

# All Hands Herald

Massachusetts Department of Fire Services

June 2020

## New Penalties in the Fire Code

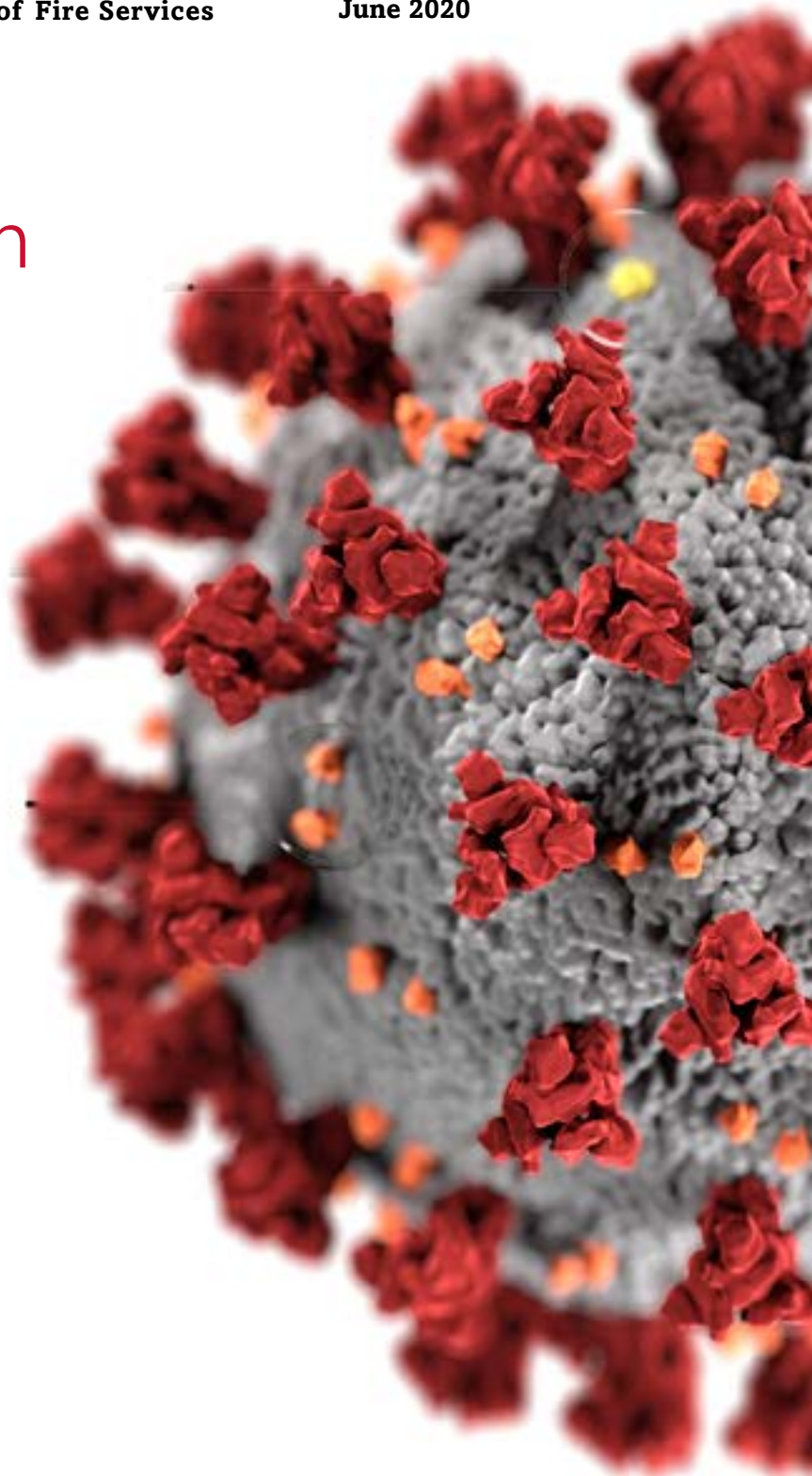
*for Working with a Suspended  
or Revoked License*

*Also Inside:*

Changes in Hazardous  
Materials Technician Training

Cancer Prevention  
Training and Screening

Fire Investigation News



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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 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.

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# Contents



## 3

### New Penalties in the Fire Code

Important new penalties are in effect for working after a license has been suspended or revoked, and for unlicensed individuals who falsely represent themselves as licensed.



## 4

### Changes in Hazardous Materials Technician Training

The MFA is implementing two training programs, one for those who want to become HazMat technicians for a local department, and one for those who want to apply to one of the six Massachusetts HazMat teams.



## 5

### Cancer Prevention Training and Screening

Cancer in the Fire Service training programs have been an effective way to promote cancer awareness. The course is often paired with the opportunity to be screened for cancer, leading to positive health outcomes for firefighters.

- 1 From the Fire Marshal
- 3 New Penalties in the Fire Code
- 4 Changes in Hazardous Materials Technician Training
- 5 Cancer Prevention Training and Screening
- 6 Fire Investigation News
- 14 Massachusetts Fire Sprinkler News
- 15 Residential Sprinkler Requirements
- 16 FCAM Conference
- 16 Fire Prevention Week 2020
- 17 Boiler and Pressure Vessel Certificates of Inspection
- 18 Aboveground Storage Tank Inspections
- 19 Collapse Rescue Training Coming to Bridgewater Campus
- 20 Regulations for Hand Sanitizer
- 22 Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations
- 26 Fire Education in the Time of COVID-19
- 28 2019 Pride in Performance Awards
- 29 Canine Surrender
- 30 YouTube™ Burn Awareness Video Contest, Winners Announced
- 31 DFS on Social Media

# From the Fire Marshal

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This spring, the entire world is grappling with the COVID-19 virus. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Department of Fire Services and public safety first responders have struggled to find the right balance between protecting our workforce and providing essential frontline services. We moved from containment to mitigation as Massachusetts successfully flattened the curve and reduced the spread of the disease to keep hospitals from being overwhelmed. Guidance from public health scientists and government leaders has constantly evolved and we have all responded and reacted to it as quickly and as best we can.

We have looked to history and to outbreaks in other countries to anticipate what may lay ahead. Firefighters and EMTs have been understandably concerned about protecting themselves and their families. They are the ones called when people need help, when they are sick.

I am especially proud of the excellent work by DFS personnel across all divisions. Our team was instrumental in planning and implementing testing sites, operating a call center connecting first responders with testing services, assembling orders and delivering PPE from the MEMA warehouse and working tirelessly to address code and procedural matters necessary to deal with the unique conditions we are operating in.

Beginning in mid-March, DFS staff transitioned to remote operations wherever possible and continued to provide all of our core functions, supporting fire service needs extremely well. The Fire Academy made innumerable schedule changes and worked diligently to complete three career recruit classes already in progress while enacting best practices to protect participants and DFS personnel from the virus.

At the Department of Fire Services, we are supporting our core mission of investigating fires, responding to HazMat incidents, enforcing the fire code, and training local firefighters who are needed on the front lines to protect residents. Canceling or postponing classroom-only courses, meetings, and public education outreach and closing graduations to families and friends were difficult but necessary



decisions. We took advantage of technology wherever possible to hold public and internal meetings.

## Testing For Public Safety

Testing, especially for first responders, is key to protecting the fire service and keeping local fire departments functioning for the people they protect. DFS worked hard in April and May to help stand-up and operate two testing sites for public safety personnel. One site was in West Springfield at the Big E fairgrounds, and the other was at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough. The sites were expanded after the first few

weeks to include others working on the frontlines – grocery store and public transportation workers. Local test sites and rapid testing allows those who test negative to return to work right away, and those who test positive to quarantine, protecting themselves, their families, their co-workers and the public. Eventually more testing sites opened in the state and these two were closed on June 5.

The Hazardous Materials Response division continues to be key to the program to test Department of Correction staff and inmates for COVID-19. We know the virus spreads quickly in enclosed environments including: prisons, nursing homes, factories and processing plants. The Department of Correction is a sister agency in the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security.

## DFS Bridgewater

The first recruit class graduated from the Bridgewater campus on March 27, 2020. This was intended to be a celebratory occasion, but everyone was disappointed that we had to close the graduation to outside guests. I want to recognize the hard work of the Recruit Firefighter Training Program staff for creating a training matrix that ensured these recruits received the full program although the Bridgewater campus is still under construction. The facilities and purchasing units supported the on-time opening of the campus for this class. Our team was able to have a Drill Tower prop built at Bridgewater in time for this first recruit class and many mobile training props were in place.

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# From the Fire Marshal

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The recruits had live fire training in Milford and came to Stow for vehicle extrication, gas school and to use other training props not yet available in Bridgewater. I want to thank the Milford Fire Department and now retired Chief Touhey for allowing us to use their burn building. Milford is closer to Bridgewater than Stow, and the Stow burn building use is almost at capacity.

## Finding a Way Forward; Restart on June 8

During this time, DFS staff has worked hard to find a way forward. Academy staff evaluated a number of software platforms used by colleges and businesses and found one that we believe will allow us to replicate the classroom experience with group discussion, interaction, and quizzes. They have focused on adapting the Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program to this format. Our plan also rearranges the matrix of the training course so that students are in the virtual classroom for two weeks, on campus for practical training (using special safeguards and social distancing) for two weeks, then back to the virtual classroom. If a student or instructor is exposed to the virus, they will be able to quarantine during the off-campus time and rejoin their class or a future class at the appropriate time.

The Career Recruit Training Program will still be 10 weeks long in the new format. This will allow us to run multiple classes at the Stow campus without having two classes intermingle, and also run classes at the Springfield and Bridgewater campuses. We launched the redesigned program on June 8, 2020. The Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter program will restart in July, also with a revised format of online and on campus classes.

We continue to move forward and address the many challenges the Massachusetts fire service and our residents face.

