

All Hands Herald

Massachusetts Department of Fire Services

October 2020

Firefighter Training Resumes



**HazMat at Center of Testing
1st Responders and Prisoners**

**Fire Code Enforcement
During the Pandemic**

**Fireworks Enforcement
Operation**



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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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From the Fire Marshal

On August 14, we reached a major milestone at the Department of Fire Services (DFS) in the COVID-19 pandemic. We graduated our first three Career Recruit Firefighter classes, one on each campus, since we restarted firefighter training. Three more classes have graduated since, and six Career Recruit classes and three Call/Volunteer Firefighter Recruit classes are in progress. As we go to press, no one has become sick with the coronavirus and training has not been interrupted by illness or exposure. This implies that the protocols put into place both by DFS and by local fire departments have been effective, and that all the students cooperated.

I want to express my appreciation to the amazing DFS staff who made this milestone possible. We had to change all our operations and instructional methods because of the coronavirus. I have seen everyone rowing in the same direction to achieve the goal of restarting firefighter training. I also want to thank the fire departments for doing their part to implement protocols to keep their students safe, and the individual students themselves for behaving responsibly. We have seen young adults heading to college campuses this year that have not done the same.

This is the time for all of us to stay focused and vigilant. We see the worrying national statistics and know that the threat of COVID-19 remains very real. We must all keep up efforts to protect ourselves, our families, and people in our communities. It is important for the fire service to lead by example.

Bond Bill: Bridgewater Build-Out and Fire Equipment Grants

This summer, Governor Baker signed the Bond Bill passed by the Legislature that will allow us to further invest in and upgrade the Bridgewater campus. The Governor has signed Legislation transferring ownership of the property to DFS, so we can move forward with the build-out. I am grateful to the Administration and the Legislature for their commitment to the Massachusetts Fire Service. The support recognizes the high demand for recruit firefighter training. Our training waitlist continues to grow and the COVID-19 shutdown has made the wait longer. The Bridgewater campus will be a great benefit to the southeastern part of the state and to the entire Commonwealth by opening seats up in classes at the Stow and Springfield campuses. The facility will also continue to support our work on advancing the statewide Technical Rescue teams and their training.

The Bond Bill also includes a \$25M Firefighter Equipment Grant. The first time the state had such a grant program for fire departments was in 2000, after six firefighters died in the Worcester Cold Storage Warehouse fire. For many departments, that was the first time they were able to acquire thermal imaging cameras, now considered an essential piece of equipment.

AFG Grant for Mobile Extraction Unit

The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA) was awarded a \$400,000 grant for a mobile extraction unit (MEU). We know that one of the most important things for the long-term health and safety of firefighters is to wash their turnout gear each time it is exposed to smoke or fire.

The MEU purchased with this grant will allow us to wash gear for students and instructors after live fire training. It will drastically increase our capacity to wash gear, and it will be able to travel between the three campuses. The MEU 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. In addition to the primary benefit of cleaning the gear used by firefighters at the MFA, the MEU will contain clean water and wastewater tanks, which will allow us to sample water before and after it is used. This will provide new information about the type of toxins created in an academy setting by burning straw, pallets, and gas. The information will benefit fire academies across the country that engage in similar training practices.

Grant for State Police Bomb Squad

DFS was awarded \$375,000 of funding from the FY17 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant to upgrade the robotic capabilities of the State Police Bomb Squad. The funding comes through the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) from the Office of Justice Programs at the federal Department of Justice, and will be used to purchase three new robots and repair one aging robot. The robots will be used to identify, investigate,



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HazMat at Center of Testing

1st Responders and Prisoners

COVID-19 was first confirmed in Massachusetts on March 9, 2020 after an initial test of forty-one people identified one positive case of the virus. Within eleven days, the state had 413 confirmed cases and the first death from COVID-19.

On March 23, 2020, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker issued the first emergency order requiring all businesses and organizations not providing COVID-19 essential services to close their, “physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers and the public,” in order to defend the Commonwealth from the dangers of COVID-19. It was clear that essential workers would have to be tested to ensure their safety and that of their workplaces.

The Undersecretary for Homeland Security, State Fire Marshal, DFS leadership, Foxborough Fire Department, Brewster Ambulance Service, Wellpath, Massachusetts State Police and the Army National Guard joined forces to develop a plan for setting up COVID-19 mobile testing sites for essential workers in the state. The team developed a plan to open the first of two testing sites immediately. The goal was rapid testing of first responders in geographically convenient locations. The two state-run sites were established in Foxborough (opened April 5) and Springfield (opened on April 9). Each COVID-19 testing site was comprised of workers from seven different agencies representing both the public and private sectors.

With over thirty people at each site daily, working to test for a potentially deadly virus, it was important to develop a culture of respect, safety, and teamwork. Team leaders emphasized adherence to safety protocols, correct nasal swabbing techniques, and decontamination procedures. These topics were reinforced daily. They also asked that staff get to know each other professionally and personally in order to help build a cohesive team with a smooth operational flow. Team leaders also made clear that this was everyone’s first pandemic experience and that all ideas and suggestions were welcome.

The mobile test sites were set up so that first responders could drive through in their personal vehicles. The responders made appointments to visit the site by phoning a call center set up by the Deputy State Fire Marshal and run by the employees from the Department of Fire Services (DFS). Wellpath created a personalized swabbing kit for each individual scheduled to be tested. Brewster Ambulance personnel performed the actual tests, sealed the kits and refrigerated them until the site closed for the day. Quest Diagnostics took the kits to their labs for testing and



notified all those tested of their results. The sites tested between 100 and 290 people daily.

When the first people arrived for testing, COVID-19 cases were growing at alarming rates. For example, 29.7% of tests came back positive on April 6. That meant nearly one out of three vehicles had a person with COVID-19. But the safety protocols at the testing sites were sound. On-site staff were tested multiple times and all were negative.

Between April 5 and June 5, the Foxborough test site completed 8,117 tests and Springfield completed 7,263. The sites successfully achieved their mission due to the skill and professionalism of the workers operating together as a team.

Testing at State Prisons

After the testing sites for first responders were up and running, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) directed DFS, Brewster Ambulance, and Wellpath to begin testing inmates and staff at ten state prisons. The successful protocols used in Springfield and Bridgewater were easily adapted to testing these first responders and the vulnerable prison populations. Many COVID-19 outbreaks across the country have centered in nursing homes and prisons where people live in close quarters and cannot leave. The testing allows Department of Correction staff to implement quarantine protocols to prevent additional spread by infected individuals.

Each prison has been visited multiple times since the program began in April and testing continues today. Brewster Ambulance personnel test inmates inside the prisons and DFS HazMat technicians ensure that proper safety protocols and consistent decontamination procedures are followed. By August 26, 7,206 inmates and prison staff had been tested. Plans are in place for phase III of state prison testing that will continue the program through September.

Massachusetts Firefighting Academy

Firefighter Training Resumes

Training Safely During Pandemic

In response to the pandemic, the 10-week Career Recruit Firefighting curriculum was reorganized to take advantage of online learning technology while ensuring plenty of practical skill experience with instructors on DFS campuses. Training began in virtual classrooms for two weeks, then students came to campus for four weeks of practical training (using special safeguards and social distancing). Students returned to the virtual classroom for another week, came back to campus for two weeks and finished the program with one week in the virtual classroom.

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 Stow headquarters of DFS, the Springfield campus and the new Bridgewater campus.

Class #283

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #283 graduated on August 14, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Stow campus. The 17 graduates represent the 10 fire departments of Acton, Auburn, Belmont, Beverly, Charlton, Hopkinton, Melrose, North Andover, Stoughton, and Wilmington.

Class #284

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #284 graduated on September 11, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Stow campus. The 16 graduates represent the 11 fire departments of Bellingham, Clinton, Northbridge, Pepperell, Reading, Sharon, Shrewsbury, Walpole, Watertown, Westwood, and Wilmington.



