal Ostroskey presented 10 medals of valor, nine individual citations for meritorious conduct, seven group citations for meritorious conduct, and two Norman Knight Awards for Excellence in Community Service to members of 17 Massachusetts fire departments. The awards reflect lifesaving rescues, lengthy and complex operations at structure fires and crash sites, and off-duty action to render medical aid when every second counted.

The Stephen D. Coan Fire Marshal's Award is the only award for which non-firefighters may be eligible. State Fire Marshal Ostroskey presented this award to Dr. Christine Kannler, who volunteers through the Department of Fire Services and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy to screen thousands of firefighters for skin cancer — a form of occupational cancer for which firefighters are at heightened risk. Her brother, Peter Kannler, was a Chelsea firefighter and Academy instructor who lost his life to occupational cancer at just 37 years old. Dr. Kannler received a standing ovation from a packed house of firefighters, their families, and DFS staff at the ceremony.



Medal of Valor recipients Capt. Brandon Silva and FF Neal David Costa of New Bedford.



Medal of Valor recipients Lt. Charles Bailey and FF Anthony Resendes of New Bedford.



Stephen D. Coan Fire Marshal Award recipient Christine Kannler, M.D.

The awards and recipients are:

Medals of Valor

- Lynn – Capt. John Lynch and FF John Moloney
- Nahant – Senior FF Frank Anthony Pappalardo and FF Matthew Canty
- Natick – FF/Paramedic Matthew Higgins and FF/Paramedic Michael Salvucci
- New Bedford – Lt. Charles Bailey and FF Anthony Resendes
- New Bedford – Capt. Brandon Silva and FF Neal David Costa

Individual Citations for Meritorious Conduct

- Ashby – Dep. Chief James Joseph
- Bellingham – Capt. Robert Provost III
- Fall River – FF Brandon Norbut
- Hopkinton – Lt. Scott Jurasek
- Lawrence – Capt. Eric Zahn
- Springfield – Lt. Brian Couture and FF Joshua Rios
- Tewksbury – Capt. David Carney and Lt. Robert Keddie

Group Citations for Meritorious Conduct

- Berlin (with Bolton) – Capt. Anthony Alessi, Lt. Jonathan Paulino, FF Frank Brewer, and FF/EMT Michelle Deveau
- Bolton (with Berlin) – Fire Chief/Paramedic Jeffrey

Legendre, Capt. Peter Casello, FF/EMT Gregory Childs, FF/Paramedic Shayne Cook, FF/EMT Wesley “Chip” Durant III, FF/Paramedic Jeremy O’Connell, and FF/Paramedic Jason Roach

- Fall River – Dist. Chiefs Jeffrey Bacon and Matt Johnson; Dep. Chief Michael Shea; Captains Paul Berube, Michael Cabral, Eric Caffery, Kevin Emond, Jason Lewis, and Neil Furtado; Lieutenants Jon Braz, Daniel Gerling, Chris Lecomte, Paul Machado, Christopher Medeiros, Michael Medeiros, and Kevin Poirier; Firefighters Bruce Alves, Scott D. Camara, Michael Carvalho, Scott Casey, Scott Chretien, Michael Cusick, Patrick Donnelly, Brian Dorsky, Dave Duarte, Keith Dumaine, Robert Forand, Nick Freitas, Ken Furtado Jr., Anthony Hout, Brandon Jackson, Paul Kosinski, Michael LaFleur, Scott Lovenbury, Gary Martins, Brandon Norbut, Mitchell Nunes, John Pimental, Cristian Ponte, Kyle A. Rogers, Henry Santos Jr., Dennis Sardinha, Brian Shea, Jeffrey Silvia, Ian Stevens, Olusoji Taiwo, Phillip Tessier, Christian Thiboutot, Donovan Torres, and Michael Viveiros.
- Foxborough (with N. Attleborough) – FF/P Cory Shepardson
- Lawrence – Lt. Ryan Lavallee, FF Luis Severino, and FF Jeffrey Young
- Lynn – Capt. John Lynch, FF Thomas Lowry, Jr., FF John Moloney, and FF Michael O’Connor
- New Bedford – Lt. Charles Bailey, FF Richard McCue, FF Anthony Resendes, and FF Kevin Sweet
- North Attleborough (with Foxborough) – Chief Christopher Coleman, Capt. Joshua Langille, Capt. George McKinnon, Lt. Jeffery S. Badger, Lt. Scott Langille, and FF Richard McDonagh (Ret.)
- Stoughton – Capt. George O’Neil, Lt. Ryan Cabral, Lt. David Jardin, FF Jerry Fowler, FF Morgan Genatossio, FF John Hussey, FF Joseph Manganaro, FF George Silva, and FF Justin Slowinski

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CSX Railcar Safety Training

More than 200 Hazmat Professionals Participate



Between September 27 and October 6, 2022, more than 200 Hazmat professionals participated in a series of one-day rail car safety trainings with CSX. The trainings took place in rail yards in Ayer and West Springfield. Over the two weeks, all six district Hazmat teams and 24 students in a Hazmat Technician class participated.

Training Topics

Students began the day with an introduction to diesel/electric locomotives, how they operate, and how firefighters can shut them down during an emergency to make them safe. Instructors also reviewed tank and rail car design and construction. Lectures and hands-on breakout sessions throughout the morning covered valving and domes on railcars, why and how they leak, and how to fix leaks. Students reviewed the use of the Midland Leak Stopping Kits, Chlorine C kits, and a newer, lighter leak-stopping kit from Indian Spring. In the afternoon, students donned chemical suits and ran through multiple leak-stopping scenarios on railcars in the rail yard, using the tools and practicing all they learned in the morning.

The program was taught by CSX professionals and contractors, led by Dave Scoons, the CSX Police Manager of Hazardous Materials. MFA Instructor Captain David Curran of the District 3 Hazmat Team was the liaison who arranged the program through the DFS Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Division. He also assisted CSX personnel with the training.

Training in Rail Yards

“We are very fortunate to have this training on rail cars in the rail yard. Nothing compares to working on a 135-ton locomotive or 125-ton railcar in a working rail yard,” said Captain Curran. For those who have trained on the rail car simulator at the DFS gas school, working on actual rail cars brought a new perspective to the myriad dangers in the

work. The CSX training emphasized safety at every turn. “The sheer size and weight of rail cars and everything in a rail yard is an entirely different environment from the DFS simulator. Everything in a rail yard can injure people due to the size and weight of rail equipment and the cargo being transported,” said Curran.

