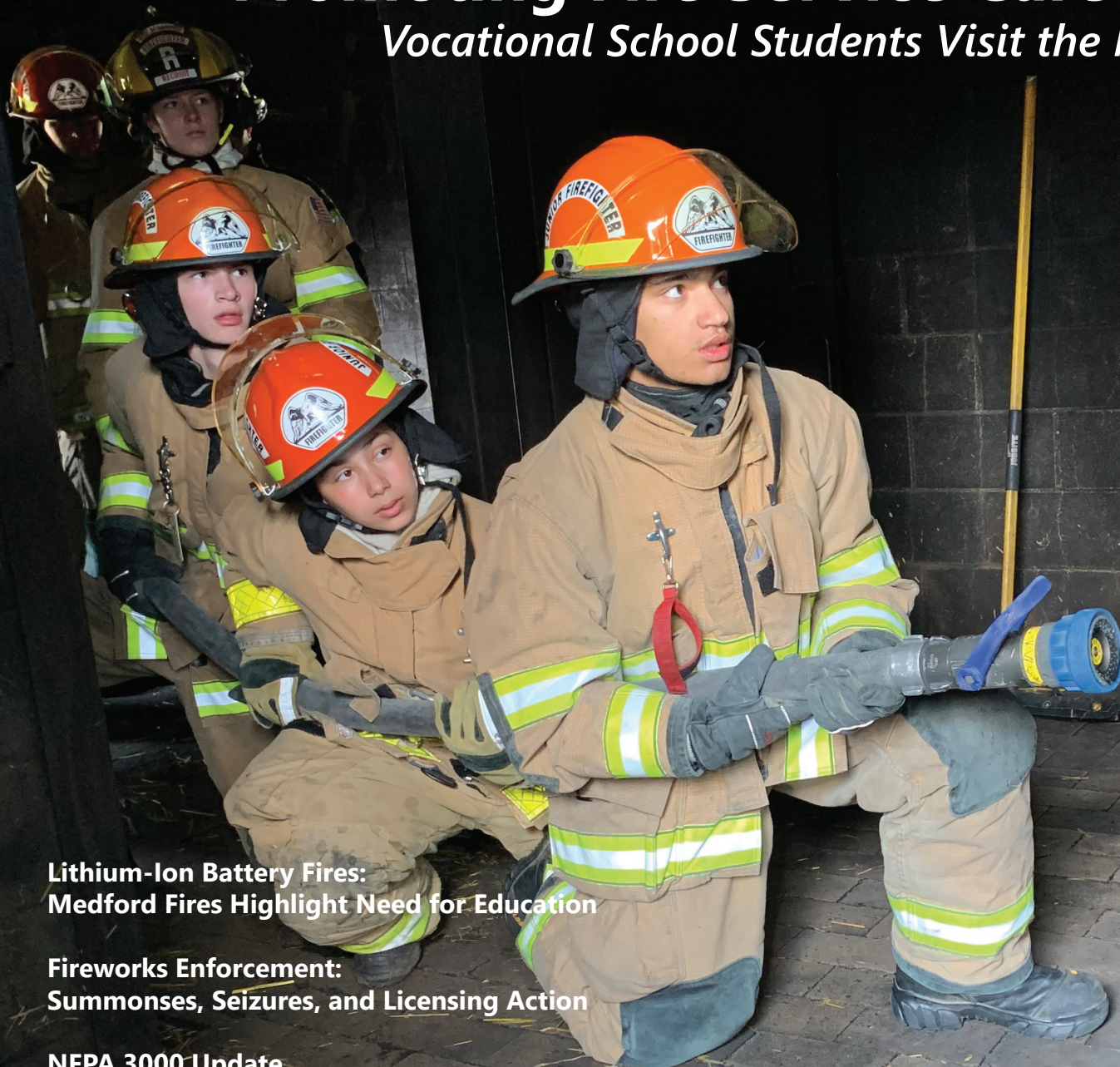


# All Hands Herald

Massachusetts Department of Fire Services September 2023

## Promoting Fire Service Careers *Vocational School Students Visit the MFA*



**Lithium-Ion Battery Fires:  
Medford Fires Highlight Need for Education**

**Fireworks Enforcement:  
Summonses, Seizures, and Licensing Action**

**NFPA 3000 Update**



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The *All Hands Herald* is published three times a year by the Department of Fire Services. Our title incorporates the traditional fire service meaning of all hands working to extinguish a fire. In this publication, all hands is DFS staff providing information, training, and assistance with issues that affect all levels of the fire service.