## AFG Grants

In March, we submitted an application for the current round of Assistance to Firefighters Grant program to purchase a Mobile Extraction Unit (MEU). In recent years, our capacity to clean the turnout gear worn by staff and students across our three campuses has been overwhelmed. A Mobile Extraction Unit would travel between our three campuses to wash turnout gear. It can wash and dry 40 full sets of gear per day. The unit consists of a box truck chassis with two extractors, two drying cabinets, a tumble dryer, a

700 gallon fresh water tank, and a 700 gallon wastewater tank.

Improving our gear washing is very important, but this new unit will also allow us to test the processed wastewater from the unit to better understand the hazards in the academy training environment where we primarily burn straw, pallets, and gas. Testing this wastewater will be the first research initiative specific to combustion byproducts in an academy setting that we are aware of. I hope to have good news to share on this grant application soon.

## Washer-Extractor Grant Program

In February, we awarded a second round of Washer-Extractor Grants to 75 fire departments. The two rounds of this program enable fire departments to purchase washer-extractors for 139 fire stations. This is a great step forward for occupational cancer prevention. The number of firefighters that will benefit from these machines over the next 10-15 years is immense, and we are very appreciative of the support from the State Legislature and Administration that made the grants possible.

## Smoking Fire Safety Campaign

This spring we launched a new *Smoking Fire Safety Campaign*. Two television spots were filmed in Chelsea at the site of a porch fire started by the improper disposal of smoking materials. The 4-decker was rebuilt, but there is some significance in using this site to help prevent similar tragedies. I hope that our media campaign supports local efforts to educate residents on the proper disposal of smoking materials. These fires are always dangerous because they can start and burn undetected for some time. Exterior fires can get a strong hold on a building before a smoke alarm notifies occupants of danger, which gives them less time to escape. In dense urban neighborhoods, these types of fires can quickly put several buildings at risk, displace large numbers of residents and tax firefighting resources. In this issue, you will see that there were more fire deaths in April 2020 than there have been in any April since 2008. Many of these were caused by the improper use and disposal of smoking materials. Since the beginning of 2020, 40% of fire deaths have been from smoking. Together, the fire service needs to promote the safe disposal of smoking materials. *Put it out. All the way. Every time.*



# New Penalties in the Fire Code

## *For Performing Work with a Suspended or Revoked License, without a Valid License, or for Letting Someone Else Use Your License.*

New penalties took effect on May 15, 2020 for performing work that requires a license after it has been suspended or revoked, and for unlicensed individuals who falsely represent themselves as licensed to perform work regulated by the State Fire Code. Additional changes hold companies responsible for knowingly allowing their employees to falsely represent themselves as valid license holders. The types of licenses affected include commercial hood cleaning, fireworks, special effects, blasting, explosives and fire suppression, among others.

State Fire Marshal Ostroskey said, "This puts real teeth into the regulations and allows us to hold accountable people who do work after their license has been suspended or revoked or who choose to loan or sell their license out to others. It also allows us to hold employers accountable who knowingly permit their workers to do work they are not licensed to do or worse yet, falsely represent themselves as valid license holders."

The fire service has seen a dramatic increase in people doing work in these trades without a license, after their license was suspended, or allowing unlicensed people to use a legitimate license, often for money. The new penalty for doing work without a valid license or after a suspension is a minimum 3-year suspension. The new penalty for "loaning" or "selling" a license is permanent revocation of any and all licenses issued by the State Fire Marshal. The penalty for using someone else's license is a permanent ban on applying for any license issued by the State Fire Marshal.

In many instances, the work performed by these unlicensed individuals is putting the public at risk as it falls well below the level of proficiency required by the State Fire Code.

In many cases, the people who perform work such as hood cleaning are low-wage workers doing what their employers tell them to do. The new penalties for companies who knowingly allow workers to use another's license is a minimum 3-year suspension of their certificate of registration (which is the company's license to do business). For the first time, these new penalties place the onus on companies to police their employees' work. Any company that



allows an employee to do work in violation of any provision of the State Fire Code may have their certificate of registration revoked or suspended.

The Department of Fire Services has found that individuals who "loan" their licenses out often claim that their service tags or labels have been lost or stolen when code compliance officers discover substandard work attributed to their license. The Fire Code now requires individuals and companies to report the loss or theft of their service tags or labels, or the presumption will be that they allowed the use of their tags and labels by others. Failure to report the loss or theft is a 2-year suspension of their license.

For more information about specific changes to the State Fire Code, [read the advisory](#) from the State Fire Marshal to local fire chiefs.

The Department of Fire Services, through the Fire Safety Division, issues permits and licenses to individuals and companies engaged in many trades to ensure fire safety. The agency also enforces the State Fire Code and the State Electrical Code. Fire officials and those in regulated industries can contact the Fire Safety Division at (978) 567-3375 with questions.

# Changes in Hazardous Materials Technician Training



The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA) has offered hazardous materials technician training to firefighters since the 1990s. The training has evolved over time to meet the changing threats to which they must be prepared to respond. It's part of how the fire service "adapts and overcomes."

Since 2010, the MFA has offered a 305-hour hazardous materials technician training. The course exceeds National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requirements and covers: incident action plans, proper suit and meter selection, proper identification of hazardous materials, applying proper leak kits for containers, and advanced metering skills.

This program was originally offered only to full-time firefighters who wanted to be considered for a state Hazardous Materials Response Team. As time passed, more fire departments wanted their members to have HazMat training. The MFA now trains many firefighters to the level of hazardous materials technician for their own departments.

The MFA is working hard to change the 305-hour program into two distinct programs. One is for firefighters who want to become a hazardous materials technician trained to the NFPA standard for a local department. These students can take a Pro-Board certification test after they complete the MFA program. The second course will be for those who want to apply to one of the six Massachusetts district HazMat response teams and need additional advanced training to prepare.

The MFA plans to release the program in this new two-part format in the fall of 2020. After the programs begin, we hope to offer more than one Hazardous Materials Technician class each year.

## New Technician Requalification Process

The MFA has also streamlined the technician requalification process for those waiting to be selected for a district HazMat team. Requalification consists of two courses that are in the DFS Learning Management System (LMS). The first is a 5-hour online program (course #20A) that includes 13 modules. After candidates complete the online program, they can apply for the 8-hour practical session (course #20B), in the LMS. Practical skills must be evaluated annually according to NFPA 1072. After a candidate completes courses 20A and 20B, they will be in good standing for one year.

The changes to the requalification program reduce that time it takes a student to complete the program. The MFA will run multiple practical sessions across the state each year. This plan was put in place long before the need for social distancing required us to innovate ways of providing firefighter training.

*Members of the DFS HazMat Division participated in a tabletop exercise in February to prepare for the now postponed Plymouth 400 celebrations.*



# Cancer Prevention Training and Screening



*Cancer screening in Shrewsbury, December 2019.*

The Department of Fire Services conducts Cancer in the Fire Service training programs throughout the state. It has been an effective way to promote cancer awareness and move firefighters to action. The course is often paired with the opportunity to be screened by Dr. Christine Kannler, a dermatologist, and Lisa Evans, a dental hygienist. Fire service personnel can register for one of the cancer screening courses and also be checked by these volunteers. Dr. Kannler lost her brother, a firefighter, to cancer that could have been treated if caught early. When Dr. Kannler or Lisa Evans find an area of concern, they advise people to see their dermatologist or dentist.

## **Two Firefighters Share Their Stories**

Wellesley Firefighter Joan Cullinan wrote: In June of 2018, a friend convinced me to attend one of the screening sessions. Dr. Kannler found a spot on my back and told me to keep an eye on it. At my next physical, I had it biopsied and it came back as malignant melanoma. After surgery to remove the tumor, I found out my cancer had spread to my lymph nodes. For the past 10 months, I have been undergoing oral chemotherapy. If I didn't have my skin checked, my cancer would have quickly spread to my organs and I most likely would have become another statistic. But

because of Dr. Kannler, I was given a chance to fight this disease.

Wrentham fire Captain and MFA instructor Michael Wainwright wrote: In the Spring of 2019, after seeing Dr. Kannler conduct these screenings at DFS in Stow, I decided to get checked. Dr. Kannler found a mark on the left side of my neck and recommended that I see my dermatologist. Several weeks later, at my appointment, I had a surface biopsy done. I was diagnosed with stage 1 melanoma cancer on my neck and was scheduled for a surgical procedure to have it removed. After three surgical biopsies, the cancer was removed. If it was not for the work that Dr. Kannler and Abby Baker do for cancer awareness, I would not have known I had cancer and would have not found it in the early stages.

We are very lucky these tests are free to us, and to have these individuals taking their own time to make sure that we are safe and healthy. Get checked! Early detection saves lives!

While the COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily put these trainings and screenings on hold, firefighters should ask their physicians to pay special attention to areas of concern that warrant a referral to a dermatologist.



# Fire Investigation News

**In the first 5 months of 2020, 40% of Massachusetts fire deaths were caused by smoking.**

## Fatal Smoking Fires

### Hanson Fatal Fire Caused by Smoking

The May 4, 2020 fire at 165 Pennsylvania Avenue in Hanson was caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials. The fire took the life of a 58-year old woman. Her husband and two children escaped unharmed. The home was a total loss and a dog also died in the fire. The fire began on the front porch, which is where the woman usually smoked. When firefighters arrived at the scene, they immediately began to extinguish the fire and to search for the missing woman. They were beaten back by intense heat and flames.

The Hanson Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and to the Office of the Plymouth District Attorney jointly investigated the fire.

### Smoking Causes Fatal Fire in Chelmsford

The May 1, 2020 fatal fire at 104 Turnpike Road in Chelmsford was caused by the improper use or disposal of smoking materials. The fire claimed the life of the 58-year old woman who lived there. She was rescued from the apartment but died from her injuries. The woman was found in a recliner. There was evidence of smoking in and near the chair. A single fire sprinkler head activated and contained the fire to the recliner. The sprinkler prevented the fire from spreading through the apartment or to the rest of the 4-story, 48-unit apartment building. The sprinkler system also triggered an alarm to the fire department. A neighbor, who smelled smoke, had already called 9-1-1.

The fire was jointly investigated by the Chelmsford 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.