The Hazmat Division is very grateful to CSX for coordinating the training and for moving the trains for the program to Ayer and West Springfield to allow responders to stay near their districts during training.

Training the Community

In June of 2022, CSX acquired Pan Am Railways. The acquisition means that CSX operates more track in more locations up and down the east coast. CSX is actively reaching out to communities to introduce rail safety to as many first responders as possible. They are sending



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educators to fire and police departments across New England. CSX wants to train first responders in the basics of railcar safety before an incident occurs. The MBTA also trains first responders in passenger train evacuation.

Bring Rail Car Safety Training to Your Department

CSX Railway

For general questions and to set up fire responder training, contact Robert Rohauer at CSX State Relations and Community Affairs, 518-767-6057.

For hazmat questions, contact David Scoons of the CSX Police, 518-376-1819.

MBTA

For questions and to set up commuter rail car first responder training, call the MBTA Police at 617-222-1212.

"Nothing compares to working on a 135-ton locomotive or 125-ton railcar in a working rail yard," said Captain Curran. "Working on actual rail cars brought a new perspective to the myriad dangers in the work."

From the Fire Marshal, *continued from page 1*

Academy. Mr. Winn comes to us after a 34-year career with the Massachusetts National Guard, where he most recently served as deputy chief of staff for personnel. His assignments prior to that include service as chief of the Guard's Training Division, where he was responsible for the planning, coordination, and design of individual and collective training, and as commander of the 1st Weapons of Mass Destruction – Civil Support Team, where he worked closely with civilian authorities responding to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive events. He is a qualified Hazmat technician, CBRN responder, and former call and volunteer firefighter in several western Massachusetts communities.

Personally and professionally, Jeff's background has repeatedly intersected with the fire service and our public protection mission. Organizationally, his administrative and managerial experience will also serve the Academy, our staff, and our customers well. I look forward to working with him in the months ahead, and I want to express my deep appreciation to Deputy State Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier for her tireless work as acting MFA director, where she kept the Academy moving forward during the candidate recruitment process.

Data Points

The DFS Special Operations branch provides direct operational support to local fire departments at emergencies and pre-planned events. Among other resources, our Incident Support Units, Rehab trucks, drones, and other assets are available to assist incident commanders and keep firefighters safe and healthy on the fireground.

Special Operations teams were very busy supporting the Massachusetts fire service in 2022, and especially during a very challenging wildfire season. Their responses included 20 ISU missions, 107 Rehab missions, and 25 drone missions in support of local fire departments. In fact, our Special Operations personnel and apparatus responded to 180 scenes across the state during the five months from April through August 2022 — more than during all 12 months of 2021!

Not all of that activity was related to wildland fires, and it didn't reach the high numbers we saw in 2018, but it does illustrate the almost nonstop pace that Massachusetts firefighters endured last summer. As we confront 2023 together, please remember that these assets are always available as a resource for you, your personnel, and your departments.

Firefighter of the Year Awards, *continued from page 5*

Norman Knight Award for Excellence in Community Service

- Eastham – Lt. Rachel Topal
- Lawrence – FF Juan "Manny" Gonzalez

Stephen D. Coan Fire Marshal Award

- Dr. Christine Kannler, MD, of Harvard, MA

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

Inaugural Delivery



For eight days in October 2022, 29 firefighters from 22 Massachusetts fire departments took part in the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's (MFA) first delivery of the new Structural Collapse Rescue Technician course.

The physically, academically, and mentally challenging course was held at the Department of Fire Services' (DFS) Bridgewater campus, which serves as a center for the MFA's growing Technical Rescue program. Its success was a testament to the hard work of MFA instructors and course development staff, as well as the support and backing of DFS leadership.

The eight-day training included both classroom and practical work. Classroom instruction included the causes of different types of collapses, how to respond to them, and engineering concepts that serve as a foundation for safely lifting, moving, and shoring structures. Students took this knowledge into the drill yard and built their skills handling specialized tools unique to structural collapse. Practical activities included breaching and breaking concrete, using a torch to cut steel, lifting and moving irregular shaped objects, and shoring the interior and exterior of unstable structures.

Participants left the training with valuable new skills for responding to both major incidents and typical calls. They learned how to handle a collapse or partial collapse of a structure, such as when a car crashes into a building; when the structural integrity of a building is compromised after a fire; or when a large tree falls onto a house. Most Massachusetts fire departments handle scenarios like these on a regular basis, and these new skills will translate into more firefighters conducting safer operations and saving more lives more often.

In the near future, students who complete this practical training will be eligible to test for a pro-board certification in structural collapse skills. To sign up for future structural collapse training programs, visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *Learning Management System*.

The DFS Bridgewater campus serves as a center for the MFA's growing Technical Rescue program.



New Resource

Legal Quick Reference Guides for the Fire Service

The Department of Fire Services' legal team often receives guidance requests from fire chiefs and other in the fire service. To help local departments, the DFS General Counsel's office has created *Quick Reference Guides* that answer some of the most common questions. They include:

- **Mutual Aid in the Massachusetts Fire Service** – An overview of the different forms of mutual aid available to the Massachusetts fire service from a legal rather than operational perspective.
- **Ticketing and Administrative Hearing Process for Fire Code Violations** – An overview of the requirements and process to be followed when violations of the fire code are identified and the fire department wants to issue a written notice of code violation and/or refer the case to DFS for further administrative action.
- **Mandatory Retirement Age for Massachusetts Firefighters** – Reviews the history and foundation of Massachusetts laws governing the mandatory retirement age for paid and call firefighters.
- **Line of Duty Death Benefits for Massachusetts Fallen Firefighters** – Outlines the types of benefits available to families of Career and Call/Volunteer firefighters who die in the line of duty and how to access them.
- **Authority of Fire Departments to Enter Buildings for Inspections** – An overview of the Constitutional considerations of entering a building or property to conduct an inspection; exceptions to the warrant requirement; and the administrative warrant process.
- **Delegation of Authority in the Massachusetts Fire Service** – Provides information on the authority to enter

and inspect premises in furtherance of fire prevention duties and how that authority is properly delegated. Includes "pocket card" templates for use by local chiefs.