Let us know how you like the *All Hands Herald* and what we can do to make it even more useful to you – our dedicated fire service members and customers.

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Photos by DFS staff.

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# From the Fire Marshal

As I begin my first installment of *From the Fire Marshal*, I have to say what an honor it is to lead an agency that has been so valuable to so many Massachusetts firefighters. The Department of Fire Services (DFS) provides vital support across all its divisions to our fire departments and the communities they protect.

DFS has been an asset to me at every stage of my fire service career. From my first days as a recruit in Class #140 to my graduation from the Chief Fire Officer training program, the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy supported my professional development. My colleagues and I at Northampton Fire Rescue relied on and benefited from the unique and efficient administration of Hazardous Materials and Special Operations assets, and I went on to work as a technician on the District 4 Hazmat team and Joint Hazard Incident Response Team. The Fire Safety Division has been a source of expertise on everything from plan reviews and code enforcement to statistical data and public education. The State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit is a tremendous resource to local departments that may not have the staffing or extensive training to undertake comprehensive fire investigations and hazardous device assessment and disposal. And while it may not be obvious from outside the agency, the staff of Administrative Services support all these operational divisions so they can, in turn, support the fire service.

I would again like to express my thanks to the Fire Service Commission for entrusting me with the responsibility to lead this agency and its dedicated staff, and I hope every chief will continue to utilize all the important resources we offer. We're here to help you. Finally, I want to recognize the leadership of Fire Marshals Stephen Coan and Peter Ostroskey, who worked to build today's DFS from a handful of state agencies and departments into a world-class organization with three regional campuses and one unified mission. I look forward to working with the DFS team, the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the Legislature, and all our customers to meet the fire service's existing and emerging needs for many decades to come.

## Campus Fire Safety Month

Governor Maura Healey declared September to be *Campus Fire Safety Month* in Massachusetts. This is a great time to target outreach to local colleges and universities. While most schools work very hard to ensure that their on-campus living spaces comply with smoke alarm, sprinkler, and

egress requirements, we know that there have been more than 2,600 fires in student dormitories, fraternities, and sororities in the past five years. We also know that, 10 years ago, two Massachusetts college students died in separate fires just a few months apart. Both of these fires occurred in off-campus housing, where students have historically been at greatest risk. Working smoke alarms and a practiced home escape plan with two ways out are fundamental fire safety tools. Let's help the young adults who come to Massachusetts for school stay fire-safe during their college years and beyond.

## Sprinkler Push in New Bedford

Over the past several months, following a tragic rooming house fire that claimed two lives, a concerted effort by the New Bedford Fire Department (NBFD) and other city agencies has brought seven rooming house operators into compliance with the local-option law that requires fire sprinklers in these occupancies. Another five operators are currently installing sprinklers, and the city has brought two more to court for failing to comply with the law and the city's directives. During this same period, NBFD inspected an additional 14 rooming houses to ensure that their existing sprinkler systems were in proper working order. Fire sprinklers are the fastest, most effective way to contain or extinguish a fire before it becomes deadly. New Bedford's work here is a great development and reflects a commitment to occupants' safety.

## Lithium-Ion Batteries

Lithium-ion batteries are all around us, powering everything from pocket-sized devices to electric vehicles. Fire departments across Massachusetts and around the world are battling fires that start with these power-packed batteries, and we can expect the number of fires to grow in the years ahead. You can read about two such fires in Medford that went to multiple alarms on page 4, and watch your email for an invitation to a symposium on lithium-ion battery fire hazards, suppression, and related topics that we're planning for later this fall.



*Continued on page 10*



# Promoting Fire Service Careers

## *Vocational School Students Visit the MFA*

The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA) has hosted more than 50 vocational and technical high school students this year as part of an ongoing effort to generate interest in fire service careers. Dr. Sara Pragluski Walsh, the Academy's Instructional Design and Curriculum Development Specialist, has taken the lead on this project, using her skills as an educator to deliver an immersive experience that will help develop the next generation of firefighters.