Class #283



Class #284



Class #S15



Class #S16

Continued on page 16

Fire Code Enforcement During the Pandemic



The COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges in keeping communities safe from fire and other emergencies. The State Fire Marshal developed guidance for the fire service and communities on many areas related to pandemic response. You can find the complete guidance documents at www.mass.gov/lists/fsd-advisories. Advisories include guidance on:

- storage and use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer and dispensers,
- temporary tents,
- school reconfiguration,
- and school emergency planning.

The Department of Fire Services (DFS) and the Division of Public Licensure (DPL) have guidance on storage and use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer and dispensers, temporary tents, and school reconfiguration in two joint advisories: one on [outdoor dining](#) and one on [school safety](#). These issues along with guidance on school emergency planning were covered in another advisory, [School Emergency Planning and COVID 19](#).

Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer

Many schools, businesses and workplaces are installing and using hand sanitizer in new ways. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations, effective alcohol-based hand sanitizer must be at least 70% alcohol. This classifies alcohol-based hand sanitizer as a Class IB or IC flammable liquid. The storage of flammable liquids is regulated by the building code and limited to 120 gallons in unsprinklered buildings and up to 420 gallons (in approved storage) in sprinklered buildings. Additional

storage requirements are in the guidance documents and the *Massachusetts State Building Code*, 780 CMR.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer dispensing units are regulated by the *Comprehensive Fire Safety Code*, 527 CMR 1.00: Sections 10.22 and 60.5.2. Dispensers are limited to a capacity of 41 oz. in corridors and 67 oz. in rooms. Dispensers must be at least 48 inches apart and 1 inch away from an ignition source in every direction. Dispensers may be installed directly over carpeted floors only in sprinklered areas of a building.

New Hand Sanitizer Fire Prevention Pamphlet

DFS has a new [Hand Sanitizer Fire Prevention](#) pamphlet about storing and using hand sanitizer in public and work settings. Fire departments can share the pamphlet in their communities. Find the pamphlet and more information at the [DFS Code and Fire Prevention Support webpage](#).

Temporary Tents

The State Building Code (780 CMR) regulates permitting and installation requirements for temporary tents (erected for less than 180 days). The code path directs users to the *International Fire Code*. Requirements include:

- Tent material must meet NFPA 701 fire resistance.
- Tents must be at least 20 feet from property lines and buildings.
- Tents cannot block egress from a building or the fire department vehicle access path.
- Smoking is prohibited in tents.
- Cooking and open flame devices are not permitted within 20 feet of a tent.

Continued on next page

- Fuel storage and the use of open-flame cooking devices is regulated by 527 CMR 1.00.

Read the full guidance document for all requirements at www.mass.gov/doc/joint-dfs-dpl-outdoor-dining-guidance/download.

School Reconfiguration

Many schools are reconfiguring their spaces to meet Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recommendations on student and teacher spacing. Schools must work with building officials to maintain code compliance during the reconfigurations. Requirements include:

- Egress must remain clear.
- Hallway movement can be one-way but must allow free movement in both directions in an emergency.
- Newly created classrooms that were previously used for other purposes (gymnasiums, cafeterias, etc.) must be evaluated to verify compliance with fire alarms, exit signs, and egress.

Read the full guidance document for all requirements at: www.mass.gov/doc/joint-dfs-dpl-guidance-on-safety-considerations-for-schools/download.

School Emergency Planning and Fire Drills

Schools have many options for when and how students and staff return to buildings in this pandemic. Fire drills must be a consideration. Local fire departments should consult with school administrators on scheduling and planning fire drills. Students may attend school in pods or smaller groups. But fire drill scheduling must include every student. Fire drill requirements have not changed. Read the full guidance document at www.mass.gov/doc/school-emergency-planning-and-covid-19/download.

DFS also offers a School Fire Prevention pamphlet that will help in emergency planning efforts. Visit the Fire Prevention in Schools (www.mass.gov/service-details/fire-prevention-in-schools) webpage before annual School Multi-Hazard and EMS Plan meetings with school and police officials.

From the Fire Marshal, *continued from page 1*

and mitigate potentially explosive devices across the state. These necessary and long-awaited upgrades to the robot fleet will modernize our capability to combat explosive threats and keep people safe for years to come. I'm thankful that Governor Baker and EOPSS prioritized this need and were able to help us meet it.

COVID-19 Grant

DFS also received a grant from the Executive Office of Public Safety (EOPSS) through the Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) Program. The funds came from the federal Office of Justice Programs. Along with every other public safety agency in the country, DFS has been working hard to adapt everything we do so that our work can continue during the pandemic without putting staff, instructors, students, or the general public at risk. The grant will support many of those changes by providing staff, students and instructors with PPE, paying for weekly deep cleaning of the three DFS campuses, and equipping the HazMat Division with the ability to sanitize large and small spaces.

Fire Prevention Challenges

During the strictest part of the stay-at-home order, fire code enforcement was difficult. For example, how to allow the sale and transfer of homes without immediate smoke and carbon monoxide alarm inspections? The reopening

During the COVID-19 crisis, the fire service is adapting and overcoming so we can be there to answer the call.

has created new and additional challenges: how to safely store large quantities of flammable hand sanitizer in places that never did before? How to make sure every child who attends school in-person participates in fire drills? How to help restaurants, schools, stores and offices reorganize spaces in ways that do not create new fire hazards? The staff of the Fire Prevention Division worked closely with the fire service and across agencies to collaboratively develop guidelines and recommendations on how to safely reopen with fire safety in mind. The challenges of the pandemic do not mean the State Fire Code can be ignored. You can read more about this issue on page 4.

Public Counts on the Fire Service

There is an old joke that the answer to, "Who you gonna call?" is not ghostbusters, but the fire service. The public relies on the fire service to respond to the call for so many different services and types of emergencies. There is an old adage in the fire service, "adapt and overcome." During this latest crisis, like so many more before, we are adapting and overcoming so we can be there to answer the call, whatever it is. Stay safe.

Fireworks Enforcement Operation



The Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) conducted a fireworks enforcement operation at the direction of the Massachusetts State Police (MSP) in conjunction with the Department of Fire Services (DFS) this summer. The operation was the result of numerous citizen complaints about the illegal use of fireworks. This was a joint operation with the MSP A Troop that covers the northeastern part of the state. MSP Crime Scene Services assisted with evidence documentation and the Commonwealth Fusion Center (CFC) helped develop the operations plan. The operation targeted illegal fireworks coming into the Commonwealth via Routes 93 and 95. The transportation of fireworks is a violation of Chapter 148 Section 39 of the Massachusetts General Law.

The initial operation ran on July 8 and 9 and netted 26 summonses, including one driver with a suspended license. About 200 pounds of illegal fireworks were seized. Because of the successes on July 8 and 9, the operation continued for several more days the following week. The second

phase of the operation brought 26 additional summonses. Over the four-day operation, a total of 52 summonses were issued and about 450 pounds of illegal fireworks were seized.

The Lawrence Police Department contacted the MSP before the second round of the operation asking for help stemming the tide of illegal fireworks in their city. They joined the second phase of the operation.

The operation included surveillance and motor vehicle stops by a marked MSP vehicle after vehicles carrying fireworks crossed into Massachusetts.

During the vehicle stops, violators were given an informational pamphlet on the dangers of fireworks and the law. The illegal fireworks were seized and the violator was issued a summons for the violation of M.G.L. C.148, S.39, and sent on their way.

To see the pamphlets and learn more about the dangers of fireworks go to the DFS webpage: www.mass.gov/service-details/leave-fireworks-to-the-professionals.

Fire Prevention Officer Credentialing *Temporary Extension Granted*

The State Fire Marshal has granted a one (1) year credential extension to individuals holding a valid Fire Prevention Officer I and II Credential as of January 1, 2020. All valid Fire Prevention Officer Credentials which were active or issued after January 1, 2020 will expire one (1) year from their current expiration date.