- **Municipal Liability Considerations for Massachusetts Fire Departments** – An overview of the Massachusetts Tort Claim Act as it relates to what types of claims can be filed against fire departments, who can be held liable, and limitations on damages and statutory immunities.

While these guides are provided to inform and assist local departments, they do not constitute legal advice. For questions about specific legal matters or scenarios, readers should consult with their own legal advisors or the correct authority having jurisdiction. No reader or user of these guides should act or refrain from acting on the basis of information in the guide without first seeking legal advice from counsel in the relevant jurisdiction. Only your individual attorney can provide assurances that the information contained herein – and your interpretation of it – is applicable or appropriate to your particular situation.

More Questions?

Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *Legal Quick Reference Guides for the Fire Service* to read or download the documents.

The Legal team will continue to create *Quick Reference Guides* on common questions and concerns. To suggest a Quick Reference Guide topic, email MaryElizabeth.Lynch@mass.gov.

9/11 Remembrance Ceremony in Marion

From September 9–24, instructors from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's Advanced Fire Skills group led a Motor Pump Operator course hosted by the Marion Fire/EMS Department. The program provides instruction on water supply, hydraulics, large diameter hose, hydrant operations, drafting, and other topics.

The third day of the course fell on Sunday, September 11 — no ordinary day. To mark the 21st anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, instructors began the day with a remembrance ceremony. With firefighters from Marion, Bridgewater, Devens, Halifax, Topsfield Walpole, and Wareham in attendance, they recalled the thousands who perished and in particular the 343 New York firefighters who gave their lives in the line of duty.

The anniversary was also marked across the Commonwealth in ceremonies large and small, including the annual ceremony at the Fallen Firefighters Memorial at the State House and at DFS headquarters in Stow.



Rapid Intervention Program Updates



Rescuing a brother or sister firefighter from a mayday scenario is one of the most urgent missions a firefighter can undertake. The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's (MFA) Rapid Intervention (RIT) and Survival Skills Program helps students develop and refine the skills to do it effectively.

"Over the past few years, we've been very busy revamping the Operational RIT Team Leader program and adding new programs," said Program Coordinator Brad Kwatcher. "The Academy offers a wide variety of courses covering this important topic for all firefighters."

The MFA's RIT programs include:

- 256_v1 – Rapid Intervention
- 257_v1 – Statewide Rapid Intervention Initiative
- 276 – Thermal Imaging for Fire Ground Operations
- 27A – Sterling/F4/FCX Training
- 279 – Rapid Intervention for the Public Safety Dispatcher
- 281 – Advanced Rapid Intervention (RIT Under Fire)
- 562 – Operational RIT Team Leader
- 616_v1 – Saving Ourselves

Log onto the MFA Learning Management System for more information or to register. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs. Search for *Learning Management System*.

Changes to RIT Operational Team Leader Program

In the past, the two-day RIT Operational Team Leader program presented simulation lab scenarios and a review of basic RIT skills on the first day. The second day covered RIT

Rescuing a brother or sister firefighter from a mayday scenario is one of the most urgent missions a firefighter can undertake. The MFA's RIT program helps students develop and refine the skills to do it effectively.

scenarios under fire conditions. The MFA is in the process of re-training all coordinators and instructors using updated simulation software from a new vendor. In the meantime, program personnel had to find a way to deliver the program without use of the sim lab.

"Our team research about how to change the program included a needs assessment of fire departments, observing other programs, and learning about new educational techniques," Kwatcher said. "The result was a new program called Advanced Rapid Intervention, or RIT Under Fire."

The two-day, 16-hour course uses live fire in RIT scenarios and teaches advanced RIT techniques and tools. Day 1 includes a two-hour lecture and a review of basic RIT skills. Participants then turn to practical scenarios with advanced RIT skills and tools. Day 2 is RIT scenarios under live fire conditions where students use all their RIT tools and skills. The MFA plans to deliver the new program twice at each DFS campus over the next year using the search and rescue props at each campus.

Thermal Imaging for Fire Ground Operations

RIT personnel are also excited about the two-day Thermal Imaging for Fire Ground Operations program. The course teaches firefighters and fire officers about a variety of thermal imagers and offers practice using them in a variety of situations. The class took two years to develop, and was taught once before the pandemic. The program was well-received and we hope to deliver it again in the Spring of 2023.



Continued on next page

Legislators Visit During Fire Prevention Week

What a Great Fire Prevention Week!

The Department of Fire Services (DFS) welcomed state and federal lawmakers and fire service leaders to two of our campuses during Fire Prevention Week. Each visit was an opportunity to thank them for their support, showcase our facilities, and celebrate grant awards that will improve the safety of Massachusetts firefighters and their communities.

AFG Award Presented at Stow Campus

On October 11, 2022, Congresswoman Lori Trahan and Representative Kate Hogan visited the DFS Stow campus with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 1 Deputy Administrator Paul Ford and representatives of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS), the Town of Stow, and the Stow Fire Department. They presented an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award to the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy.

The FY2021 AFG grant is for two gas/liquid leak props and a flashover simulation trailer. The gas/liquid leak props will enhance existing Hazmat technician training by allowing students to practice



FEMA Region 1 Deputy Administrator Paul Ford (center) passed away on November 11, 2022. He was with FEMA for 31 years, including 15 as deputy regional administrator for the New England states. Paul's vast knowledge, friendly nature, and readiness to help in times of crisis made him a true friend to the fire service.



Local, state, and federal officials traveled to DFS in October to present the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy with a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant award to help fund mobile training props. Left to right: US Congresswoman Lori Trahan, Stow Town Administrator Denise Demboski, FEMA Region 1 Deputy Administrator Paul Ford, State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, Stow Fire Chief J.P. Benoit, and State Representative Kate Hogan.

patching and plugging leaks in a Level A suit. The new flash-over simulation trailer will restore MFA's ability to deliver this prop to local fire departments for training on demand, as all current units are typically committed to on-campus training in Bridgewater, Springfield, and Stow.

Sadly, Paul Ford passed away a month after this visit. Our hearts go out to his family, loved ones, and colleagues at FEMA, where he served for more than 30 years. Paul was a tremendous resource for the fire service and emergency management community. We will miss him greatly.