"Using our instructors' decades of experience and the resources available through the MFA, this initiative is providing students with a meaningful opportunity to determine if the fire service is for them," said Dr. Walsh. "The work we do now will increase the number of viable candidates

pursuing a fire service career path and expand awareness of the many opportunities available to them."

### **More Than Just a Tour**

Every month from March through June, students visited the Academy's campuses in Stow and Springfield. Some came with no fire service experience at all, some were part of school-based firefighting programs, and some were already working for local departments. All of them got the chance to observe and practice the skills they would learn as recruits, with their exercises based on their levels of proficiency.

"This was more than just a visit and a tour," said Dr. Walsh. "Each group had a day of hands-on learning, with activities that were geared to their particular levels of experience."

In March and April, students from Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School and Roger L. Putnam Vocational Technical Academy visited the Department of Fire Services' (DFS) Springfield campus. A group of about 10 juniors and seniors from each school took part, arriving at 8:15 a.m. and starting the day with an overview of the mission, duties, and values of the fire service.

Students then learned to don the turnout gear they would wear at all times on the drill yard. Under the supervision of Assistant Coordinators Rich Craven, Mike Gelinas, and Pete Jerusik, and with assistance from Instructors Zachary Gates and Christopher Hernandez, they conducted right-hand searches in the Search & Rescue Prop under blackout conditions and practiced forcible entry on the Multi-Force door prop using Halligan bars, both on their own and with partners who used either a second Halligan or an eight-pound axe. They even got a chance to deploy and use hoselines on the drill yard before sitting down for a Q&A





with fire service leaders such as former State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, Deputy Marshal Maribel Fournier, and Springfield Fire Commissioner B.J. Calvi.

The following month, Shrewsbury High School students visited the Stow campus and worked directly with Assistant Coordinator Gelinas to experience the same learning opportunities. Shrewsbury High was the first school to begin the work with Dr. Walsh last year, and this program has been a critical addition to the experiential and vocational learning opportunities they offer.

Also in May, students from South Shore Vocational Technical High School's Fire Cadet Training Program visited the Stow campus. The eight-week cadet program is a partnership between South Shore Technical and the fire departments in its school district, including those in Abington, Cohasset, Duxbury, Hanover, Hanson, Marshfield, Norwell, and Scituate, that provides students with a basic orientation to fire and emergency services. About 15 cadets got an overview of the MFA from former State Fire Marshal Ostroskey and Assistant Coordinator Gelinas. Following the overview, they observed Academy recruits conducting live burn training and ladder and hose evolutions and saw many of the training props we offer for firefighters at every level of experience.

Finally, in June, members of the Quaboag Regional Middle/High School's Intro to Fire & EMS program spent a day at the DFS Springfield campus along with some of their instructors from the Warren Fire Department. These students, several of whom are members of the Warren and West Brookfield fire departments, were able to practice water mapping in the burn building under non-fire conditions, "hit it hard from the yard" using a hoseline pumped through Engine 7, and get familiar with the tools and tasks they'll encounter in the fire service.

Dr. Walsh said that there is a significant increased need for both vocational programs and skilled workers, both in the fire service and elsewhere.

"We're working closely with a few of these schools to advance the current vocational/technical school immersion program into an expanded junior firefighter program," she said. "In the meantime, I would truly like to thank



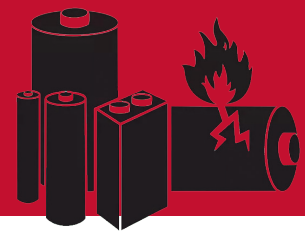
the recruit instructors for their support, as well as the expanded support of Assistant Coordinators Rich Craven, Pete Jerusik, and Mike Gelinas. This work is having a positive impact on our recruit program, our staff, and the future of fire service."





# Lithium-Ion Battery Fires

## Medford Fires Highlight Need for Education



As more and more household devices are powered by lithium-ion batteries, the number of battery-related fires is also increasing—including fires that start with scooters and e-bikes. Two such fires went to multiple alarms in Medford in recent months.

“These two fires alone displaced a dozen people and sent three of them to the hospital,” said Medford Fire Chief John Freedman. “If you, a family member, or roommate have a scooter, e-bike, or other device powered by lithium-ion batteries, it’s extremely important to understand the hazards involved and take the right steps to avoid them.”