The one (1) year credential extension is temporary and is in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It serves as recognition of the difficulty in obtaining the needed points and professional development during this time and the accompanying closures/postponement of necessary trainings.

The extension may be terminated or modified at any time.

Fireworks Incidents in 2020

Many Massachusetts communities experienced a severe rise in complaints about the illegal use of fireworks this year. Local police departments were inundated with complaints. Many homes were set on fire by illegal fireworks. Residents feared their own home might be next. Losing your home to fire is traumatic enough, but being homeless in the middle of a pandemic is much worse.

In addition to the special fireworks enforcement operation mentioned elsewhere, the State Police fire investigators and bomb squad technicians in the Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) at the Department of Fire Services (DFS) were involved in several interdiction efforts, recovering and destroying fireworks confiscated by state and local police. Here are just some of the incidents reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) by fire departments, the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (M-BIRS) by hospitals, or to which members of the Fire and Explosion Investigation Section responded.

Incidents

- **June 3:** State Police stopped and arrested five people in Woburn who were traveling in a stolen motor vehicle. The car was filled with fireworks stolen from a New Hampshire store.
- **June 9:** A car slammed through the security gate and front door of Pimental Market at 340 Centre Street in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston. Boston Police seized a large amount of illegal fireworks from the car.
- **June 14:** Eleven people were displaced in a late evening fire in Worcester. The fire in the 3-decker was started by illegal fireworks being set off in the neighborhood.
- **June 16:** The Springfield Fire Department responded to a building fire on a front porch. A firework caused the blaze.
- **June 28:** The Springfield Fire Department responded to a fire in a 3-car garage. Investigators found a used fireworks canister nearby. On the same night, they responded to a house fire started by fireworks that went through a window and ignited curtains.
- **July 2:** The Taunton Fire Department responded to a fire in a single-family home. The fire began while the homeowner was building wooden racks to launch illegal fireworks from his deck. One of the fireworks exploded and set off many other fireworks. The detonations ignited the deck. Firefighters extinguished the fire and drenched the 1.4" shells that were still in their tubes. The MSP Bomb Squad was called. They seized the remaining fireworks.
- **July 4:** A 29-year old man suffered serious burn and puncture wounds from a fireworks explosion in



Charlton. Local and State Police found a large cache of fireworks in the man's home.

- **July 4:** The Holyoke Fire Department was called to a dumpster fire that was started by spent fireworks.
- **July 5:** The Boston Fire Department responded to a fire in a 3-unit apartment building. Neighbors reported that the fire was started by fireworks. The fire began on the back of one building and spread to another 3-unit apartment building next door, and a vehicle. Twenty people were displaced from their homes.
- **July 5:** The Holyoke Fire Department responded to a fire in a boarded-up vacant residence. The fire began when fireworks ignited ordinary combustibles (assorted bags of trash, mattresses, etc.) outside the building, near the garage. Firefighters found boxes of spent fireworks directly in front of the area of origin.
- **July 5:** The Centerville-Osterville-Marstons Mills Fire Department responded to a garage fire started by fireworks. The owner had lit fireworks off on the beach and put the spent casings up against the wall of his garage.
- **July 5:** The Douglas Fire Department responded to a boat fire on Whiting Reservoir. A firefighter noticed exploded and unexploded fireworks on a wooden barge docked next to the boat. Several 1.4G fireworks (Class C), a handheld remote receiver, and several mortar racks were seized by the Bomb Squad.
- **July 5:** The Lynn Fire Department responded to an outside rubbish fire under the porch of a single-family home caused by fireworks.
- **July 5:** A 16-year old from Dartmouth received 1st- & 2nd-degree burns to lower portions of his body from a fireworks explosion.

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K9 Corner

News from the F&EIU Canine program

The Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) Canine (K9) program has evolved into a premier program from its humble beginnings in the early 1990s. The first accelerant detection canine (AK9) was “Hulk”, a black Labrador retriever. Today, we refer to them as ignitable liquid detection dogs (ILDK9s). The Connecticut State Police provided the training, which was sponsored by the Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association (MPIUA).

Much has changed since the program’s inception. The MPIUA is still the program sponsor. Their unwavering support and our three in-house certified trainers have made the program the success it is today. The program has grown to 19 dogs including 11 explosive detection K9s (EK9) and eight ignitable liquid detection canines. Sgt. Paul Horgan, lead trainer, has been building the program with Troopers Mike Fagan and Greg Spahl over the last several years. All training is now done in Massachusetts. The in-house program is a huge time and cost saver. There are no more daily commutes to Connecticut for several weeks. The group trains new K9 teams continually while also working full time as fire investigators or bomb squad technicians. Horgan, Fagan and Spahl have made impressive and lasting contributions to the F&EIU K9 program.

K9 Certification

The canine certification process is long and arduous. First, a dog is selected from one of two respected agencies. The *Guiding Eyes for the Blind* breeds dogs to work with the blind, and *Puppies Behind Bars* trains prison inmates to raise service dogs for wounded war veterans, first responders, and law enforcement. When the F&EIU program needs a dog and the MPIUA is willing to sponsor it, the F&EIU team checks with *Guiding Eyes for the Blind* and *Puppies Behind Bars* for available animals. The trainers travel to meet the dogs and give them a “tryout”.

Dogs Work on a Food Reward System

All dogs trained by the F&EIU work for food. Each dog’s working life involves daily training on odor recognition. Dogs earn one kibble each time they find the source of an odor they are trained to detect. To receive their daily food allotment (four cups), each dog must find the source of an odor and alert correctly 160 times. A primary requirement for every dog in the program is a high food drive.

In addition to a high food drive, dogs must be energetic and curious. They cannot fear heights, noise or the dark. They must have a clean medical record. An animal who successfully completes the tryout is matched with a handler so the two can bond before training begins. The

dog and handler have a chance to socialize and get used to living together.

The next step in the certification process is imprinting the dogs to the odors they must recognize. This five-week process is completed by the trainers with new handlers observing. After a dog learns to recognize and respond to specific odors, they continue training with their handler for six to eight more weeks, depending on whether they will be an ignitable liquid detection K9 (arson dog) or explosive detection K9 (bomb dog). During this second phase, the handler and canine partner develop a working bond.

The F&EIU trainers created an outdoor training area at Camp Curtis Guild in Reading, and constructed an indoor facility at the DFS Bridgewater campus. The F&EIU K9 training team received a Massachusetts Vesta-Dog grant that supplied four lights for nighttime training and scene responses.

Certification Tests

After the training process is complete, each K9 team must pass a certification test. The test is called the New England State Police Administrators Conference (NESPAC) odor recognition test. Senior Forensic Chemist John Drugan, who is the technical leader of the Massachusetts State Crime Lab Trace and Arson Explosives Unit, independently monitors the certification.

After a team is certified, the K9 handler is required to keep detailed training records, attend quarterly in-service training and complete a yearly recertification. The handler makes a five-year commitment to the program. Dogs work until they are 8- or 9-years old.



K9 Memorial at the Stow campus of DFS.

Program Success and Service

The F&EIU canine training program is well-known across the state and gets training requests from a variety of agencies. We have trained two ILDK9s for the Boston Fire Department, two EK9s for the Methuen Police Department, two for the University of Massachusetts/Amherst, one for Worcester Polytechnic Institute and one for the Chelsea Police Department.

The team also trained Winnie, an Electronic Storage Detection (ESD) K9 for Trooper Chris MacDonald who is assigned to the Massachusetts State Police Cyber Crime Unit–Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. Trooper MacDonald and Winnie investigate child exploitation and have found evidence in more than twenty cases.

K9 Teams at Work

The 19 F&EIU canine teams are busy. They have responded to 350 calls since January 1. Trooper Peledge and ILDK9 Vasco tied together a series of hate crimes targeting the Jewish community. The bomb dogs have located firearms three times in recent gun searches. Trooper McCarthy and EK9 Admiral located firearms in Framingham and Hyannis and Trooper Ragosa and Scout found firearms in Billerica.