Bridgewater Campus Visit

On Thursday, October 13, 2022, State Senator Walter F. Timilty, State Representatives Carlos Gonzalez and Steve Xiarhos, and guests from the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts and Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts visited the DFS Bridgewater campus. They saw our new Search and Rescue prop, watched recruits training, and met troopers and K9s from the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office.

We've made remarkable progress at our Bridgewater campus since it first opened, and the visit was a great opportunity to showcase how far it's come.

Rapid Intervention Program Updates, *continued from previous page*

Rapid Intervention for the Public Safety Dispatcher

The RIT team has also been busy with the 8-hour Rapid Intervention for the Public Safety Dispatcher program for emergency service dispatchers. It teaches students what to expect and what to listen for if they are called on to handle a mayday situation on the fire ground. The course is unique to the MFA and in high demand. We are honored that it is

a permanent part of the Massachusetts State 9-1-1 Academy curriculum. We have also delivered this unique program for out-of-state audiences.

For more information about all RIT programs offered at the MFA, visit www.mass.gov/dfs. Search for *Learning Management System*.

Fire Investigation News

Fatal Fires

Fatal Springfield Fire; No Smoke Alarms

A September 7, 2022, fire on Wakefield Street in Indian Orchard caused major damage to the structure. A 61-year-old woman was taken to the hospital with serious injuries and later died. Three adults were displaced by the fire.

The fire was investigated by the Springfield Arson & Bomb Squad and State Police assigned to the offices of the State Fire Marshal and Hampden District Attorney. Investigators found that the fire began in the victim's bedroom in the single-family home. Though the exact cause is officially undetermined, investigators found candles, incense, and matches in the area. The home had no working smoke alarms and was not protected by sprinklers.

Commissioner Bernard J. Calvi offered his condolences to the victim's family and urged fire safety when using candles and incense. "Always place candles in a sturdy, nonflammable saucer or candle holder and keep them at least a foot from anything that can burn," he said. "Unattended candles and incense are a fire hazard, so be sure to extinguish them if you're drowsy, going to bed, or leaving the room."

Fatal Chatham Fire

On October 31, 2022, the Chatham Fire/Rescue Department responded to a fire at a 2½ story single-family home. Firefighters found heavy smoke coming from the structure and fire in the basement. Firefighters rescued a 50-year-old man from the building. He was transported to Cape Cod Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation by the Chatham Fire Department and State Police assigned to the offices of the State Fire Marshal and Cape & Islands District Attorney. Additional State Police assets and the Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit of the Department of Fire Services (DFS) are assisting.

Fatal Fire in Lynn

A two-alarm fire on November 11, 2022, claimed the life of a 3-year-old girl and displaced more than a dozen residents. The Lynn Fire Department responded to the Circuit Avenue fire at 4:07 a.m. They found heavy fire and smoke and battled the flames for 45 minutes before bringing it under control. Several residents were transported to the hospital as a precaution. The victim was unaccounted for until later in the morning, when she was located inside the home.

"Our thoughts remain with this child's family, who lost a cherished loved one and the place they called home,"

"Investigators found no working smoke alarms. This is the common thread in many fatal fires. Whatever else you do, please be sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home," said State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey.

said Chief Stephen Archer. "I know the community shares their grief for this terrible loss."

The fire was jointly investigated by the Lynn Fire and Police Departments, and State Police assigned to the offices of the State Fire Marshal and the Essex District Attorney. The fire began at the left front corner of the building's exterior. Investigators were unable to rule out multiple accidental factors and the fire will remain undetermined. While some witnesses reported hearing alarms, investigators found no working smoke alarms in the home.

"Whatever else you do today, please take time to be sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home," said State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey.

Fatal Fire in Millers Falls

A two-alarm fire in Millers Falls claimed the life of a 66-year-old woman on November 9, 2022. At about 4:45 p.m., the Turners Falls Fire Department responded to a fire on Bridge Street. When they arrived, several residents had escaped the building but one remained unaccounted for. She was found inside the home and was pronounced dead at the scene. The fire caused catastrophic damage and structural collapse to the building.

"On behalf of the Turners Falls Fire Department, I want to express our deepest condolences to the victim's family and loved ones," said Chief Todd Brunelle. "This is a tragedy for them and for our community."

Half a dozen fire departments provided mutual aid. The Department of Fire services deployed an Incident Support Unit and Rehab Unit to support firefighters and incident commanders at the scene.

The fire was jointly investigated by the Turners Falls Fire Department, Montague Police, and State Police assigned to the offices of the State Fire Marshal and the Northwestern District Attorney. While they could not determine the exact cause, investigators believe it was accidental.

"Smoking is the leading cause of fatal fires, both in Massachusetts and across the nation," said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey. "If you still smoke or have guests who do, please use a heavy ashtray with water or sand; remember

to put it out, all the way, every time; and never smoke in a home where someone is using medical oxygen.”

Arson

Brockton Man Guilty of Arson

On May 21, 2021, Laroy Cox, age 48, set fire to the Brockton apartment of a person with a restraining order against him. Cox was wearing a GPS monitoring bracelet at the time and officials traced him to the scene and time of the fire. After the incident, Cox removed his tracking device and continued to contact the victim. Brockton Police and Probation officials arrested Cox on June 8, 2021.

Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz’s office put the case before a grand jury and secured indictments charging Cox with arson, attempted murder, and other offenses. On October 6, 2022, Cox pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 12–13 years in State Prison.

The case was jointly investigated by the Brockton Police and Fire Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

Vehicle Fire Charged as Arson

On August 24, 2021, a burning car was found abandoned in a canal in Woburn. The Woburn Fire Department extinguished the fire, and the vehicle was transported to a tow yard and examined by local and state fire investigators.

The car’s owner reported that the car had broken down and that he left his vehicle on the side of the road after calling AAA. He reported high value items were in the vehicle. Investigators did not find those items.

In the weeks and months that followed, a joint investigation by the Woburn Fire and Police Departments, and State Police fire investigators determined that the fire was intentionally set. The owner was charged in September 2022 with one count each of burning a motor vehicle and burning a motor vehicle with intent to defraud an insurer. The case is being prosecuted by Middlesex County District Attorney Marian Ryan’s office.