### Falmouth Fatal Fire Caused by Smoking

The April 22, 2020 fire at One Crystal Spring Avenue was caused by smoking. An 82-year old woman was rescued from the fire but later died from her injuries. Her clothing ignited while she was smoking in the bathroom. She alerted another resident who was injured trying to help put out the flames. Two residents were treated for injuries. A passer-by saw the fire and helped two residents escape. A third resident



*Trooper Braley examines debris in April 2020 Plymouth fire.*

escaped on his own. One firefighter suffered minor injuries. Damages are estimated at \$150,000.

The Falmouth Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire. The Code Compliance Unit of the Department of Fire Services provided assistance.

### Smoking Caused Fatal Ludlow Fire No Working Smoke Alarms

The April 21, 2020 fire at 196 Rood Road in Ludlow was caused by the improper use or disposal of smoking materials. Firefighters rescued a woman from her bedroom window but she later died. Damages are estimated at \$100,000. The fire was ignited by smoking materials on the second-floor rear porch. The porch was the only way out of the apartment. The building was built in the 1800s as a single-family home. It is currently divided into several apartments. A code compliance investigation is underway because the apartment where the fire originated had only one means of egress and no working smoke alarms.

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# Fire Investigation News

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The Ludlow Fire and Police Departments jointly investigated the fire with State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and to the Office of the Hampden District Attorney. The Code Compliance Unit of the Department of Fire Services provided assistance.

## **Fatal Methuen Fire Caused by Smoking Expired Smoke Alarms**

The April 17, 2020 fire at 2 Lisa Lane in Methuen was caused by the improper use or disposal of smoking materials. The fire took the life of a female resident. Damages are estimated at \$150,000. There was evidence of smoking in the second-floor bedroom where the fire started. The victim's husband was injured trying to rescue his wife but was beaten back by the extreme heat. The smoke alarms in the home were from the mid-1970s and did not work.

The fire was jointly investigated by the Methuen Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and to the Office of the Essex District Attorney. The Code Compliance Unit of the Department of Fire Services provided assistance.

## **Framingham Fatal Fire Caused by Smoking**

The January 20, 2020 fatal fire at 46 Swift Road in Framingham was caused by the improper use or disposal of smoking materials. The 67-year old victim may have fallen asleep while smoking. The fire started in the living room where an upholstered sofa was ignited by the improper use or disposal of smoking materials. There was evidence of smoking materials on the coffee table.

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

## **Fatal Lowell Fire Caused by Smoking**

The January 10, 2020 fire behind 16 Middle Street in Lowell was caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials. The fire took the life of a man sleeping behind the building. A passerby called 9-1-1 when they saw smoke. Firefighters responded quickly but found the man had died. Investigators believe the victim fell asleep smoking and his blankets and clothing ignited.

The Lowell Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire

*There were more fire deaths in April 2020 than there have been in any April since 2008. One-third of these fatalities were from smoking. The fire service needs to promote the safe disposal of smoking materials. Put it out. All the way. Every time.*



Marshal and to the Office of the Middlesex District Attorney jointly investigated the fire.

## **Fatal Burlington Fire Caused by Smoking**

The January 9, 2020 fire at 26 Maryvale Road in Burlington was caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials. The fire took the life of a man, believed to be a resident of the home. An elderly woman was rescued from the home by a FedEx driver and a neighbor, and she was taken to a local hospital.

The fire began in the first floor living room where the victim was found. A melted plastic bucket containing cigarette butts was found near the couch. There was additional evidence of smoking materials found in the living room.

The Burlington 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.

## **Smoking Fires**

### **Holyoke Fire Caused by Smoking**

The most probable cause of the May 9, 2020 fire at 280 West Franklin Street in Holyoke was the improper disposal of smoking materials. One woman was hospitalized with injuries she suffered escaping the fire. Damages to the 2-family home are estimated at \$50,000. The fire started on the first floor porch. Residents on both floors smoked and there was evidence of smoking on both porches and littering the

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# Fire Investigation News

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driveway below. It was an extremely windy day with gusts up to 50 m.p.h.

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

## **Smoking Causes Brush Fire in Revere; 2 Homes, 3 Sheds Damaged**

The May 8, 2020 brush fire at 19 Loring Road in Revere was caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials. The fire started when cigarettes were tossed into dry grass in the backyard of 19 Loring Road. Wind gusts up to 50 m.p.h. spread the fire from grass, to tall marsh grass, a wooden stockade fence, three sheds and two houses. The home at 21 Loring Road had significant damage and a family of four was displaced. The home at 19 Loring Road suffered heat damage to the vinyl siding. Total damages are estimated at \$160,000.

The Revere Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

## **Barre Fire Caused by Smoking**

The April 16, 2020 fire in a liquor store at 578 Summer Street was caused by improperly discarded smoking materials. Damages are estimated at \$30,000. There were no injuries. The fire began on the exterior of the building in an area that was littered with cigarette butts near the store entrance.

The Barre Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

## **Ayer Fire Caused by Smoking**

The February 22, 2020 fire at 20 Bligh Street in Ayer was caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials. One adult and one child were injured and a dog died in the fire. The fire originated on an exterior, wooden porch of the single-family home. Residents smoked on the porch earlier in the day and used a small plastic wastebasket to dispose of the smoking materials.

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

## **Agawam Fire Caused by Smoking**

The January 27, 2020 fire at 20 Gale Street in Agawam was caused by the improper disposal of smoking

materials. There was extensive damage to the covered porch and attic on the second floor. No one was injured but many people were displaced from the 2-family home. The fire began on the second story covered porch when cigarettes were extinguished in a cardboard pizza box.

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

## **Stoughton Fire Caused by Smoking**

The January 8, 2020 fire at 2026 Bay Road in Stoughton was caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials. A caregiver rescued an elderly woman from the home, then suffered a medical emergency and was taken to a local hospital. The fire started on the first floor 4-season porch.

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

## **Peabody Fire Caused by Smoking**

The December 5, 2019 fire at 50 Warren Street, Peabody was caused by the improper use and disposal of smoking materials. Firefighters were investigating the source of a water leak in the building when they found the fire. The building's sprinkler system had activated. Firefighters rescued the occupant of the apartment with the fire and the person was transported to a hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. The fire started on a mattress in the sixth-floor studio apartment.

The Peabody Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

## **Fatal Fires, Other Causes**

### **Fatal Fire on Nantucket – No Working Smoke Alarms**

The April 12, 2020 fire at 33 Old South Road, Nantucket is undetermined but considered accidental. The fire took the life of a 27-year old resident. Damage is estimated at \$390,000. The fire began in the living room. There were several electric appliances plugged into a console in the area of origin, and evidence of smoking materials. There were no working smoke or carbon monoxide alarms in the home.

The fire was jointly investigated by the Nantucket Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned

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# Fire Investigation News

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to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Office of the Cape and Islands District Attorney.

## **Lawrence Fatal Fire – No Working Smoke Alarms**

The January 23, 2020 fatal fire at 5 Saxonia Avenue in Lawrence is officially undetermined but considered accidental. The fire took the life of a 76-year old man who lived in the 2-family home. The fire started in the first floor living room where the man was sitting in a chair. There is no evidence that the fire was intentionally-set. It is possible the man fell asleep smoking in his chair or that there was a failure of the electric blanket covering him. No working smoke alarms were found in the building.

The Lawrence Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and to the Office of the Essex District Attorney jointly investigated this fire. The Code Compliance Unit of the Department of Fire Services provided assistance.

## **Overloaded Powerstrip Cause of Fatal Fitchburg Fire**

The cause of the January 7, 2020 fire at 14 Highland Avenue in Fitchburg was an overloaded power strip. The fire took the lives of two brothers aged 50 and 61. The fire started in a bedroom of the two-family home. Investigators found a lightweight extension cord and a flexible power strip plugged into an outlet. Among the appliances plugged in were a space heater, a cellphone, a lamp, a television, and a computer monitor and processor. It is impossible to say which if any of the appliances caused the overload or if the use of all the appliances together triggered it. The house had no working smoke alarms.

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

## **Fatal New Bedford Fire Likely Electrical**

The December 28, 2019 fire at 143 Myrtle Street in New Bedford is likely electrical but because of damage to wiring and electric appliances, the fire is officially undetermined. The fire took the life an elderly man who lived on the top floor of the two-family home. The fire began on a kitchen countertop where there was a toaster, a can opener, and a

coffee maker. There was a 3-way adapter plug in one outlet and a microwave oven plugged into an extension cord. It was impossible to determine which appliances were plugged in, or in use, at the time of the fire.

The New Bedford Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to both the Office of the State Fire Marshal and to the Office of the Bristol District Attorney jointly investigated the fire.

## **Fatal Great Barrington Fire**

The cause of the December 9, 2019 fire at 24 Silver Street #8E in Great Barrington is officially undetermined, however the probable cause was ignition by smoking materials. The fire took the lives a 68-year old man and a 67-year old woman. Firefighters found heavy smoke and fire when they arrived at the unit, which is part of a building with seven other apartments. They put the fire out quickly and found the two unresponsive occupants. The woman was resuscitated at the scene, but she died the next day.

Investigators ruled out all causes of the fire except for the improper disposal of smoking materials. A smoke alarm outside the bedroom where the fire began did not sound. Investigators were unable to identify the reason it did not sound due to fire damage.

This fire was jointly investigated by members of the Great Barrington Fire and Police Departments, Berkshire County District Attorney Andrea Harrington's Office, and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. State Police Crime Scene Services and the Department of Fire Services' Code Compliance Unit provided assistance.

## **Hoverboard Fires**

### **Kingston Fire Caused by Hoverboard Charging**

The May 10, 2020 fire at 131 Country Club Way in Kingston was caused by a hoverboard. Residents reported the fire and put it out using a fire extinguisher. There were no injuries and damages are estimated at \$10,000. A hoverboard charging on the third floor of the single-family home ignited the fire. A new charging cord was in use. The battery pack exploded, causing the fire.