Bomb dogs also work dignitary protection details. They protect U.S. presidents and other heads of state when they visit Massachusetts or New England. They also provide protection at major events including the Boston Marathon and the July 4th concert on the Esplanade. Protecting large-scale events can involve dozens of canine teams. We work with partner agencies including the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to assist at these events. You can see our K9s at other major events including: The Big E, Topsfield Fair, Xfinity Center, Tanglewood, Gillette Stadium, Revere Sand Castles, Falmouth Road Race, Lowell Folk Festival, Pan Mass Challenge, Plymouth Thanksgiving Parade, Governor's State of the State address, Caribbean Festival and the Head of the Charles Regatta.

K9 Retirement

Fifty-four dogs have provided a lifetime of service to the Commonwealth with the F&EIU program. This includes 19 working dogs and 35 retirees. When a dog's working life ends, they get to eat out of a bowl and relax, and live with their handler's family.

Retired dogs are not forgotten. The F&EIU trainers worked with the State Police Association of Massachusetts (SPAM) to create a K9 Memorial to honor dogs who served the Commonwealth. The memorial is on the



Trooper Ken Belben training K9 Starsky at the DFS Stow campus.

grounds of the Department of Fire Services Stow campus. Each dog has their name engraved on a brick to recognize their service. The Massachusetts State Police has a K9 retirement program, which provides a food stipend and an annual physical.

The 54 dogs who have worked for the Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit, and the countless others trained by the F&EIU are much more than pets or best friends. They are partners who work selflessly every day to help keep the residents of the Commonwealth safe.

New Teams

Trooper Belben and Starsky, and Boston Firefighter Eric Wirtz and Robbie graduated as Ignitable Liquid Detection K9 teams on Thursday, September 3, 2020 at DFS Bridgewater. We wish them well.

Boards and Commissions Conduct Business Online

During COVID-19 Pandemic

The Department of Fire Services (DFS) boards and commissions have continued their important work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, remotely. On March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an executive order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law (M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18 through 25) which allows the DFS boards and commissions to carry out their responsibilities while adhering to public health recommendations for social distancing. The executive order allows DFS to provide an alternative means of public access to the meetings or hearings, in place of conducting meetings in a physical space. With the help of the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security, the DFS boards and commissions have used teleconferencing and video conferencing platforms to conduct business.

DFS works with the following boards:

- Automatic Sprinkler Appeals Board
- Board of Boiler Rules
- Board of Fire Prevention Regulations (BFPR)
- BFPR Appeals Board
- Building Code Coordinating Council
- Hazardous Materials Mitigation Emergency Response Advisory Board
- Massachusetts Fire Service Commission
- Massachusetts Fire Training Council
- Massachusetts Safety Commission
- Technical Rescue Coordinating Council

Guidance for Local Communities Conducting Public Business During the Pandemic

The Massachusetts Attorney General's Office has guidance to help public bodies, including fire departments, to comply with the Open Meeting Law as modified by the Governor's March 12, 2020 executive order. Read the full guidance at: www.mass.gov/service-details/updated-guidance-on-holding-meetings-during-the-covid-19-state-of-emergency. Here are some key excerpts:

May a public body post a recording or transcript of the meeting afterwards, instead of providing access to the meeting as it is occurring?

The executive order provides that a municipal public body that, for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts, is unable to provide alternative means of public access that will enable the public to follow the proceedings in real time, may instead post a full and complete transcript, recording, or other comprehensive record on its website as soon as practicable after the meeting. In light of



the various free and low-cost technologies that could be used to provide the public with real time access, the Division of Open Government strongly recommends that a municipal public body consult with our office before determining that it is unable to provide the public with real time access to a meeting.

May public body members meet in person, while requiring the general public to follow the proceedings remotely?

Yes. Section (1) of the executive order allowing public access through adequate, alternative means is independent from Section (2), which allows members of the public body to participate remotely. The public body may conduct its proceedings under the relief provided in section (1) or (2) or both.

If a public body will provide access to its meeting through "adequate, alternative means," what information must be included on the meeting notice?

Public bodies must continue to post notice of every meeting at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting, not including weekends or state holidays, using the official notice posting method (physical notice or website), even if the clerk's office is closed. The notice must include the "location" of the meeting. If access to the meeting will be provided through "adequate, alternative means," the meeting notice must include clear instructions for accessing the meeting remotely. A public body may require members of the public to call to obtain access information for the meeting, rather than including such information on the public meeting notice, to minimize Zoom-bombing and similar disruptions. In such situations, the meeting notice must include clear contact information, and members of the public must be able to obtain the meeting access

Continued on next page

Smoke Alarm Inspections Resume

The Governor's Executive Order allowing the deferral of smoke and carbon monoxide alarm inspections ended on July 10, 2020. Buyers who agreed to defer the inspections must have them completed by October 9, 2020. This includes all sales or transfers of residential property.

Sellers must have these inspections for all new sales or transfers after July 10. It is critically important that every home is properly protected. New homeowners should contact their local fire department to schedule an inspection immediately, as the deadline has passed.

Read the [State Fire Marshal Advisory & Governor's Executive Order Reinstating Licensing Deadlines and Resuming Certain Inspections](#) for more information.



Boards and Commissions, *continued from previous page*

information up to and throughout the duration of the meeting (members of the public cannot be required to register in advance).

What other requirements apply to remote meetings?

The Open Meeting Law regulations governing remote participation, 940 CMR 29.10, remain in effect, except where the Governor's executive order specifically suspends certain requirements. In particular, when any — or all — public body members participate in a meeting remotely, the following requirements apply:

1. At the start of the meeting, the chair must announce the name of the member or members who are participating remotely; such information must also be recorded in the meeting minutes.
2. All votes must be taken by roll call.
3. Members of the public body must be clearly audible to each other and to members of the public at all times.
4. When holding an executive session remotely, the public body must still take all required procedural steps for entering into executive session in open session. At the beginning of the executive session, each public body member participating remotely must state that no other person is present or able to hear the discussion at the remote location, unless the public body has approved the presence of that individual.

Should the public body encounter technical problems while meeting remotely, the person chairing the meeting may decide how to address the technical difficulties, but is encouraged wherever possible to suspend discussion while

reasonable efforts are made to correct any problem that interferes with a remote participant's ability to hear or be heard clearly. If technical difficulties result in a remote participant being disconnected from the meeting, that fact and the time at which the disconnection occurred must be noted in the meeting minutes.

What about public comment, public participation, and public hearings?

The Open Meeting Law does not require that public bodies allow public comment or public participation during meetings — to the contrary, the Open Meeting Law specifies that nobody shall address the public body without permission of the chair. However, the Attorney General encourages public bodies to allow public comment and/or public participation when feasible. Because the Open Meeting Law does not require that public bodies allow for public comment or public participation during meetings at all, the manner that public bodies may choose to accept comment or questions is outside the scope of the Open Meeting Law. Public hearings, on the other hand, are governed by separate laws that impose additional requirements, and may require opportunity for public comment or testimony. Those requirements are outside the scope of the Open Meeting Law and therefore do not fall within the Division of Open Government's jurisdiction. Public bodies and members of the public should consult with legal counsel for guidance on the requirements for public hearings.

Excerpted from: www.mass.gov/service-details/updated-guidance-on-holding-meetings-during-the-covid-19-state-of-emergency

Fire Investigation News

Fatal Electrical Fire in Falmouth *No Working Smoke Alarms*

An electrical malfunction caused an April 12 fire at 663 Gifford Street in Falmouth. The fire claimed the life of 67-year old Mary Jo Nelson who lived in the single-family home. The fire started in a first-floor bedroom.

Chief Small said, “The only smoke alarm we found was a non-functioning one resting on top of an oil tank in the basement. Falmouth had two fatal fires in April that took the lives of two older adults. Our hearts go out to both families. We ask every resident to make sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home.”