“Smoking is the leading cause of fatal fires in Massachusetts and the nation,” said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey. “If you smoke or have guests who do, please use a heavy ashtray with water or sand; remember to put it out, all the way, every time; and never smoke in a home where someone is using medical oxygen.”

Employee Charged in Lanesborough Restaurant Fire

On August 28, 2022, the Lanesborough Fire Department responded to the Olde Forge Restaurant and found fire showing from the rear of the building. Firefighters kept the fire from spreading into the rest of the building. The fire departments of Cheshire, Dalton, Hancock, and Hinsdale also responded. The fire was contained within an hour.

The fire was investigated by the Lanesborough Fire and Police Departments, and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office. They determined that the fire was intentionally set by a 55-year-old employee using smoking materials. He was indicted in September 2022 and his case is being prosecuted by the Berkshire County District Attorney’s office.

“I’d like to thank our firefighters and mutual aid partners for their work containing this fire and preventing even greater damage,” said Chief Jeffrey DeChaine.

Suspect Arrested in Fall River Arson

An August 3, 2022, fire on Globe Street in Fall River was charged as arson after investigators determined that a man set a baby stroller on fire in the stairway. Four occupants, including an adult and infant rescued from the fire, were treated at a local hospital for smoke inhalation.

Based on evidence developed by the Fall River Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, a 42-year-old man was charged on August 4 with arson of a dwelling and unlawfully carrying a taser. The case is being prosecuted by Bristol County District Attorney Thomas Quinn’s office.

New Bedford Fire Injures Older Adult — No Working Smoke Alarms

On October 3, 2022, the New Bedford Fire Department responded to 108 Tremont Street for a reported fire. A firefighter and a New Bedford police officer rescued one adult from the home shortly after arrival. Firefighters then used aerial ladders to rescue another adult from the third floor. They also carried a third occupant, an injured older adult, down an interior stairway. That occupant was transported to a hospital. One firefighter sustained minor injuries.

Investigators believe the fire began in a third-floor room. There were no working smoke alarms in the unit. The New Bedford Fire Department and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office are investigating. The DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit provided assistance.

The fire was the second time in three days in which the New Bedford Fire Department conducted ladder rescues

Continued on next page

from a residential fire. The first was in the early morning hours of October 1 on Madeira Avenue, where firefighters rescued two residents. Investigators believe that fire started with smoking materials. Residents were alerted by an alarm system and climbed out a window onto the roof. Firefighters helped them to safety over ground ladders.

Smoking Materials Likely Cause of Lynn Fire

An August 30, 2022, fire on Allerton Street was most likely caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials. “This fire began outside the building and grew significantly before smoke alarms inside detected it,” said Chief Stephen Archer. “This is a scenario we see too often when cigarettes and other materials are discarded unsafely from outdoor stairways, porches, and balconies.”

The Lynn Fire Department responded to the scene to find heavy smoke and flames at the two-family home. The fire quickly went to a second alarm and firefighters reported low water pressure, which hindered the response. The building sustained catastrophic damage before firefighters brought the fire under control. Nine people were displaced and two were treated for minor injuries.

Chief Archer and State Fire Marshal Ostroskey reminded residents that outdoor fires start, grow, and spread more easily during droughts like the one last summer. “It’s important that everyone in the community use caution and common sense with any open flame outside, including smoking materials,” said Chief Archer. “Dry grass, mulch, and debris can ignite easily in these conditions.”

The fire was jointly investigated by the Lynn Fire Department and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office. Investigators determined that the fire began at the left rear of the building, then spread upward along the exterior of the structure and into the attic.

Massive Boatyard Fire Accidental

The massive fire at the Mattapoisett Boatyard on August 19, 2022, was most likely caused by the ignition of gasoline vapors during the replacement of a boat’s gas tank. The

midday fire consumed six buildings, 47 vehicles, and 14 boats. It reached six alarms, drawing mutual aid from across southeastern Massachusetts and task forces through the Statewide Fire Mobilization Plan. More than 100 firefighters battled the fire with 19 engines, 12 tankers, three fireboats, and two ladder trucks before knocking it down around 6:00 p.m.

“This highly coordinated and collaborative effort allowed us to contain the fire to the boatyard property and save all of the surrounding homes and structures,” said Chief Andrew Murray. “On behalf of the Town of Mattapoisett, I also want to recognize the efforts of our firefighters and our brother and sister firefighters and chiefs from across the region who rushed in to help. They defied the danger of a massive, wind-driven fire to prevent it from spreading further into the community and putting more people at risk.”

The fire was jointly investigated by the Mattapoisett Fire and Police Departments, and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal’s office. The fire began inside a building on Ned’s Point Road, where a worker was replacing a boat’s gas tank. Investigators believe that a spark ignited gasoline vapors, causing an explosion and fire that seriously injured Phil Macomber, a boatyard employee. Four co-workers rescued him from the burning building: Jake Clarke, Trevellis Oliver, Roger Reed, and Jacey Yancey were later honored by local and state officials.

The fire was fed by winds of up to 25 miles per hour coming in off the water and spread to nearby buildings, vehicles, and boats. In addition to the worker who was injured, three firefighters suffered smoke inhalation and heat exhaustion. All four were transported for medical care.

The Department of Fire Services deployed an Incident Support Unit, a Rehab Unit, a Drone Unit, a Hazmat team, and State Police fire investigators to work with local officials. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, Department of Environmental Protection, several area harbormasters, and the US Coast Guard also responded to the scene.

AC Fires Highlight Summertime Fire Hazards

On August 10, 2022, the Palmer Fire Department responded to 4454 High Street and saw smoke coming from the front corner of the second floor. One adult resident was injured attempting to extinguish the fire but escaped. She was transported for medical care. Palmer firefighters were able to quickly extinguish the fire.

The massive boatyard fire consumed six buildings, 47 vehicles, and 14 boats. It reached six alarms, drawing mutual aid from across southeastern Massachusetts and task forces through the Statewide Fire Mobilization Plan. More than 100 firefighters battled the fire.

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Winter Safety Issues for Public Education

Home Heating

With home energy prices climbing this season, many residents are turning to fireplaces, wood stoves, and other solid fuel heating appliances. Fires attributed to these appliances represent a rising share of home heating fires in recent years, climbing from 35% in 2017 to nearly 45% in 2021.