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

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# Fire Investigation News

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*Fire investigator working at scene of Andover hoverboard fire.*

## **Hoverboard Causes Andover Fire**

The April 9, 2020 fire at 10 Temple Place was caused by a malfunctioning hoverboard. The hoverboard ignited the fire as it was charging on the first floor of the two-family home. This was the first of two Massachusetts fires in about a month caused by a charging hoverboard.

Hoverboard fires were a national problem in 2016. They are powered by lithium-ion batteries and must now be compliant with national safety standards. Only use chargers supplied by the manufacturer. Never charge a hoverboard unattended. Overcharging can cause a fire.

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

## **Hoverboard Causes Stoneham Fire**

The cause of the October 12, 2019 fire at 16 Flint Street in Stoneham was a battery-powered hoverboard. A teenager escaped safely through a second-floor window. A dog was treated for smoke inhalation. Damage to the single-family home are estimated at \$200,000. The fire started in the first-floor kitchen where the hoverboard was left. The fire is accidental but investigators could not determine if

the failure was in the hoverboard, the charger, or if the hoverboard was overcharged (left plugged in once it was fully re-charged).

The Stoneham Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated this fire.

## **Other Causes**

### **Westfield Lumberyard Fire Caused by Wood-Fired Furnace**

The most probable cause of the May 9, 2020 fire at Green Meadow Lumber in Westfield was embers from a wood-fired furnace. There were no injuries and damages are estimated at \$350,000. The fire was in an industrial building used for making wooden pallets. The building had a wood-fired furnace for heat that had recently been loaded with scrap wood. Investigators believe the fire began when embers from the furnace ignited building materials and lumber stored in the building. It was an extremely windy day with gusts of up to 50 m.p.h. Wind fanned the flames and the building was quickly engulfed.

The Westfield Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

### **Essex Seafood Fire Caused by Gas Heater**

The May 10, 2020 fire at Essex Seafood, 143 Eastern Avenue was caused by a gas heater. The building suffered extensive damage, estimated at \$250,000. There were no injuries. The fire began over the counter where a 15 to 20 year old ceiling-mounted gas heater was left running overnight.

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

### **Pellet Stove Caused Merrimac Fire**

The April 7, 2020 fire at 2 Mechanic Street in Merrimac was caused by a pellet stove. The fire started on the exterior of the home where the pellet stove vented. The venting pipe was clogged with ash and soot and the heat ignited combustibles leaning against the building.

Through heroic efforts, neighbors rescued four residents who were home at the time of the fire. Fire blocked the back door and excessive clutter blocked the front door. Neighbors could not open the front door, but broke a window to climb in, removed

*Continued*

# Fire Investigation News

Continued

enough clutter to open the front door and guided the residents to safety. Excessive clutter also hindered firefighting efforts.

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

## **Reading Fire was Electrical**

The cause of the April 17, 2020 fire at the Meadow Brook Golf Course clubhouse in Reading was electrical. The fire destroyed the building and damages are estimated at \$1.5 million. The building was closed when the fire started and no one was injured.

The fire began in a void space in the ceiling between an office and a kitchen where it burned undetected. When it broke out of the void space, it traveled up the exterior of the building. Investigators suspect that the fire disabled the fire alarm system. By the time a neighbor noticed and reported the blaze, the fire had a strong hold on the building.

The Reading Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire. The Reading building inspector provided assistance.

## **West End Firewood in Northbridge Heavily Damaged**

An investigation into the March 23, 2020 fire at West End Firewood in Northbridge is undetermined. The fire consumed seven wood and metal buildings, several forklifts and logging trucks, and 700 cords of firewood. Damages are estimated at \$1.3 million. There was one minor firefighter injury.

Due to the extent of the damage and the need to use heavy equipment to fight the fire, investigators could not rule out some possible accidental causes, so the fire will remain undetermined. Some possible causes are: a spark from an acetylene torch or a welder, failure of a heat processing conveyor or a woodstove, an electrical malfunction, or the improper disposal of smoking materials.

Members of the Northbridge Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated this fire. The Department of Fire Services' Special Operations Unit drone was used to help document the fire scene.

## **Millville Dryer Fire**

The March 5, 2020 fire at 166 Thayer Street in Millville was accidental. An electric dryer was left running



*Meadow Brook Golf Course clubhouse after electrical fire.*

unattended and started the fire. There was a minor injury to one firefighter. The house is a total loss and the family is displaced.

The fire was jointly investigated by the District 7 Fire Investigation Team and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

## **Newburyport Chemical Explosions**

The February 13, 2020 explosions at the PCI Synthesis chemical processing facility at 9 Opportunity Way in Newburyport were caused by a chemical reaction. No one was injured. The plant was operating at the time of the incident. A sprinkler system activation notified the fire department. Investigators found that several explosions happened during a sampling procedure of product from a large vat.

The Newburyport Fire Department requested a Joint Hazard Incident Response Team (JHIRT) response which included a state Hazardous Materials Team and specially trained members of the State Police Bomb Squad. The Department of Fire Services' Special Operations Unit provided drone footage to help with the assessment. Once the situation was stabilized and deemed safe for entry without personal protective equipment, investigators from the Newburyport Fire and Police Departments and State Police fire investigators and explosive technicians, assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, were able to complete the forensic scene examination.

*Continued*

# Fire Investigation News

Continued



## **Dishwasher Caused Warren House Fire**

The January 13, 2020 house fire at 1101 Southbridge Road in Warren was caused by a dishwasher malfunction. The family turned on the dishwasher before leaving the house in the morning. An animal control officer who was passing by reported the fire. The family dog died in the fire. Investigators determined that the fire started in the kitchen at the dishwasher.

The Warren Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

## **Adams Family Mansion Destroyed by Chimney Fire**

The December 27, 2019 fire at 240 Fairhaven Hill Road was an accidental chimney fire. A fireplace fire breached mortar inside the chimney. Super-heated gases escaped and ignited the structure. The large historic home was built in the 1890s by a descendant of presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams, Charles Francis Adams III, a lawyer and former secretary of the U.S. Navy. The loss is estimated at \$2.9 million.

The Concord Fire and Police Departments, the District 14 Fire Investigation Team and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

## **Marlborough Fire Likely Caused by Smoking**

The cause of the November 8, 2019 fire at 218 West Main Street in Marlborough is undetermined. Improper use and disposal of smoking materials is the most likely cause of the fire. All five occupants of the home escaped, but three were transported to hospitals. One woman was severely injured and a dog perished in the fire. The fire started on a mattress in a second-floor bedroom.

The Marlborough Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

## **Arson Fires**

When fires happen, especially arsons, media attention and community anxiety are high. When someone is charged with arson, there is also a lot of media attention. But when a case is finally adjudicated, there is little press coverage and less community interest. However, several arsonists who caused a great deal of community anxiety were finally sent to prison this spring. Investigators in the Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) spent a lot of time and resources proving these fires were intentionally set, figuring out who was responsible for them, and bringing good cases to prosecutors. The investigators went to court many times.

The serial arsonist Mark Sargent was the subject of two major investigations by the F&EIU. In 2014, he and his stepson were arrested for a series of arsons that terrorized all six southeastern Massachusetts counties during 2012 and 2013. The entire F&EIU unit, not just the South Team, worked with many fire and police departments and four district attorney's offices on that case. Sargent received a 2-3 year prison term though prosecutors had requested 8-10 years. He was out on probation after serving only 20 months. In 2017, he was arrested again for setting fires in Hull, Hanson, and Brockton during the fall. Since he was on probation for the earlier fires, a Plymouth County judge sentenced him to 10-15 years and sent him back to prison in September 2018. He is awaiting trial for the 2017 fires in Plymouth County.

*Continued*



# Fire Investigation News

Continued

All defendants are considered innocent until proven guilty in the United States.

One of the 2017 fires was set in Westport, which is in Bristol County. In February, 2020, Sargent was sentenced to 6-9 years in MCI Cedar Junction for the Westport fire.

Also in 2017, another serial arsonist, Jose DeBrito, was initially charged by New Bedford Police with setting nine structure fires over a three month period:

- July 28 at 79 Adams Street
- July 31 at 475 Coggeshall Street
- August 2 at 470-472 Sawyer Street
- August 8 at 140 Hathaway Street
- August 8 at 78 Penniman Street
- September 7 at Purity Linens, 405 Myrtle Street
- September 30 at 231 Myrtle Street
- October 11 at 149 Myrtle Street
- October 12 at 245 State Street

In February 2020, DeBrito pled guilty to the two most serious charges, setting fire to occupied multi-family homes on the night of October 11 – 12, 2019, seven hours apart. The first fire was at 8:22 p.m. at 149 Myrtle Street and the second was at 3:19 a.m. at 245 State Street. He set the fires at night using gasoline at the rear exterior of the buildings. Fortunately, no one was injured in these fires, but the outcome could so easily have been different. DeBrito used a bicycle to move around the neighborhood.

On February 20, 2020, DeBrito was sentenced to 3½ – 5 years in state prison, followed by 2 years probation and possible deportation.

## JHIRT Response to West Springfield Home

### **Removal and Countercharging of Ammunition and Dangerous Explosives Required**

The State Police Bomb Squad was called to the home of a deceased, retired West Springfield police officer by the West Springfield Police Department on Monday, May 4, 2020. The local police went to the home to secure firearms. They also found military ordnance, which is what triggered the bomb squad response. During the clean-out, the bomb squad discovered a large quantity of energetic material in a deteriorated state, believed to have been in the basement for years. Some of the containers were marked and some were not. A state Hazardous Materials team responded to help identify the unknown chemicals. There was also a large amount of ammunition, commercial fireworks, homemade M-class explosive devices, and firework-making materials.

The deteriorated state of the containers and the unknown stability of the fireworks and the homemade devices created a great risk to the occupants and to public safety. The bomb squad decided that immediate disposal was necessary.

The process of identifying and removing the materials took two days. The amount of material requiring detonation was so extensive that it took several hours for the Bomb Squad to do so safely.

The State Police Bomb Squad is part of the Fire and Explosion Investigation Section assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The Hazardous Materials Response Division is part of the Department of Fire Services. The Joint Hazard Incident Response Team (JHIRT) includes specially cross-trained members of both units.