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

Andover House Fire Electrical *Plug Air Conditioners Directly into Outlets*

The cause of the July 8 fire at 26 Vine Street in Andover was electrical. The fire caused an estimated \$350,000 in damage to the single-family home, a total loss. There were no injuries. The fire originated in a breezeway where a window air conditioner was plugged into a 4-way extension cord. Propane tanks stored in the area fueled the fire.

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

Smoking Fires

Smoking Cause of Pittsfield Fatal Fire *Excessive Clutter a Factor*

The cause of the July 6 fatal fire at 73 Chickering Street in Pittsfield was the improper disposal of smoking materials. The victim, 74-year-old Frances Lysonski, was rescued by firefighters but she succumbed to her injuries at a local hospital.

Damage to the single-family home are estimated at \$40,000. One firefighter was injured battling the blaze. The fire originated in a plastic trash barrel in the first floor living room. Several packs of Pall Mall cigarettes and matches were found in the area of origin.

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

There were no working smoke alarms in the home. One found in the basement was at least 25 years old and

had a dead battery in it. One alarm found buried under boxes on the second floor was also at least 25 years old and had no battery.

“Pittsfield Fire Department has a smoke alarm program for older adults as part of its Senior SAFE program,” said Chief Sammons, “Contact Lt. Randy Stein in Fire Prevention at RStein@cityofpittsfield.org or call (978) 448-9764 for more information.”

Excessive clutter contributed to the fire’s spread and hindered firefighting efforts. Safe and non-judgmental support for individuals and families struggling with clutter is available. Contact your local senior center, board of health, or a mental health professional if you identify someone who needs help. In Berkshire County, contact the Brien Center, Servicenet, or Clinical Support Options for help.

State Fire Marshal Ostroskey said, “We understand excessive accumulation of possessions is a mental health issue as well as a fire safety issue. We care about the safety of all of our residents and ask anyone who feels that possessions are impairing their ability to use rooms in their home as they were intended, to reach out for help. There is no shame in asking for help.” For a list of statewide resources on hoarding and cluttering, go to www.masshousing.com/hoarding or call 800-243-4636 (800 AGE INFO).

Smoking Cause of Groton Fire

The cause of the June 1, 2020 fire at 373 Main Street in Groton was the improper disposal of smoking materials. The fire caused an estimated \$800,000 in damage to the 8-unit apartment building, also known as Winthrop Place. One resident and one firefighter were injured and treated at a local hospital. The building is a total loss and all the occupants have been displaced.

The fire originated in an exterior storage closet on the front of the house. Investigators determined the cause was the improper disposal of smoking materials.

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

Fire Sprinklers

The building had a partial sprinkler system that only protected the exits, hallways and stairs. New multi-family buildings of this size must have fire sprinklers inside the living areas, the attic, and the storage areas. Chief McCurdy said, “Sprinklers in the storage area and the attic would have made a ton of difference in slowing the progression of this fire and would have led to a different outcome.”

“This fire is a prime example of why the fire service continues to push for change in the State Building Code to require sprinkler systems in all housing units. While the

The Building Code requires sprinklers in all new multi-family homes, but not in one- and two-family homes which is where most fire deaths occur. Clearly, the need for a change is paramount.

Building Code requires sprinklers in all new multi-family and most larger commercial buildings, the same cannot be said for one- and two-family homes which is where most fire deaths occur,” said McCurdy, “Clearly the need for a change is paramount.”

Truss Construction

McCurdy added, “The truss construction used in this building is known to fail rapidly in a fire. Firefighters initially focused on getting all the occupants safely out because of the risk that the roof and attic would collapse. Firefighters saw the roof collapse behind them as they left the building.

Smoking Cause of Chelmsford Manufactured Home Fire

The cause of the June 4, fire at 2 Mason Avenue in Chelmsford was the improper disposal of smoking materials. The sole resident and a dog escaped safely. The manufactured home was totally destroyed. The fire started in a plastic kitchen trash barrel where smoking materials had been discarded the night before. No working smoking alarms were found in the home.

Members of the Chelmsford Fire Department and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire. This was the second Chelmsford fire caused by the improper disposal of smoking materials in two months. A woman died in the first fire on May 1, 2020.

Arson Fires

Fires along Route 128 Solve Stolen Car Case

On Thursday, June 25, the Weston Fire Department requested assistance investigating a series of fires in the area of Interstate 95 /Route 128 at Route 30 in Weston. Troopers had responded to a motor vehicle fire. Shortly after the response, the department began to receive calls about multiple brush fires along Norumbega Road. This road runs parallel to where the car fire happened. Firefighters saw two juveniles near the brush fires and gave descriptions to police before the youths fled. The Waltham Police found them nearby at Brandeis University.

The fires were determined to be intentionally set. The vehicle had recently been stolen from a business in Upton and the license plate of another vehicle was attached. This

was the third vehicle stolen from the same business in two months. Evidence linking the juvenile suspects to the vehicle was seized and submitted to the State Police Crime Lab.

The youths were carrying a large number of commercially packaged electronic cigarettes, burglary tools, jewelry, marijuana, a scale and a large amount of loose change in a backpack.

Both juveniles will be charged with: burning of a motor vehicle, 3 counts of burning of a wooded area, larceny of a motor vehicle, possession of burglary instruments, removing a number plate from another motor vehicle, and attaching motor vehicle plates.

Haverhill Vacant Building Fire Intentionally Set

On June 22, Haverhill firefighters responded to 58 Railroad Street and located a small fire on the second floor of the vacant building. The fire was quickly extinguished. An examination of the scene revealed that the fire was intentionally set. Investigators were able to identify two juvenile suspects. They have been summonsed to court on charges of burning a building and breaking and entering in the daytime with intent to commit a felony. No one was injured in the fire. The Haverhill Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated this fire.

Suspect in Orange Arson Fire to Face Charges

An Orange man was summonsed to Orange District Court to face charges stemming from the July 17, 2020 fire at 80 West Main Street in Orange. The Northwestern District Attorney’s Office is prosecuting the case. No one was injured in the fire as no one was home at the time. Damages are estimated at \$15,000. The fire in the 2-family home was determined to be intentionally set. Members of the Orange Fire and Police Departments and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal jointly investigated the fire.

5-Alarm Clinton Converted Mill Fire Accidental

The cause of the June 22 fire at 470R Main Street in Clinton was accidental. The 5-alarm fire took place in a converted mill building housing commercial tenants. The fire started in MR Wheel Finishing in heavy timbers between the first floor and the basement. The cause was an industrial oven used in coating auto parts. There were no injuries. Damages are estimated at \$250,000.

A state Hazardous Materials Response Team responded to assess containers of chemicals used in the processing.

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

Cooking is #1 Cause of Fires & Civilian Injuries

Cooking is the one thing that almost everyone does, each day, at home, in every season. Stay at home orders during the pandemic have naturally led to more cooking. It is no surprise that cooking is the leading cause of all residential fires. Cooking is also the leading cause of civilian fire injuries and a minor cause of civilian fire deaths.

Between 2010 and 2019, unattended cooking, other unsafe cooking practices and defective cooking equipment in Massachusetts caused:

- 101,778 fires
- 26 civilian deaths
- one fire service death
- 703 civilian injuries
- 315 firefighter injuries
- \$85.1 million in estimated losses

Residential cooking fires accounted for 70% of all residential fires in the state and 31% of all residential civilian fire injuries during that 10-year time period.

Cooking Fires Declining

Cooking fires have been declining since the peaks in 2014 and 2017. The majority of cooking fires, 97,779, were confined to a non-combustible container. This is good news. These fires represent one-third (33%) of the total fires that occurred and is the largest single cause of fires in Massachusetts. Confined cooking fires comprised 96% of all residential cooking fires reported between 2010 and 2019.