Fire and life safety educators can remind residents to have their heating equipment, including chimneys and flues, professionally checked each year; to burn only dry, seasoned hardwood, which will reduce creosote build-up; to use a screen with their fireplace or close the door on their wood stove to prevent sparks and embers from escaping; to extinguish the fire before going to bed or leaving the house; and to shovel ashes into a metal container with a metal lid, placing it outside and away from the home.

Home heating equipment is the second-leading cause of residential fires and the main source of carbon monoxide in the home. It's especially important during the winter heating season that residents have working smoke and CO alarms on every level of their homes. For more heating safety tips, visit www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe.

Burns and Scalds

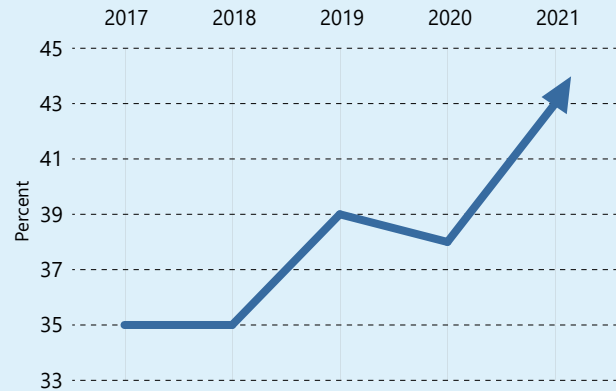
National Burn Awareness Week is February 5-11, 2023. The week is an opportunity for fire and life safety educators to share critical burn awareness and prevention message in their communities. This year's theme is *Burning Issues in the Kitchen!*

Hot liquid scalds to children under age 5 are the leading burn problem nationally and in Massachusetts. The American Burn Association has many burn safety resources including information on cooking safety for older adults, pediatric scalds and general scald prevention. Visit ameriburn.org/prevention.

The U.S. Fire Administration has burn prevention resources and a customizable Burn Safety handout for downloading. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *Burn and Scald Prevention*.



Massachusetts Residential Heating Fires:
Percent Involving Solid Fuel Sources



Fireplaces, wood stoves, and other solid fuel heating appliances account for a rising share of home heating fires in recent years.

DFS has burn prevention resources including handouts. You can also find data on burns in the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (MBIRS) annual reports. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *Burn and Scald Prevention* or *MBIRS*.

Ice and Cold Water Safety

Ice and cold water safety is an important issue in New England. Each winter, residents are injured from exposure to cold water. Between 2012 and 2021, Massachusetts fire departments carried out 301 ice rescues.

Every year, fire departments also rescue large numbers of unleashed dogs and other animals who fall through ice. In many cases, owners are also rescued from the water after they try to help their pets. DFS has a pamphlet in English and Spanish to help educate the public about ice and cold water safety. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *Ice and Cold Water Safety*.

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. Search for *Open Burning*.

27th Annual Fire & Life Safety Education Conference

The 27th Public Fire & Life Safety Education Conference took place on September 21 and 22, 2022, at the Southbridge Hotel & Conference Center in Southbridge, Massachusetts. About 250 fire and life safety educators, 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 "Adapting to Change." The theme reflected the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic changed so many things, fire and life safety education among them.

Karla Klas, BSN, RN, CCRP, presented the keynote address, "You Can Teach an Old Dog New Tricks: Modernizing Youth Firesetting (YFS) Prevention and Intervention." Karla manages the University of Michigan Trauma Burn Center's prevention programs, which focus on mitigating high-risk behaviors to reduce the occurrence of trauma, burn injuries, and violence. She spoke about improving YFS prevention and other fire and life safety programs with new ideas.

Captain Bryan Tyson of the Barnstable Fire Department presented a morning general session entitled, "Developing a Youth Firesetting Program." He focused on his experience developing an intervention program after youth firesetting became an issue in his town.

On the second day of the Conference, attendees heard from Jessica Sondgeroth, Community Risk Reduction Outreach Program Coordinator for South Carolina State Fire. She spoke about building risk reduction programs. Attendees learned how South Carolina is building CRR one community at a time, and how they did it.

Educator of the Year Award

The 2022 Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year Award was presented to Hanover Firefighter-Paramedic Eric Johnson. He was one of more than a dozen fire safety educators nominated for the award, which was presented by State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey and members of the Department of Fire Services. Johnson manages the Student



Left to right: Lieutenant Christie Clement, State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, Hanover Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Johnson, Captain David DeMarco.

Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and Senior SAFE programs for the Hanover Fire Department, teaching fire and life safety to the town's third-graders, to seniors at the Council on Aging and senior living facilities, and to residents of all ages at community events and health fairs.

In 2019, Johnson started a home visiting program that includes smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm installation for vulnerable Hanover residents, along with information on fire safety, home escape planning, burn awareness, fall prevention, and other tips. The program has conducted more than 250 visits — including one that may have saved a resident's life. In December of 2021 a kitchen fire broke out at a home in Hanover. The fire activated a nearby smoke alarm. The resident heard the alarm, safely left the home, and called 9-1-1. Crews responded and extinguished the fire. The smoke alarm was installed after a home visit by Firefighter Johnson in 2019.

The Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year Award honors an individual or a team for their involvement and commitment to making our world safer from fire and other preventable injuries. It recognizes those who have shown excellence in educating their community and demonstrated outstanding leadership, teamwork, creativity, and perseverance. This year's nominees also included:

Continued on next page

Four K9 Teams Graduate

from the FEIU 12-Week Training Program

Congratulations to the K9 handlers and working dogs who graduated from the 12-week training program held by the Massachusetts State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit (FEIU) assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office. The graduating teams included FEIU Trooper Michael Fagan and EK9 Clue, Topsfield Police Detective Sgt. Brendan Gahagan and EK9 Aster, Northeastern University Sgt. Joseph Corbett and EK9 Sarge, and Boston Fire Inspector John Mannion and AK9 Rio.

From August to November 2022, the teams were trained to detect either explosives or ignitable liquids. Sgt. Paul Horgan of the State Police Bomb Squad led the program with assistance from Troopers Michael Fagan and John Ragosa of the Bomb Squad and Trooper James McTeague of the Troop F K9 Unit.