# Massachusetts Fire Sprinkler News

## New Home Built with Fire Sprinklers

A few years ago, a home built with community support for a disabled Granby veteran was severely damaged by fire. The community rallied, rebuilt the home, and included fire sprinklers in the second house. The loss of the Granby home inspired the inclusion of fire sprinklers in a new home under construction in Hopkinton. The new home is being built by the Gary Sinise Foundation for U.S. Army Captain Greg Galeazzi, a disabled veteran. Fire sprinklers will protect this new home.

The architect on this project is Mellowed & Paladino from Hopkinton, the contractor is Tarca Construction of Hopkinton, the fire sprinkler contractor is Meridian Fire Protection of Salem, NH and General Air provided materials.

For more information about the project go to: <https://www.garysinisefoundation.org/specially-adapted-smart-homes/greg-galeazzi/>

## The Benefits of Fire Sprinklers

Unfortunately, fire sprinklers are not required in all new one- and two-family homes by the Massachusetts Residential Building Code, although the International Residential Code that the Massachusetts Code is based upon does. However, sprinklers are always an option when building new homes. The Massachusetts Fire Sprinkler Coalition recommends that everyone building a new home ask for fire sprinklers. For less than the cost of lawn sprinklers or wall-to-wall carpeting, a you can protect your family and your investment.

A report commissioned by the Fire Protection Research Foundation found that the average, national cost of installing sprinklers in new homes is \$1.35 per sprinklered square foot, which is one to two percent of the total construction cost. This cost includes: design, installation, permits, equipment, and tap and water meter fees – to the extent that they apply. In states and counties where sprinklers are required in all new homes, the cost drops even lower to \$1.16 per square foot, with no negative impact on housing starts.

Developers can ask local planning and zoning boards for trade-offs when they install fire sprinklers. Trade-offs can include: additional units, street width reduction, longer dead-end streets, tee-turnarounds, increased street grades, expansion of existing water supply, and increased hydrant spacing. Local officials might prefer home fire sprinklers to cisterns, which



the community often ends up maintaining. The Coalition urges fire officials to educate local planning and zoning boards. Info can be found at <https://home-firesprinkler.org/community-risk-reduction/>.

## Fire Sprinklers Save Homes

On May 11, 2020 at 7:45pm, the Hopkinton Fire Department responded to smoke in a house. They found an extinguished fire on the stove. A single sprinkler head had put the fire out. No one was injured and damage was minimal. The residents were able to stay in the house that night. This kind of fire never makes news, but perhaps it should. A story like this teaches homeowners and officials about the value of fire sprinklers. This was the second sprinkler save in the same development, proving the incredible value of home fire sprinklers.



# Residential Sprinkler Requirements

## *Vacation Rental Homes, Congregate Living Facilities, and Townhouses*

*Building officials and the public may not be fully aware of residential sprinkler requirements, particularly for vacation rentals, congregate living facilities, and townhouses. Local fire officials can help.*

### Vacation Home Rentals

When you travel, what do you look for in a place to stay? Gorgeous views and beach access outside the door? A quaint cabin hidden in the woods? The comfort and coziness of a home setting? You are not alone. Websites like AirBNB, HomeAway, VRBO, and others have made it increasingly easy to find home-style vacation accommodations. And if you want to, you may be able to post your own house as a vacation rental. But there is a catch!

According to the 2015 International Building Code (IBC), which is the basis of the Massachusetts State Building Code, transient lodging is considered a hotel. Use Group R-1 applies to hotels, motels, and congregate living facilities with more than 10 occupants [780 CMR 310.3]. If the building houses 10 or fewer occupants, the classification is Use Group R-3 [780 CMR 310.5]. In either case, newly constructed, or substantially renovated, house-hotels must be fully sprinklered and have the appropriate fire alarm and detection system.

These requirements create a major issue in towns where home vacation rentals are popular and a necessary source of revenue for homeowners. Even if no work is done to a single-family house when it becomes a rental, the 2015 International Residential Code (IRC) no longer applies to it. The change of use to a house-hotel, regardless of the extent of work, requires compliance with the IBC. Enforcing compliance in local jurisdictions is left to local building officials. The Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) has not made an official determination about the applicability of the code. However, the International Code Council (ICC) has been consistent in their interpretation of house-hotels and considers them to be Use Group R-1 or R-3.

### Congregate Living Facilities

Congregate living facilities are defined by 2015 IBC as “a building or part thereof that contains sleeping units where residents share bathroom or kitchen

facilities, or both.” Many college towns have seen single-family homes turned into congregate living facilities for students. Recently, a number of single-family homes have been converted into congregate living facilities for alcohol and drug rehabilitation or as half-way or sober housing. There has been a strong push to waive sprinkler and fire alarm requirements in these facilities, which are required in 780 CMR. The common argument is that requiring these fire protection systems creates an undue financial hardship for the organizations running the facilities. Fortunately, the IBC does not make any distinction about the use of a congregate living facility. The IBC requires all commercial-style residential buildings to have a fire sprinkler system and adequate fire alarm and detection equipment. When a conversion is made from a single-family home to a congregate living facility, these buildings must comply with the provisions applicable to Use Group R buildings.

### Townhouses

Townhouses are, “single-family dwelling units constructed in a group of three or more attached units in which each unit extends from the foundation to roof and with open space on at least two sides.” Townhouses are defined as Use Group R-3 in the IBC but are permitted to follow construction requirements of the International Residential Code (IRC). It has been a persistent policy of the BBRS to amend the residential fire sprinkler provision of the IRC to apply only to single- and two-family homes over 14,400 square feet in aggregate area. However, townhouses are also required to be sprinklered. The code reference is in 780 CMR Table 903.2, Note 7 (MA amendment) and in 780 CMR (IRC) 313.1.1 (MA amendment). Although the code is explicit in requiring fire sprinklers without exception, many jurisdictions have waived fire sprinkler requirements through a misinterpretation of 780 CMR (IRC) 302.2. Because the IRC applies to newly constructed townhouses, as well as existing townhouses, there is a provision in 780 CMR (IRC) 302.2 for the minimum fire resistance rating for the common wall between the dwelling units. If a new townhouse is added to a series of existing townhouses that have an automatic

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# FCAM Conference

In early March, the Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts (FCAM) held its annual professional development conference at the DCU Center in Worcester. Several fire chiefs represented the growing diversity of the Massachusetts fire service, which is a predominantly white and male profession. They agreed to pose for this photo knowing they are role models for others, and so that youth can see themselves in the firefighting profession. This year we have the largest number of African-American fire chiefs serving concurrently in Massachusetts. There are also several women, Native American and Hispanic fire chiefs serving the Commonwealth today. The first Black fire chief in the United States was Cambridge, Massachusetts Fire Chief Patrick H. Raymond, appointed in 1871. The second Black fire chief in the state, retired Wendell Fire Chief Everett Ricketts was

appointed in 1976. Today, there is increased diversity in the officer ranks, which is the candidate pool for future chiefs.



Left to Right: Amherst Fire Chief "Tim" Nelson, Norfolk Fire Chief Erron Q. Kinney, Swampscott Fire Chief Graham Archer, Devens Fire Chief Tim Kelly, & Lynn Fire Chief Steve Archer.

## Fire Prevention Week 2020

Fire Prevention Week (FPW), October 4 - 10, 2020, is an opportunity to promote fire safety messages. This year's theme is "Serve up fire safety in the kitchen." Fire prevention week is a great time to teach that cooking is the #1 cause of home fires and home fire injuries. This year's campaign works to educate everyone about the simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves safe in the kitchen. Use this logo and other materials for teaching during FPW. Visit [www.NFPA.org](http://www.NFPA.org) for more information and materials.



## Residential Sprinkler Requirements

Continued

fire sprinkler system, the fire resistance rating of the common wall is permitted to be 1 hour. However, if a new townhouse is added to a series of townhouses that are not sprinklered, or to an existing unsprinklered two-family house, the fire resistance rating of the common wall must not be less than 2 hours. There is no exception for an automatic fire sprinkler system in newly constructed townhouses.

### More Information

The Fire Safety Division has fire protection engineers

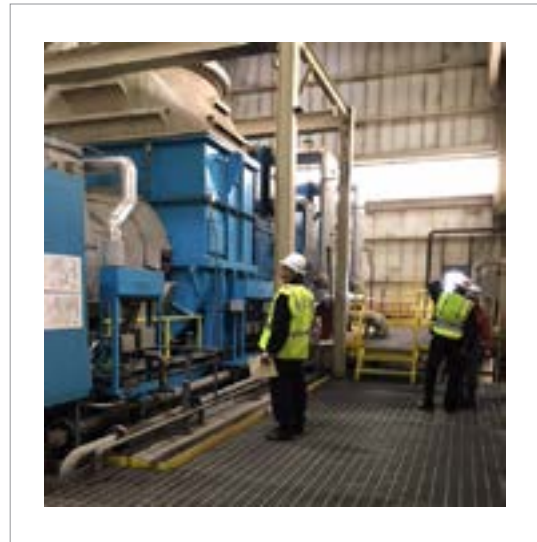
to assist with plan reviews, answer technical questions, and accompany the local fire department on inspections. For more information, contact the Division of Fire Safety's fire protection engineers. Communities north of the Massachusetts Turnpike, contact: Kristen McDonough (formerly Nich), P.E. at 978-567-3376 or [kristen.mcdonough@mass.gov](mailto:kristen.mcdonough@mass.gov). Communities south of, or on the Mass. Turnpike, contact Jake Nunnemacher at 978-567-3377 or [jacob.nunnemacher@mass.gov](mailto:jacob.nunnemacher@mass.gov).

# Boiler and Pressure Vessel Certificates of Inspection

The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Unit (BPV) of the Department of Fire Services promotes safety and prevents loss of life and property by ensuring boiler and pressure vessel integrity. By law, (M.G.L. Chapter 146), certain non-residential boilers and pressure vessels must be inspected by a DFS district engineering inspector before they can begin operating. Then they must be inspected annually (or biennially, in the case of air tanks). If no problems are found during an inspection, the BPV program issues a *certificate of inspection* (see sample below). The certificate must be posted in a conspicuous place in the engine or boiler room, or near the pressure vessel.