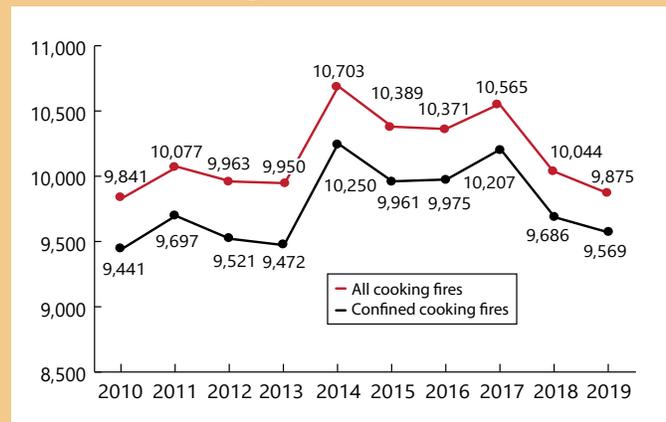
26 Civilian Fire Deaths

While cooking is the leading cause of residential building fires, it isn't a leading cause of civilian fire deaths. There were 26 civilian fire deaths attributed to cooking fires between 2010 and 2019, accounting for 7% of residential fire deaths and 5% of all civilian fire deaths.

Cooking was the Leading Cause of Injury in Fires the Last 10 Years

Cooking was the leading cause of injury in all types of fires between 2010 and 2019. Of the 703 cooking fire injuries,

Residential Cooking Fires, 2010 - 2019



52% of victims were male and 48% were female. People aged 25 to 54 accounted for 59% of the people injured in cooking fires, but adults between the ages of 45 and 54 were the most at risk of injury at one of these fires.

Unattended Cooking Causes 12% of Cooking Fires Stand by Your Pan!

Human error causes most cooking fires. At least twelve percent (12%) of cooking fires between 2010 and 2019 were caused by unattended cooking (where 'Factors Contributing to Ignition' was completed). This data led to our "Stand By Your Pan" cooking safety message. The idea for this slogan came from retired Portland Fire Capt. Jerry DiMillo who developed complete alternative lyrics to the Tammy Wynette song, *Stand By Your Man*, all about cooking fire safety. When we teach the public to stay in the kitchen when cooking, fewer fires happen.

Sixty percent of people injured in cooking fires were attempting to control the fire. This data has led to our "Put A Lid On It" cooking safety message

58% of All Cooking Injuries Were Burns

Stovetop fires tend to produce a lot of heat in a small area and when people choose to attempt to extinguish them, they run a great risk of being burned. Of the 612 cooking fire injuries where the nature of injury was known, 38% suffered thermal burns; 13% suffered from burns and smoke inhalation; and 7% suffered a scald burn.

The importance of responding correctly to a clothing ignition – Stop, Drop, Cover and Roll – cannot be overemphasized. Older adults are historically the age group with the highest risk of



Continued on next page

Virtual Fire and Life Safety Education

We now live in a world where virtual learning is the norm for most children. Delivering fire and life safety education in this new reality is vitally important. The Fire Data and Public Education Unit of DFS is working with firefighter-educators to provide creative opportunities and guidance about delivering fire safety information to communities.

Virtual Fire Safety Lessons

DFS has two new virtual fire safety lessons ready for firefighters to use this fall.

- *Hunting for Home Hazards* is a grade 4-6 lesson children can do alone or with an adult. Students look for home hazards and ask for help to correct any they find. Students can share photos of testing a smoke alarm or the family at the meeting place with their fire department using the hashtag #makesomenoiseforfiresafety.
- *Create a Home Escape Plan* guides third graders and their families through making and practicing a home escape plan. Students can take photos and share them with local fire departments using the same hashtag.

Creative Ideas from Many Sources

During the summer, public educators met online to talk about virtual teaching experiences and share ideas.

- Captain James Brooks of the Danvers Fire Department developed a virtual fire safety lesson that he shared in one of the Zoom meetings. State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, Lt. Bonnie Lopez of Upton and Lt. Katie Collins-Kalbaugh of Chicopee were taped reading children's books about fire and life safety. The videos were posted on Facebook and YouTube™.
- Many fire departments recorded and posted virtual fire station tours that included safety messages. Springfield Fire Inspector Willie Spears gave virtual tours of most fire stations in the city. The Lynn Fire Department also posted virtual tours.
- Ken Doucette, Community Program director for the Middlesex Sheriff's Department wanted to run the Department's summer camp and developed a virtual program. One of the weeks was devoted to fire safety. At least 50 children enjoyed watching Ken make mistakes in the kitchen wearing a large green bathrobe.

Public educators reacted quickly and creatively this spring. They recognized that although they couldn't be in classrooms, they could still teach fire safety. This fall, DFS is looking forward to creating more virtual lessons, and to hosting workshops for fire educators. Stay tuned!

Cooking #1 Cause of Fires & Civilian Injuries, *continued from previous page*

being injured in a cooking fire. Older adults are often more afraid of falling than of fire. They must be persuaded they can safely lower themselves to the ground and roll to smother flames.

Thanksgiving Day Fires

Massachusetts fire departments respond to more fires on Thanksgiving Day than any other day of the year. Most of them are cooking fires. In 2019, DFS developed a campaign in an attempt to reduce these numbers, and the associated injuries. Local departments can download our materials in advance of the holiday this year to help continue reducing fires and injuries on the holiday.

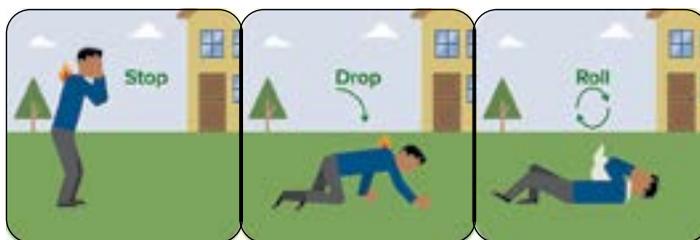
Total Thanksgiving Day fires dropped 15% in 2019 from 2018 according to Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) data. Residential cooking fires on Thanksgiving Day 2019 dropped 23%, nearly one-quarter, from 2018. We thank the fire departments for making cooking fire reduction on Thanksgiving a priority. We look forward to continuing a decline of residential cooking fires on this holiday.

Addressing the Problem

Massachusetts fire departments have done an excellent job educating the public about the importance of safe cooking practices. Because it remains the number one cause of fires and fire-related injuries, we must continue to this effort.

DFS has developed many resources for teaching cooking fire safety. Fire departments can download: public safety announcements (PSAs), recipe cards, flyers, logos, and lesson plans, and more from the *Cooking Fire Safety Toolkit* webpage at: www.mass.gov/service-details/cooking-fire-safety-toolkit.

The U.S. Fire Administration also has cooking fire safety resources including many low-literacy pictographs that departments can share on social media. USFA's "Stop, Drop, Cover and Roll" pictograph is shown below.



Marine Fueling Inspections

Many fires start when boats are being fueled. Some fires happen because of mechanical error, while others are due to the human errors by untrained boat owners.

Any company or individual that provides marine fuel from fixed locations, barges, or mobile facilities (tank trucks) must have a marine fueling permit issued by the Department of Fire Services (DFS). DFS code compliance officers & local fire prevention officers conducted dozens of annual inspections of marine fueling facilities all around the state this summer.

To help keep boaters safe, compliance officers make sure that permits are up to date and that facilities meet the Fire Code. Visit www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-marine-fueling-permits for more information on marine fueling permits.



MFA Graduations, *continued from page 3*

Class #S15

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S15 graduated on August 14, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Springfield campus. The 14 graduates represent the 8 fire departments of Agawam, East Longmeadow, Easthampton, Granby, Holyoke, Ludlow, Southbridge, and Springfield.

Class #S16

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S16 graduated on September 11, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Stow campus. The 10 graduates represent the seven fire departments of Easthampton, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Northampton, Southbridge, Turners Falls, and Westfield. They trained at the Springfield campus.