The newly trained K9 Teams are now at work in their communities and will assist the FEIU with future incidents requiring K9 assets. These may include bomb threats, firearms searches, major incidents, fire investigations, and large events like the Boston Marathon and July 4 celebrations.

The FEIU K9 Training Unit is currently training a firearms detection canine for the Newington, NH, Police Department and an EK9 for the Mass. Environmental Police. The demand for K9 training from outside agencies including law enforcement and universities continues to grow exponentially. In past years, these teams would have to travel out of state to receive this specialized training,



Left to right, back row: Deputy State Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier, State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, Tpr. Jim McTeague, Tpr. John Ragosa, Det. Lt. Mike Riley, Lt. Eric Desrochers, Sgt. Paul Horgan. Front row: Sgt. Joseph Corbett and EK9 Sarge, Tpr. Michael Fagan and EK9 Clue, Sgt. Brendan Gahagan and EK9 Aster, and Fire Inspector John Mannion and AK9 Rio.

but FEIU is now able to provide it at an enhanced training facility at the Department of Fire Services' Bridgewater campus and at other locations.

"The Bridgewater K9 facility is a major asset for the training program," said Sgt. Horgan. "We are grateful to the State Fire Marshal for providing the space, which offers everything we need to provide K9 training, throughout the year, regardless of weather conditions."

To date, many outside agencies have used the facility for K9 trainings, including the Massachusetts State Police Patrol K9 Unit, Massachusetts Environmental Police, Rhode Island State Police, Rhode Island State Fire Marshal's Office, ATF, colleges and universities, and municipal police and fire departments.

Conference, *continued from previous page*

- FF Kelsey Bisio of the Norton Fire Dept.;
- FF-EMT Christopher Kowal of the Milford Fire Dept.;
- FF Anthony Leite of the Lowell Fire Dept.;
- FF Matthew Morin of the Sunderland Fire Dept.;
- FF Jessica Murray of the Wales Fire Dept.;
- Lt. Hank Perkins of the Boston Fire Dept.;
- FF Michelle Sacco of the Chelmsford Fire Dept.;
- Lt. Dan Santry of the Belmont Fire Dept.;
- Lt. Michael Shulman of the Gloucester Fire Dept.;

- Capt.-Paramedic Brian Tyson of the Barnstable Fire Dept.;
- FF Ross Vona of the Belmont Fire Dept.; and
- FF Jason "Otis" Wilson of the Millis Fire Dept.

State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey and the entire DFS team congratulate the winner and the nominees, and all those who work so hard to promote fire and life safety through education across the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations



Class #304



Class #305



Class #306



Class #S29

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 mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural 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 #304

On September 16, 2022, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #304 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 26 graduates represent the 13 departments of Acton, Attleboro, Billerica, Blackstone, Chelmsford, Dracut, Gardner, Lexington, Plainville, Tewksbury, Westford, Wilmington, and Woburn.

Class #305

On October 21, 2022, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #305 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 21 firefighters represent the 11 fire departments of Andover, Beverly, Danvers, Dracut, Middleborough, Stoneham, Sudbury, Truro, Wakefield, Weston, and Woburn.

Class #306

On November 28, 2022, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #306 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 24 firefighters represent the 16 fire departments of Andover, Barnstable, Bellingham, Hingham, Hudson, Lawrence, Medford, Medway, Milford, Plainville, Shrewsbury, Tewksbury, Walpole, Winthrop, Woburn, and Wrentham.

Class #S29

On October 28, 2022, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S29 graduated at the Springfield Campus. The 28 firefighters represent the 10 fire departments of Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Holden,

Holyoke, Marlborough, North Adams, Northampton, Palmer, Southbridge, and Springfield.

Class #BW22

On November 4, 2022, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW22 graduated at the Bridgewater Campus. The 22 firefighters represent the 15 fire departments of Abington, Avon, Bourne, Centerville-Osterville-Marstons Mills, Dennis, Duxbury, Eastham, Harwich, Hingham, Medway, Norton, Orleans, Sharon, Truro, and West Bridgewater.

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 Deputy State Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier. “The rigorous training they’ve completed provides them with the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary to protect their communities safely and effectively.”

Class #100

On November 1, 2022, members of Call/Volunteer Firefighting Class #100 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 22 graduates represent the 14 fire departments of Carlisle, Charlton, Dunstable, Grafton, Lincoln, Marion, Millville, Oxford, Paxton, Plympton, Sherborn, Stow, Townsend, and Tyngsborough.



Class #BW22



Class #100

Today’s firefighters do far more than fight fires. They train to respond to all types of hazards and emergencies. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies. They rescue people who have fallen through the ice and those who are trapped in vehicle crashes. They also test and maintain all their own equipment including hoses, power tools, apparatus, and much more.

FIU News, continued from page 14

An investigation by the Palmer Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal determined that the fire began at the connection between an air conditioner power cord and an extension cord, which was plugged into a power strip and another extension cord. An electrical event ignited combustible materials in the area.

“Fortunately, the resident was awoken by the noise and flash of light,” Chief William Bernat said. “There were no working smoke alarms in the residence, and this could very easily have been a terrible tragedy.”

This was at least the second residential fire related to

air conditioning in less than a week. Another took place on August 6 on Bigelow Road in Webster, when a resident’s air conditioner cord caused a fire after it was pinched between the bed frame and the wall.

“An occupant reported that the circuit breaker panel had tripped several times in the hours before the fire,” said Webster Fire Chief Brian C. Hickey. “Blowing fuses or tripping the circuit breaker frequently is a warning sign that you should call a professional electrician. If you see arcs or sparks, hear a sizzling or burning sound, or smell something burning, call the fire department right away.”

Buying Smoke and CO Alarms Online? *Caution!*

Counterfeit and Unlisted Alarms May Not Protect Residents

In August of 2022, members of the Rowley Fire Department found multiple smoke alarms with counterfeit marks during separate residential inspections. The alarms were purchased online.

“We discovered these counterfeit alarms during inspections prior to home sales, but there may be many more that we haven’t seen,” said Rowley Chief Mark Emery. “It’s important that every residence has working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and it’s equally important that these alarms be reliable. Alarms that aren’t tested by an independent laboratory may not protect you when you need them most.”