There are over 73,000 registered boilers and pressure vessels in Massachusetts. Each must be inspected prior to use and then again each year by the BPV Unit. Boilers and pressure vessels are found in many buildings including: schools, hospitals, nursing homes, power plants, dry cleaners, automotive repair shops, fire houses, industrial manufacturing, and commercial facilities.

Fire prevention officers frequently visit many of these facilities. If an officer sees a boiler or pressure vessel while they are working, they can help to further public safety by checking to see if the BPV certificate of inspection is posted and that it has not expired. Fire prevention officers are not responsible for enforcing BPV regulations, but they can refer issues to the BPV unit.



CERTIFICATE OF INSPECTION BOILER OR PRESSURE VESSEL		Type Cast Aluminum Pressure not to exceed 92 lbs/sq. in.	Tag Number MA140600	THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES BPV
Located at: DFS - Department of Fire Services (Stow) One State Road Stow, MA 01775-1500		NB# 0	Manufacturer Aerco	One State Rd. Stow, MA 01775-1025 <small>This is to certify that the boiler or pressure vessel herein has been inspected and approved for use in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 146.</small>
Owner or User: Department of Fire Services (Stow) One State Road Stow, MA 01775-1500 ATTN: Kevin McCarthy		Expiration Date: Oct-2020 Plant Loc: Admin Bldg- RM A106		<small>Notify this department at once if any defect is discovered.</small> <b>POST UNDER GLASS IN CONSPICUOUS PLACE IN ENGINE OR BOILER ROOM OR NEXT TO PRESSURE VESSEL.</b>
				Allen Boston Commonwealth of Massachusetts
				Peter J. Ostroskey State Fire Marshal

The BPV Unit performs and oversees approximately 60,000 inspections each year, and issues certificates of inspection for units that are in compliance. Initial inspections are performed by DFS district engineering inspectors to ensure the boiler or pressure vessel was constructed per American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) codes, and was installed in accordance with the Board of Boiler Rules regulations (522 CMR), and the National Board Inspection Code. Periodic inspections ensure ongoing compliance with regulatory requirements, and can be performed by either a DFS inspector, or an authorized insurance inspector licensed by DFS to perform inspections.

For questions about the BPV program, please call 978-567-3782.



# Aboveground Storage Tank Inspections

All aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) greater than 10,000 gallons, that store any fluid other than water, require permits and inspections in Massachusetts.

AST owners and operators must have a permit from the Department of Fire Services to build or install new aboveground storage tanks. Aboveground storage tanks also require a Use Permit. A Use Permit is issued by the State Fire Marshal upon construction and it must be renewed every five years.

Beginning in November 2020, the State Fire Marshal's Office will send AST Use Permit renewal reminder notices to AST owners and operators approximately 45 days before a Use Permit's expiration date. To renew a Use Permit, owners and operators must submit an AST Inspection and Renewal Form with the associated fee.

The DFS Fire Safety Division is responsible for ensuring that about 2,000 ASTs are inspected. Code compliance officers conduct a physical review of about 400 tanks a year. They ensure that tanks still exist, that the required types of inspections have happened, and that permits are up to date. Inspections are usually conducted by licensed professionals hired by the tank owner. The type and frequency of required inspections is determined by the approved technical standard declared at construction. Our inspections ensure that owners and operators are meeting the requirements of the approved technical standard they selected at construction. If tanks are no longer in use, inspections ensure that decommissioning happened correctly.

**All aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) greater than 10,000 gallons, that store any fluid other than water, require permits and inspections in Massachusetts.**



*DFS compliance officers inspecting an aboveground storage tank.*

## History of AST Regulation in Massachusetts

On January 15, 1919, the Great Molasses Flood killed 21 people and injured 150 more in Boston's North End. Many claim you can still smell molasses in the North End on hot summer days. The state began regulating aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) greater than 10,000 gallons, storing any fluid other than water, after this disaster.



# Collapse Rescue Training

## *Coming to Bridgewater Campus*

In the near future, technical rescue students can look forward to a structural collapse training program at the new DFS Bridgewater campus. Eventually the campus will host a permanent state-of-the-art dynamic and challenging training prop where firefighters can learn techniques for shoring up buildings and breaching rubble in order to safely search for trapped victims. After an earthquake, hurricane, tornado or bomb explosion, victims can be trapped in unstable debris piles. This training will prepare students to find and extricate those victims.

The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's (MFA) Technical Rescue Program plans to offer a multi-day structural collapse class at the new Bridgewater campus. The training will meet, and likely exceed, the minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities defined in NFPA 1006: Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Professional Qualifications. The team has spent several years developing a comprehensive structural collapse program that meets the needs of all firefighters and rescue technicians.



*Photo by Duxbury Captain Rob Reardon.*



The program will prepare students to respond to a collapse of any size or magnitude. Students will learn to mitigate hazards and rescue victims in complex structural collapse situations. The initial training will be several consecutive days and will cover techniques such as shoring, lifting and moving, and breaching and breaking. We plan to offer a Pro Board Certification based on NFPA 1006 at the completion of class.

Structural collapse training will include the class at the Bridgewater campus, along with modular classes in each discipline for those that cannot commit to several days of training. This will allow many Massachusetts call and volunteer firefighters to take advantage of the trainings. The modular training can also serve as a refresher for a firefighter or rescue technician that previously took the in-person training. It is important to maintain this perishable skill set by practicing in a real-world environment.

The new collapse rescue training prop will be used for both training programs and for refresher training to hone and maintain the skills of technical rescue team members from all five regions of the state.

The Technical Rescue program staff is committed to continual improvements in technical rescue programs for firefighters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Classes in confined space, operational and technician level rope, and trench rescue will be offered at the Bridgewater campus in addition to classes conducted throughout the state.

# Regulations for Hand Sanitizer



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As we move towards a “new normal” in the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses will stock and provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer to customers and employees. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a 70% alcohol mixture for hand sanitizer. Seventy percent alcohol content means that most hand sanitizers are classified as either Class IB or Class IC flammable liquids. Fortunately, Massachusetts has code provisions for the use and storage of alcohol-based hand sanitizer through both 780 CMR, *Massachusetts State Building Code*, and 527 CMR 1.00, *Comprehensive State Fire Code*.

## Storage

Storage of Class IB and IC flammable liquids are regulated by 780 CMR and 527 CMR 1.00:

- Bulk quantities of Class IB and IC flammable liquids are limited in non-hazardous use buildings. [780 CMR Table 307.1(1)]
  - Up to 120 gallons can be stored in a non-sprinklered building.
  - Up to 240 gallons can be stored within a building sprinklered in compliance with 2013 NFPA 13.
- Up to 480 gallons can be stored within a building sprinklered in compliance with 2013 NFPA 13 and within approved storage (rated and ventilated flammable cabinets).
- All Class IB and IC flammable liquids must be included in the calculation of the maximum amount, which may include concentrated cleaning supplies, manufacturing products, or other chemicals currently housed within the building.
- If the bulk quantities exceed the values in 780 CMR Table 307.1(1), additional control areas may be needed or the building must be classified as Use Group H (Hazardous). See 780 CMR 414 and 415 for additional provisions.:
- Any change to the storage configuration or amounts of chemicals must comply with the permitting requirements of 780 CMR and 527 CMR 1.00.
  - A permit is required from the local fire department for storage of more than 10 gallons of alcohol-based hand sanitizer. [527 CMR 1.00: 1.12.8.50]

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# Regulations for Hand Sanitizer

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## Use in Dispensers

Wall-mounted or free-standing alcohol based hand sanitizer dispenser locations are regulated through 527 CMR 1.00. Some installations may be temporary and portable, but building owners must understand the provisions associated with safe installation and use, if they are moved from their original location.

## Capacity

Capacity of wall-mounted or free-standing dispensers is limited, based on the type and location of the unit [527 CMR 1.00: 10.22.1; 60.5.2]:

- The maximum capacity of dispensing units in areas open to corridors is 41 oz. (0.32 gal or 1.2 L).
- The maximum capacity of dispensing units in rooms, or suites of rooms, and separated from corridors is 67 oz. (0.53 gal or 2.0L).
- Aerosol dispensers are limited to 18 oz. and must be classified as Level 1.
- Additional limitations apply to buildings with smoke compartments such as hospitals and institutional occupancies see 527 CMR 1.00: 60.5.2(4) & (5).

## Location

- The minimum separation distance between dispensers is 48 inches. [527 CMR 1.00: 10.22.1(2)]
- No dispensers shall be located [527 CMR 1.00: 60.5.2(2)]:
  - Above an ignition source for a horizontal distance of 1 in. to each side of the ignition source;
  - Within 1 in. of the side of an ignition source, or
  - Within 1in. below an ignition source.
- Dispensers can only be installed directly over carpeted floors in sprinklered areas of the building. [527 CMR 1.00: 60.5.2(3)].

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a 70% alcohol mixture for hand sanitizer. Seventy percent alcohol content means that most hand sanitizers are classified as either Class IB or Class IC flammable liquids.

## Dispenser Operation

Operation of the dispenser must comply with the following criteria [527 CMR 1.00: 60.5.2(9)]:

- The dispenser shall not release its contents except when the dispenser is activated, either manually or automatically by touch-free activation.
- Activation of the dispenser shall occur only when an object is placed within 4 in. of the sensing device.
- An object placed within the activation zone and left in place shall not cause more than one activation.
- The dispenser shall not dispense more solution than the amount required for hand hygiene, consistent with label instructions.
- The dispenser shall be designed, constructed, and operated in a manner that ensures accidental or malicious activation of the device is minimized.
- The dispenser shall be tested in accordance with the manufacturer's care and use instructions each time a new refill is installed.

When assessing an alcohol-based hand sanitizer installation, note the full code provisions as written in 780 CMR or 527 CMR 1.00 and consult with the building official who has jurisdiction over the provisions in the building code. If you need additional assistance, please contact the Code Compliance help desk at 978-567-3375.



# Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations

## Chief Fire Officer

On Friday, January 31, 2020, 37 fire service leaders from across Massachusetts graduated from the 27th offering of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's Chief Fire Officer Management Training Program. This 14-week program was developed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association Standards for senior fire officers. It is delivered jointly by the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management at the University of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy. It is a comprehensive course providing training in the non-fire suppression aspects of managing fire departments. These fire service leaders who complete this program are committed to continually developing their management and leadership skills in order to provide the highest level of service for their communities.

The thirty-seven graduates serve the following fire departments: Agawam, Barre, Bridgewater, Brockton, Cambridge, Carlisle, Charlton, Chilmark, Dennis, Fall River, Foxborough, Hanson, Hatfield, Haverhill, Hudson, Ipswich, Lexington, Littleton, Lynn, Massport, Merrimac, Monson, Newton, Northbridge, Paxton, Shirley, Southbridge, Southwick, Springfield, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, West Bridgewater, Westfield, and Whitman.

## Fire Investigation Programs

The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA) offers tuition-free fire investigation training. The basic and advanced programs provide fire, and state and local police officers with the technical skills to accurately determine the origin and cause of fires in their jurisdictions and together, build solid, prosecutable cases.

### Basic Fire Investigation

Eighty-two public safety officers completed the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's six-day Basic Fire Investigation course in November 2019. This rigorous professional training provides fire, and state and local police officers with the technical skills to accurately determine the origin and cause of fires in their jurisdictions and together, build solid, prosecutable cases.

The 82 graduates included 64 firefighters, eight local police officers, and ten Massachusetts State Police officers, representing the following 57 agencies: Amesbury Fire, Andover Fire, Arlington Police,



*Chief Fire Officer*

Attleborough Fire, Boston Fire, Brockton Fire, Chelsea Fire, Cohasset Fire, Danvers Police, Douglas Fire, East Longmeadow Fire and Police, Fall River Fire, Fitchburg Fire, Franklin Fire, Gloucester Fire, Harwich Fire, Haverhill Fire, Holyoke Fire, Hull Fire, Lawrence Fire, Leominster Fire, Longmeadow Fire, Malden Fire, Massachusetts State Police, Medway Fire, Methuen Fire, Methuen Police, Newton Fire, North Attleborough Fire, Norton Fire, Norwood Fire, Oxford Fire, Peabody Fire and Police, Peabody Police, Rowley Fire, Salem Fire, Salisbury Fire, Sandwich Fire, Saugus Fire, Scituate Fire, Somerville Fire, Spencer Fire, Sturbridge Fire, Sudbury Fire, Swampscott Fire, Taunton Fire, Tewksbury Fire, Wakefield Fire, West Barnstable Fire, Westborough Fire and Police, Westminster Fire, Weymouth Fire, Winchendon Fire, Winchester Fire and Worcester Fire.

## 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 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 the Stow headquarters of DFS, the Springfield campus and now the Bridgewater campus.

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# Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations

Continued



Class #278

## *Class #278*

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #278 graduated on December 5, 2019 at the Department of Fire Services in Stow. The 33 graduates represent the 14 fire departments of Canton, East Bridgewater, Falmouth, Fitchburg, Lawrence, Lexington, Littleton, Lynn, Medway, Methuen, Plymouth, Truro, Wayland and Winchester.



Class #279

## *Class #279*

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #279 graduated on January 10, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services in Stow. The 35 graduates represent the 20 fire departments of Acton, Arlington, Bedford, Beverly, Concord, Hingham, Hopedale, Ipswich, Leominster, Lexington, Lynn, Manchester, Mansfield, Marshfield, Maynard, Melrose, Rockland, Sudbury, Taunton, and Yarmouth.



Class #S14

## *Class #S14*

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S14 graduated on February 7, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services, Springfield Campus. The graduates represent the 13 fire departments of Agawam, Amherst, Athol, Chicopee, Gardner, Mashpee, Natick, Northampton, Pittsfield, Springfield, West Springfield, Westborough and Westfield.



Class #280

## *Class #280*

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #280 graduated on February 14, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services in Stow. The graduates represent the 20 fire departments of Andover, Clinton, Concord, Dennis, Devens, Harwich, Holden, Lexington, North Andover, North Attleborough, North Reading, Norwood, Raynham, Revere, Sudbury, Truro, Watertown, Wayland, Wrentham, and Yarmouth.

## **Classes Underway During the Pandemic Continued**

Career Recruit classes #281, #282 and #BW01 were underway when the COVID-19 shutdown took effect. In order to keep everyone safe and respect the need for physical distancing, the traditional graduation ceremony was canceled. Students continued their training, with some interruptions for quarantines and testing due to exposure and/or confirmed cases of the disease. This was an added stress for instructors and students alike.

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# Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations

Continued



Class #281



Class #282



Class #BW01

## *Class #281*

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #281 graduated on March 20, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services in Stow. The 34 graduates represent the 20 fire departments of Athol, Beverly, Chelmsford, Chelsea, Concord, Danvers, Fairhaven, Fitchburg, Littleton, Lowell, Newton, Peabody, Sharon, Stoneham, Stow, Sudbury, Tewksbury, Wakefield, Winchester, and Woburn.

## *Class #282*

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #282 completed their work at the Department of Fire Services in Stow on May 8, 2020. The 33 graduates represent the 24 fire departments of Bedford, Beverly, Bourne, Burlington, Cohasset, Concord, Devens, Easton, Hingham, Holbrook, Leominster, Lexington, Middleton, Norwell, Plymouth, Salem, Shrewsbury, Somerville, Watertown, West Barnstable, Westford, Weston, Winchester, and Yarmouth.

## *Class #BW01*

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW01 completed their work at the Department of Fire Services in Bridgewater on March 24, 2020. This was the first class to complete the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's fifty-day Career Recruit Firefighting Training Program at the new Bridgewater campus. DFS staff were deeply disappointed that they were not able to celebrate this milestone for the agency as well as the students. The 14 graduates represent the eight fire departments of Duxbury, Lakeville, Milford, Norfolk, North Attleborough, Sharon, Wellfleet and Westport.

## **Southeastern Massachusetts Campus in Development**

The new southeastern Massachusetts campus of the Department of Fire Services was a vacant Department of Correction property in Bridgewater. Numerous improvements to the facility have already been made and many more are planned, including construction of a live fire training building like the agency has at both the Stow and Springfield campuses. The MFA adjusted the schedule for this first class so that students could use the live fire training facility at Milford Fire Headquarters and access other specialized training resources at the Stow campus with

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# Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations

Continued

minimal disruption. The Stow campus includes a gas training facility to train firefighters on how to extinguish fires involving natural, propane gas, and liquid natural gas.

## 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 #80

On February 24, 2020 members of the Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Training Class #81 graduated. The 36 graduates represent the 21 fire departments of Athol, Barre, Charlton, East Brookfield, Hardwick, Harvard, Holden, Holliston, Hubbardston, Leicester, Millbury, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Orange, Paxton, Pepperell, Princeton, Southbridge, Spencer, Uxbridge, and Winchendon. The ceremony took place at Department of Fire Services in Stow.

### Class #81

On February 27, 2020 members of the Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Training Class #81 graduated. The 27 graduates represent the 14 fire departments of Boxford, Dunstable, Georgetown, Groveland, Hamilton, Haverhill, Lynnfield, Middleton, Nahant, Newbury, Rowley, Topsfield, Tyngsborough, and Wenham. The ceremony took place at the Masconomet Regional Middle School in Boxford.

## Today's Firefighters Do Far More than Fight Fires

Today's firefighters do far more than fight fires. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies, ranging from the suspected presence of carbon monoxide to a gas leak. They may be called to rescue a child who has



Class #80



Class #81

fallen through the ice or who has locked himself in a bathroom. They rescue people from stalled elevators and those who are trapped in vehicle crashes. They test and maintain their equipment including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), hydrants, hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, they learn all these skills and more from certified fire instructors who are also experienced firefighters. Students learn all the basic skills they need to respond to, contain and control fires. They receive training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, confined space rescue techniques, and rappelling. The intensive, ten-week program for municipal firefighters involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training, and live fire-fighting practice.

# Fire Education in the Time of COVID-19

The shutdown of schools due to COVID-19 means that fire educators were not be able to make the classroom visits this spring they had planned. Many firefighter-educators are reaching students online with videos of firefighters reading fire safety books for children. The DFS Resource Library has a list of books to consider [here](#). The books are copyright-protected so you must get permission from the publisher before you use a book online. Another way some fire educators are teaching children online in these uncertain times is with virtual fire station tours.

DFS has an online Home Hazard Inspection lesson for grades 4-6. The lesson has six modules on different areas of the home. The lesson asks students to submit pictures of themselves and their families testing smoke alarms using the hashtag #makesomenoisefor-firesafety. Departments can upload the pictures to their Facebook pages.

The lesson is available in two formats: Google Docs or PowerPoint™. Find the PowerPoint™ [here](#). If the teachers you work with use Google Classroom as their instruction platform, you can share the Lesson as a Google Doc, which will work seamlessly with their platform. Contact Cynthia Ouellette ([Cynthia.ouellette@mass.gov](mailto:Cynthia.ouellette@mass.gov)) for a link to the lesson as a Google Doc. The Fire Data and Public Education Unit is working on a second lesson plan that will cover Home Escape Planning for grade 3. It will also be available in two formats.

The [National Fire Protection Association](#) has coloring sheets, lessons and videos about fire safety. These can be used by kids at home. [Young Minds Informed](#) also has an online program called *Sound Off with the Home Fire Safety Patrol* for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students.



## Fall Public Education Conference

The Department of Fire Services and the Massachusetts Public Fire & Life Safety Education Task Force are sorry to report that the fall conference has been canceled due to COVID-19. Instead, we will offer a one-day online program of workshops for fire and life safety educators in September. We will announce the date this summer. We

will also offer a series of single workshops in October, November and December.