Class #BW02

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW02 graduated on August 14, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Bridgewater campus. The 17 graduates represent the 11 fire departments of Attleborough, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Lakeville, Marshfield, Milton, Norwood, Rockland, Somerset, and Yarmouth. This was the second class to complete training at the new Bridgewater campus and both finished during the pandemic.

Class #BW03

Members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW03 graduated on September 11, 2020 at the Department of Fire Services Stow campus. The 16 graduates represent the eight fire departments of Avon, Duxbury, Fairhaven, Falmouth, Middleborough, North Attleborough, Scituate, and Taunton. They trained at the Bridgewater campus.



Class #BW02



Class # BW03

Bridgewater 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. Students traveled to the Stow Campus for live fire training and other specialized training resources.

Massachusetts Fires in 2019

25,176 Fires - Down 3% From 2018

42 Civilian Deaths
 2 Fire Service Deaths
 248 Civilian Injuries
 506 Fire Service Injuries
 \$248.8 Million in Property Damage
 571 Reported Arsons



Structure Fires

16,148 Fires - Down 2%
 36 Civilian Deaths
 2 Fire Service Deaths
 192 Civilian Injuries
 446 Fire Service Injuries
 \$221 Million in Property Damage
 144 Arsons Reported



Motor Vehicle Fires

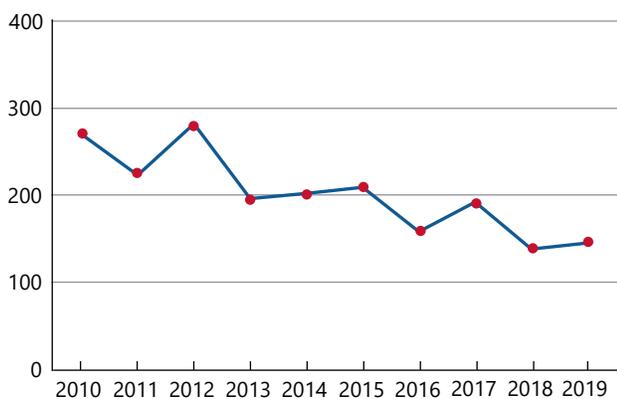
2,355 Fires - Down 6%
 4 Civilian Deaths
 34 Civilian Injuries
 35 Fire Service Injuries
 \$24.3 Million in Property Damage
 64 Arsons Reported



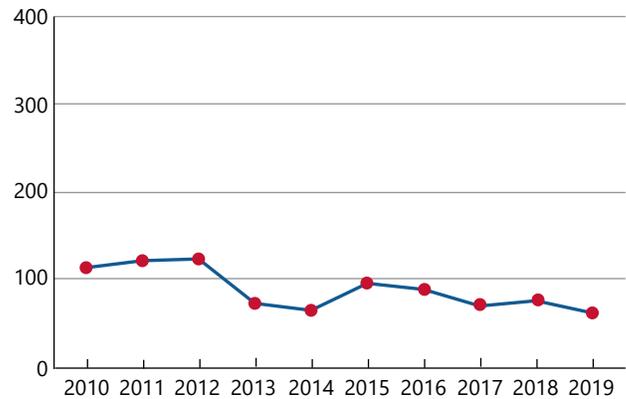
Other Fires

6,673 Fires - Down 5%
 2 Civilian Deaths
 22 Civilian Injuries
 25 Fire Service Injuries
 \$3.7 Million in Property Damage
 363 Arsons Reported

Structure Arson by Year



Motor Vehicle Arson by Year



Structure arson increased by 5% and motor vehicle arson decreased 18% from 2018 to 2019. Since 1986, motor vehicle arson has fallen 98.9%. For statistical purposes, a fire is considered arson when the cause is listed as intentional and age is not a factor or the person involved was over 18. This definition excludes undetermined and youth-set fires.

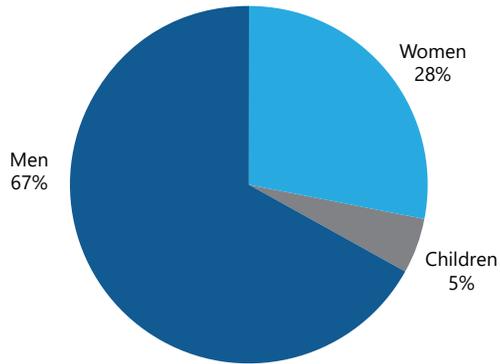


Department of Fire Services

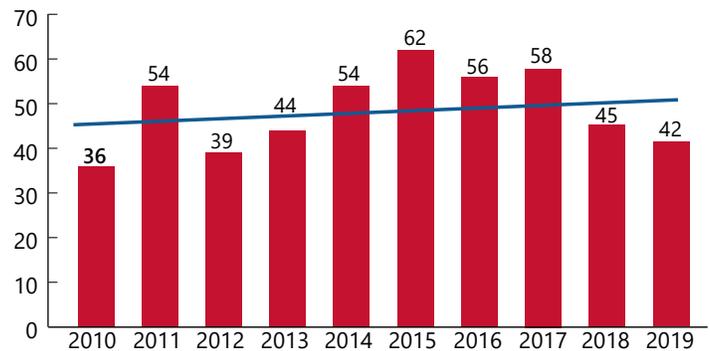
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Massachusetts Fires in 2019

Civilian Fire Deaths

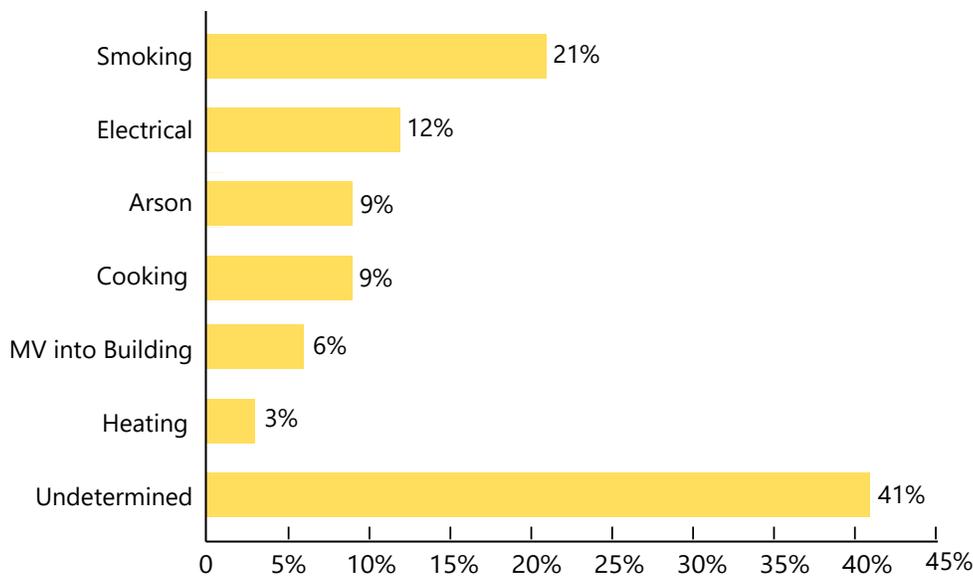


Fire Deaths by Year



- 35 fatal fires killed 42 civilians - 28 men, 12 women and 2 people under age 18.
- 2 firefighters died in fire-related incidents.
- Forty-eight percent (48%) of fatal fire victims were older adults (over 65).
- Fire deaths decreased by 7% from the 45 in 2018.
- Eighty-one percent (81%) of the civilian fire victims died in their homes.
- In 2019, smoking fires were the leading cause of residential fire deaths; smoking fires caused 7, or 21% of home fire deaths.
- One civilian died in an explosion.