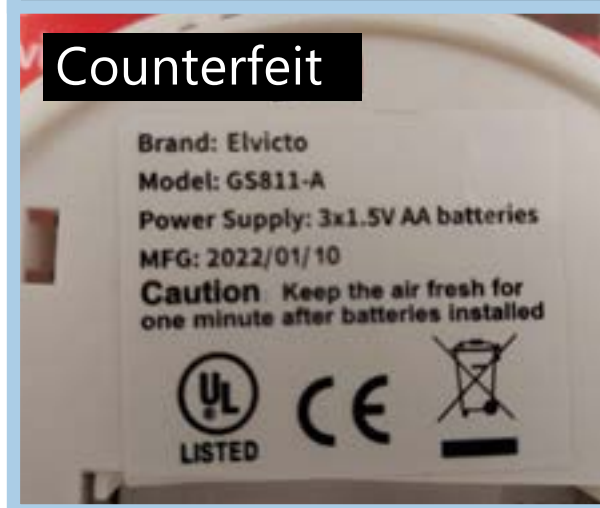
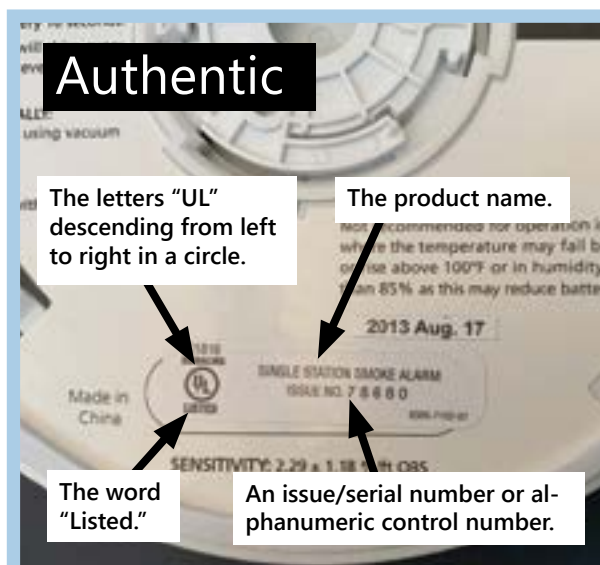
The Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code and State Building Code require that all smoke, carbon monoxide alarms, and combination alarms be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. Only Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and Intertek Testing Services NA, Inc. (ETL) are permitted to test and list smoke and/or CO alarms in the United States. The thorough review process these laboratories use helps ensure that alarms will accurately detect hazards, alert the consumer promptly, and perform other critical functions. Inspectors have found counterfeit alarms purchased online that do not detect hazards as advertised.

According to Underwriters Laboratories, the *UL Listed* mark on products such as smoke and CO alarms usually have four elements:

- The letters “UL” descending from left to right in a circle;
- The word “Listed;”
- The product name; and
- An issue/serial number or alphanumeric control number.

Public Education

Fire officials and educators can work to educate the public about counterfeit smoke and CO alarms. Counterfeit alarms are prevalent online. Teach consumers in your town to look for a mark confirming that an alarm is listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or Intertek (ETL). Choosing alarms from a well-known national brand is one way to ensure that the alarm will alert to life-threatening danger. Teach consumers that if an online price seems too good to be true then it probably is.



Remind residents that smoke alarms and most combination smoke/CO alarms should be replaced after 10 years. Most carbon monoxide alarms should be replaced after five to seven years, depending on the make and model, or when the end-of-life signal activates. The manufacturing date is printed on the back of all devices. Smoke and CO alarms don’t last forever. Replace batteries twice a year when you change the clocks. When consumers buy replacement alarms, teach them to choose one that has a sealed, long-life battery and a hush feature. And teach everyone to test alarms once a month. To learn more, visit www.mass.gov and search for *Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms*.

2023 License Examination Schedule

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 and Commercial Hood Cleaning	March 15, 2023 May 17, 2023 July 12, 2023 September 13, 2023 November 15, 2023	February 17, 2023 April 21, 2023 June 16, 2023 August 18, 2023 October 20, 2023
Cannon/Mortar, Fireworks and Special Effects, Blasting and Blasting R&D	February 15, 2023 April 19, 2023 June 14, 2023 August 16, 2023 October 18, 2023	January 20, 2023 March 24, 2023 May 19, 2023 July 21, 2023 September 22, 2023
BPV Exams		
Exams start at 9:00 a.m.		
Oil Burner, Fireman & Engineer (all classes)	February 22, 2023 March 29, 2023 April 26, 2023 May 31, 2023 June 28, 2023 July 26, 2023 August 30, 2023 September 27, 2023 October 25, 2023 November 29, 2023 December 27, 2023	January 27, 2023 February 24, 2023 March 31, 2023 April 28, 2023 May 26, 2023 June 30, 2023 July 28, 2023 August 25, 2023 September 29, 2023 October 27, 2023 November 24, 2023



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

www.mass.gov/dfs



Maritime Incident Response Team

Exercise in Gloucester Harbor

On October 12, 2022 the Department of Fire Services' Maritime Incident Response Team (MIRT) conducted two trainings in coordination with the Gloucester Harbormaster and the Gloucester Fire Department.

The first training scenario involved a clandestine laboratory that was found on a lobster boat by local authorities. The Beverly Fire Department transported MIRT members to the anchored vessel in the harbor. Wearing Blauer suits and BG4 rebreathers, the MIRT Team boarded the vessel and safely maneuvered through tight spaces in order to use state of the art technologies to identify the unknown threats. They identified multiple products that were precursors for energetics.

The second training was a test of the team's radiation metering capability and its ability to locate and identify a radiation source. With support from the University of Massachusetts Lowell, a radiation training device was hidden on a boat purposely stationed behind a larger boat in order to shield the energy of the source and make it more difficult for the maritime team to locate. Supported by Marblehead and Salisbury Fire Department boats, the second team conducted searches throughout the harbor using their meters as eyes and ears as they looked for the threat. All teams were able to find the location and correctly identify the training source.



The MIRT Team collects samples from a clandestine laboratory aboard a boat in Gloucester Harbor during training.

The MIRT is a team within the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services' Hazardous Materials Response Division. Its technicians are trained to provide reconnaissance and mitigation of shipboard hazardous materials occurring either at sea or in port — an especially valuable asset in a coastal state with more than 1,500 miles of shoreline.