## Summer Fire Education

Fire risks change with each season. In summer, fireworks, grilling, water safety and more are concerns. DFS has flyers on grilling, fireworks, and summer safety. You can find these on the [DFS Fire Education Handouts and Flyers webpage](#). The [Grilling Fire Safety](#) and [Fireworks Safety](#) webpages have more resources including videos you can share on social media or your own webpage. The Grilling and Fireworks Safety flyers give you current data from the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRs) and the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (M-BIRS) and anecdotes that illustrate the types of fires and injuries that happen in

summer. It is critically important to educate the public about the dangers of consumer fireworks. Make sure to share the message that, "July 4th is a very busy time for firefighters. Firefighters, police officers, and medical professionals ask the public to help us during this pandemic, and leave the fireworks to the professionals." The National Fire Protection Association is urging people to "Wash your hands! Don't risk losing them to fireworks."



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# Fire Education in the Time of COVID-19

## Public Awareness Campaigns

DFS has public awareness campaigns that you can use in your public education work:

- [Smoking and porch fire safety](#)
- [Cooking fire safety toolkit](#)
- [Home oxygen safety](#)
- [Home heating safety](#)
- [Smoke alarm public awareness campaign toolkit](#)

Fire deaths for 2020 were a little below the average for January, February and the early part of March. But after the COVID-19 state of emergency, fire deaths rose in March and April. In fact, there were more fire deaths in April 2020 than in any other April since 2008.

## Smoking Fire Safety

Forty percent of the fire deaths so far this year were due to the improper use and disposal of smoking materials. During the cool weather in April, it seems people were smoking indoors. Then in May, there were many porch, exterior and outside fires from



smoking. See the *Fire Investigation News* article in this edition of the *All Hands Herald* for more information on those incidents.

In response to the high number of smoking fires, DFS is airing more smoking fire safety ads on television and radio (in English and Spanish) to educate the public. You can use these ads on your own webpages and social media. The [Smoking Fire Safety](#) page has a bi-lingual (English/Spanish) Porch Fire Safety pamphlet developed by the Chelsea Fire Department. If you serve a dense urban neighborhood, you may want to adapt this for your own community. DFS can help. Contact the Fire Data and Public Education Unit.



## Smoke Alarms

In two fatal smoking fires this spring, the smoke alarms did not work. They were from the 1970s and 1980s. Most likely, these alarms were installed when the home was last sold, and never replaced. Replacing expired smoke alarms is another critical message to get out to the public. DFS has many resources for fire educators about smoke alarm safety. Start on our [Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms webpage](#). We also offer a [toolkit of materials](#) to use in your public education efforts.

## COVID-19 and Fall Fire and Life Safety Education

Fire educators may need to continue to rely on virtual and alternative methods of communication for fall fire education. Partnering with community organizations is key.

- Work with the schools to get your messages out.
- Collaborate with Meals on Wheels to deliver flyers and information to seniors.
- Bring information to school locations where people are picking up breakfast and lunch.
- Work with your local cable station to promote safety messages. You can encourage cable stations to upload videos from the [DFS YouTube™ page](#), and from our campaign pages.

In the new normal of this pandemic, fire and life safety education is still necessary. Use Department of Fire Services resources to educate your communities.



# 2019 Pride in Performance Awards

## Employees Recognized for Outstanding Performance

Each year, a committee of Department of Fire Services (DFS) staff selects full-time employees from among nominees for recognition with Pride in Performance awards. This statewide award recognizes full-time employees for achieving high priority agency objectives, exceptional managerial, organizational and communications achievements, exemplary leadership, or achievement of significant improvements in productivity or savings in agency operations. Because DFS contract employees provide critical services to the agency, DFS also recognizes a contract employee each year. This year, the DFS committee recognized one full-time employee and one contract employee for distinguished dedication and commitment to the agency's mission. Governor Baker recognized the full-time employee award recipient at the State House on December 16, 2019.

DFS presented length of service awards and the contractor's Pride in Performance award at a ceremony on February 21, 2020 at the Stow campus. Length of service awards were presented to employees who have been with DFS for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 years.

### Honorees

**Albert Thomas, Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Division, Full-time employee**



Albert Thomas (Al) provides distinguished service to the HazMat Division by relentlessly pursuing the best equipment for the best prices that he can find. Hazardous materials response items are not everyday commodities and yet Al works with vendors who have state contracts and manages to both find needed equipment, and to negotiate important savings on items. Al saved the HazMat division, and

the Commonwealth, thousands of dollars on numerous occasions by searching for the best option available, and then negotiating costs with vendors rather than accepting the first stated price. His work saved \$53,750 on one purchase alone, amounting to a 15% discount. The savings allowed HazMat to purchase one of the specialized meters for each district. Al's work has made a significant difference to the HazMat division and to the districts.

**James Hagerty, Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, Contract Employee**



James Hagerty (Jim) was an important and significant contributor on the DFS Bridgewater recruit training development project team. He created a unique training matrix that insures Bridgewater campus recruits have the same level of training as recruits on the other DFS campuses. His creative ideas minimized the impact on the other two DFS campuses. Jim's matrix has:

- minimized the number of travel days for recruits while maintaining exceptional training.
- exposed recruits to live burns with minimal water use.
- taught recruits basic skills including ladder work and search and rescue with limited building use.
- delivered required training and reduced the number of instructors needed.

Jim's approach to developing the training at Bridgewater was impressive and refreshing. He produced a viable training plan despite the many challenges that exist at the DFS Bridgewater site. His creative thinking contributed to the excellent recruit and instructor experience at Bridgewater.

# Canine Surrender

The Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) has 19 accelerant and explosive detection canines that are invaluable to their work. The dogs come from organizations that train service dogs. But not every dog is cut out to be a service dog. Some are too rambunctious or too curious. These are the very qualities that make them good at detecting ignitable liquids and explosives.

The F&EIU is very fortunate to have dogs from *Puppies Behind Bars*, a program that works with prison inmates to train dogs to become service or working dogs. Three dogs from *Puppies Behind Bars* are currently in training to become explosive detection canines.

A court recently found that a Massachusetts resident was not able to care properly for the service dog he had received from *Puppies Behind Bars*. One of our State Police fire investigators, who is a trained canine handler, executed the surrender order without incident and reunited the dog with the organization. The dog was suffering from an ear infection, severe obesity, and was behind on regular vaccinations and other routine medical care. The yellow lab was clearly neglected, but with medical care, play, and love he will bounce back. Sadly, he will not be able to return to work as a service dog.



Dog on far right reunited with other Puppies Behind Bars service dogs.



EK-9 Nancy, from Puppies Behind Bars.



AK-9 Remington working at a car fire.



EK-9 from Puppies Behind Bars in training.



# YouTube™ Burn Awareness Video Contest

## Winners Announced

On March 12, the winners of the 12<sup>th</sup> annual state-wide YouTube™ Burn Awareness Video Contest were announced. The award ceremony was canceled due to concerns about the COVID-19 virus. The contest is co-sponsored by Shriners Hospital for Children in Boston, the Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association (MPIUA) and the Massachusetts Association of Safety and Fire Educators (MaSAFE).

State Fire Marshal Ostrokey said, "The key to the success of the YouTube™ Burn Awareness Video Contest is allowing teens to use video to explore what they need to know about fires and burns without getting hurt. We have too many examples of children trying to imitate stunts shown on the internet like the recent penny challenge. Dangerous behavior on social media underscores the continued need for this contest as a way to show the truth about burns and fire, and to teach young people about fire safety and media literacy."

### Winning Videos

Sixteen teams from six high schools including: Ayer-Shirley Regional, Boston Latin Academy, Masconomet Regional, Melrose High, Millis High, and Nauset Regional High School submitted entries. All the videos were very creative and interesting, but the winning team was from Nauset Regional High School for their re-write of the story *Little Red Riding Hood* titled Little Red. Second-place was awarded to a team from Masconomet Regional High for their video *Ghostly Fire*. The third-place winners were from Melrose High for their video *One Morning*. Three teams from Boston Latin Academy and Melrose were awarded Honorable Mentions for their videos. Watch the winning videos on the [DFS YouTube™ channel](#).

### Video Contest

The contest is open to Massachusetts students in grades 9-12. Submissions must be from school-sponsored communications courses or sponsored extra-curricular groups. Communications teachers or faculty sponsors are required to review and approve all storyboards before filming begins. Videos must be one to three minutes long, explore burn prevention topics, be well researched, not demonstrate risky or unsafe behavior, and be both educational and informative. The contest addresses learning standard components (Gr.9-10) SL.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, (Gr. 11-12)



SL.11-12.5, and W.11-12.6 of the Massachusetts Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy. School districts offering communications classes which include the design and creation of media productions, are encouraged to promote this contest through independent or group assignments.

**Dangerous behavior on social media underscores the continued need for this contest as a way to show the truth about burns and fire, and to teach young people about fire safety and media literacy.**

### Judges

Contest judges included Gerard Medua, representing the MPIUA; Chief Rick Tustin, president of MaSAFE; Jeanne McCue, Marketing & Communications Specialist for Shriners Hospital for Children® — Boston; Annie and Janie McCue from Amesbury High School; Jennifer Mieth and Julie Bergeron, Department of Fire Services; Chief Dennis Condon, President of the Massachusetts Fire Chiefs' Association; Lt. Chris Towski, representing the Fire Prevention Association of Massachusetts; and Barry Ouellette, writer, producer, and director.







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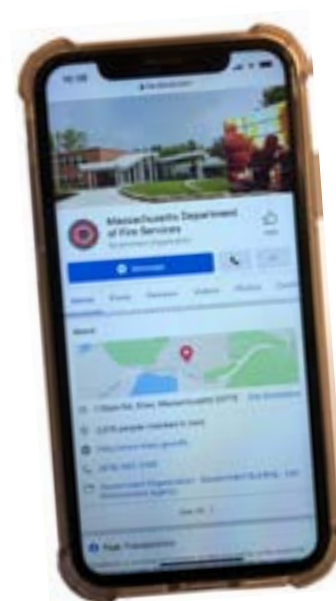
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