Causes of Residential Structure Fire Deaths



**Test your smoke alarm and plan your escape!
Fire doesn't wait!**



Department of Fire Services

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2020 License Examination Schedule

COVID-19 State of Emergency and License Renewals

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

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

Fire Safety Division

The Department of Fire Services' Fire Safety Division issues licenses, permits and certificates of competency (licenses) to people and companies engaged in fireworks, blasting, explosives, special effects, cannon and mortar firing, commercial cooking exhaust system cleaning and inspection, hood cleaning, special hazard systems, portable fire extinguishers, marine fueling facilities and above ground tanks. Register for

exams and see detailed information at www.mass.gov/dfs. Search for *DFS Licensing*. For questions, contact the Licensing Desk at 978-567-3700 or at dfs.licensing@state.ma.us.

Boiler and Pressure Vessel Program

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

Licensing Status

To see the licensing status of an individual or company, visit the DFS License Look Up at http://elicense.chs.state.ma.us/DFS_Verification/Search.aspx or go to www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *DFS licensing*.

Examination Schedule	Examination Dates	Deadlines for Applications
FSD Exams	Exams start at 10:00 a.m.	
Fire Suppression Commercial Hood Cleaning	November 4, 2020	October 16, 2020
Cannon/Mortar, Fireworks, Special Effects, Blasting, Blasting R&D	October 21, 2020	October 2, 2020
BPV Exams	Exams start at 9:00 a.m.	
Oil Burner, Fireman & Engineer (all classes)	November 25, 2020 December 30, 2020	October 30, 2020 November 27, 2020

To see the licensing status of an individual or company, visit www.mass.gov/dfs and search for *DFS licensing*.

Fire Chief Credentialing *Temporary Extension Granted*

The Fire Service Commission has granted a one (1) year extension to individuals holding a valid Fire Chief Credential as of January 1, 2020. All valid Fire Chief Credentials which were active or issued after January 1, 2020 will expire one (1) year from their current expiration date.

The one (1) year extension is temporary and is in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It serves as recognition of the difficulty in obtaining the needed points and professional development during this time and the accompanying closures/postponement of necessary trainings.

The extension may be terminated or modified at any time.

Fire Suppression System Service Tags

New Requirements in 2021

On May 15, 2020, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code (527 CMR 1.00) was amended and changes were made to the fire suppression service tag requirements. The new requirements will take effect next year on July 1, 2021. **Section 1.13.5.4.1 of the fire code will require service tags to include the following information on the front of the tag:**

- The words “Do Not Remove Per Order of the State Fire Marshal” on the top of tag
- Servicing firm’s name, address, and phone number
- Firm’s Certificate of Registration MA-CR number and type
- Type of service performed
- Date the service was performed
- Certificate of Competency number of the qualified individual who performed or supervised the service(s) performed and their initials.

The back of the service tags must include:

- Space and lines for recording owner and location of equipment
- Space and lines for recording type and size of extinguisher.

General requirements include:

- Tags can be any color except orange and must have contrasting lettering. Orange service tags are reserved for “noncompliance” systems.
- Tags must be “punched” to indicate the required information (date of inspection and type of service).
- The Certificate of Competency holder’s license number and initials may be written or printed on the tag.
- Minimum tag size is 5.25” x 2.625”.
- Tags must be in a clearly visible location **and** at the system manual pull stations or at the cylinders.
- Portable fire extinguishers must have the tag around the neck of the extinguisher.

Service Tags for Non-Compliant Systems

Any engineered, pre-engineered and self-service fire suppression system inspected and found to be in noncompliance with its listing or the manufacturer’s specifications shall have a service tag attached indicating noncompliance. **Noncompliance tags must include all of the following information:**

- Servicing firm’s name
- Phone number



- Firm’s Certificate of Registration MA-CR number and type
- Date of service performed
- Reason for noncompliance
- Initials and Certificate of Competency number of the person who conducted the inspection

General requirements for non-compliance tags include:

- Tags must be bright orange.
- The words “Noncompliance” must be printed in block letters not less than ½” in height, and be black in color.
- The Certificate of Competency holder’s license number and initials must be written or printed on the tag.
- Tags must be in a clearly visible location and placed at the system manual pull stations or at the cylinders.

Before Printing Service Tags

Prior to printing your service tags, we strongly recommend that you provide our office a sample of your tag(s). Our office will verify that the content and format of your tags meet the requirements.

If you have any questions concerning the service tag requirements, please contact Supervisor Matthew Murray at the Compliance & Enforcement Unit at 978-567-3371, or Matthew.Murray@mass.gov.

MIRT Training Exercise

On August 13, 2020, the Department of Fire Services (DFS) Maritime Incident Response Team (MIRT), in the Hazardous Materials Response Division, conducted radiation training in Newburyport Harbor and on the Merrimack River.

The Newburyport, Marblehead, and Salisbury Fire Departments and the Newburyport Harbormaster all participated in the training with the Maritime HazMat Team. The day began with classes on the use and capabilities of radiation detection equipment. Then MIRT members boarded vessels from the Marblehead and Salisbury Fire Departments to conduct searches for hidden radiation training sources set up around the city's waterways.

The HazMat technicians had to search the large bodies of water using only instrumentation. The training helped improve their understanding of radiation detection and measuring techniques in a real-life setting and gave them valuable practice in finding the exact source of radiation and the danger it presented.

The teams were very successful in finding the sources of radiation, including one on a personal boat owned by a local firefighter and HazMat technician.



The training mimicked the maritime operation used by the team during the Boston Fourth of July celebration on the Charles River in 2019.

Fireworks Incidents in 2020, *continued from page 7*

- **July 7:** A child was injured when fireworks went off in his hand near Carson Beach in South Boston.
- **July 8:** The Bomb Squad responded to a home in Ludlow at the request of the local police. The homeowner had recently died. The Bomb Squad found enough boxes of packaged and unpackaged, homemade and store bought fireworks to fill a six-foot square room. The joint operation of the Bomb Squad and the state HazMat team took several days to clear the home of explosives and safely counter-charge them.
- **July 9:** The Bomb Squad responded to the Westford Fire Department to take possession of several 1.3 aerial shells.
- **July 9:** A 4-year old Boston girl grabbed a burning sparkler from someone else. She burned her left hand.
- **July 14:** The Bellingham Fire Department responded to a dumpster fire caused by fireworks. They were tied-up for over an hour.
- **July 18:** A 13-year old Randolph boy was burned over 10% of his body from fireworks.
- **July 18:** The Turners Falls Fire Department responded to a fireworks incident. A 43-year old man suffered a serious leg injury while lighting off fireworks in his backyard. He will be charged with one count of unlawful possession of fireworks. This case was investigated by the Turners Falls Fire Department and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The Northwestern District Attorney's Office is prosecuting the case.
- **July 20:** The Bellingham Fire Department responded to a brush fire caused by fireworks.
- **August 10:** The Orange Fire Department, multiple mutual aid partners and the state Bureau of Forest Fire Control responded to a brush fire in rugged terrain on Tully Mountain in Orange. The fire took several days to put out in the hot and humid weather. Remnants of fireworks and a campfire were found at seat of the fire.



Department of Fire Services
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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www.mass.gov/dfs



Fire Prevention Week™ is October 4-10, 2020

Fire Prevention Week 2020 is October 4-10 and this year's theme is "Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen!™" Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires and this year's campaign educates the public about the dangers and prevention of kitchen fires, including creating a kid-free zone in the kitchen, extinguishing a small fire with a lid, staying focused and alert while cooking, and much more.

Use the logo above and other materials for teaching fire prevention during Fire Prevention Week. Visit www.nfpa.org for information and materials.

The Department of Fire Services also has many resources for teaching about fire safety in the kitchen. Our public education toolkit on cooking safety includes:

- TV spots (1 English, 1 Spanish)
- Radio spots (1 English, 1 Spanish)
- Cooking safety recipe cards (English and Spanish)
- Tri-fold pamphlets in 3 languages (English, Spanish and Portuguese)
- Newspaper ads
- Logos
- Customizable local press release
- A lesson plan
- Bookmark artwork

Visit www.mass.gov/service-details/cooking-fire-safety-toolkit to download materials, or search for *Cooking Fire and Burn Safety* on the DFS website.