The first fire took place on the afternoon of April 30. The Medford Fire Department responded to Allston Street following multiple 9-1-1 calls at about 4:55 p.m. On arrival, they observed heavy fire showing throughout the 2½-story, two-family home. Three occupants were able to escape, one of whom was transported from the scene for medical care. The fire went to four alarms, and firefighters battled the flames for more than two hours before bringing it under control. All four residents were displaced. A joint investigation determined that the fire began in a first-floor laundry room, where two badly damaged, battery-powered scooters were located. The fire rapidly spread from that point, causing major damage to the structure and exterior heat damage to a nearby home.



Photo credit Medford Firefighters Local 1032

The second fire took place on Dartmouth Street just over a month later, on the morning of June 3. The first arriving crew observed heavy smoke and flames from the top floor of the 2½ story, two-family home. The fire rapidly grew to three alarms and was brought under control after about an hour and a half. Eight people were displaced. Based on an examination of the scene and interviews with witnesses, including two who were hospitalized, local and state investigators determined that the fire began in a bedroom on the top floor, and started with a lithium-ion battery that was being charged in that area. The battery was used for an e-bike that was stored outdoors.

Community residents need guidance and reminders on storing, charging, and using these devices safely. Some important messages are:

- Be sure you have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home.
- Choose devices that are listed by a nationally recognized testing lab like Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or Intertek (ETL). The lab’s mark is a sign that the device has been tested to meet certain safety requirements.
- Use only the original equipment manufacturer’s batteries and charging equipment. Aftermarket or generic batteries and chargers may be cheaper but are more likely to pose a burn, fire, or explosion hazard.
- Store electric scooters and e-bikes outdoors if possible. If you must store them indoors, keep them and their batteries clear of doors, windows, and stairways.
- Charge the battery directly from a wall outlet, not an extension cord or power strip. Place it on a hard and stable surface, not on a bed, couch, or pillow.
- Charge only one battery or device at a time and unplug it when it’s fully charged. Don’t allow a charged battery to continue charging.
- If you notice changes to the battery or the device, including damage, an unusual odor, a change in color, too much heat, change in shape, leaking, smoking, or not keeping a charge, stop using it right away.
- If and when it’s time to dispose of the battery, don’t put it in the trash. Lithium-ion batteries should be recycled, and you can find a location for recycling at [www.call2recycle.org/locator](http://www.call2recycle.org/locator).

Lithium-ion batteries were the subject of this year’s *Safety Stand Down Week*, and DFS launched a Lithium-Ion Battery Safety web page to promote it. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *lithium-ion battery safety*.



# NFPA 3000 Update

Last year, the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security directed Massachusetts' state-run public safety training facilities to use NFPA 3000, *Standard for an Active Shooter Hostile Event Response (ASHER)* program, as the framework for ASHER training. Since that time, the Department of Fire Services (DFS), Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC), State Police Academy, and dozens of local fire and police departments have been working with the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center to train instructors and responders.

So far this year, nearly 130 fire/rescue and law enforcement instructors from across Massachusetts have completed the ALERRT Center's week-long Active Attack Integrated Response (AAIR) train-the-trainer course offered by DFS and MPTC. The AAIR course integrates law enforcement and fire/rescue personnel response to a hostile event with two primary goals: stop the killing by neutralizing the threat, and stop the dying by providing the fastest and most efficient medical care to the injured.

**The Active Attack Integrated Response (AAIR) train-the-trainer course integrates law enforcement and fire/rescue personnel response to a hostile event with two primary goals: stop the killing by neutralizing the threat, and stop the dying by providing the fastest and most efficient medical care to the injured.**



About 20 Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA) instructors have been certified after completing the week-long AAIR course, and some of them have already gone on to deliver two-day responder-level AAIR courses to municipal firefighters and police officers. In July, nearly five dozen local first responders took part in these two-day courses at Framingham State University and Spring Street Elementary School in Shrewsbury.

The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security has received a commitment from the ALERRT Center to conduct four additional AAIR train-the-trainer courses in FY24. This is expected to double the number of certified instructors over the course of the year.

As this issue went to press, DFS was preparing to offer a four-hour Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) train-the-trainer course in advance of the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Fire & Life Safety Education Conference. The course was designed to help instructors provide guidance to schools, businesses, hospitals, and other communities on what civilians should do if faced with an active attack threat.



# Fireworks Enforcement

## Summonses, Seizures, and Licensing Action

The illegal use of fireworks causes injuries and property loss every year in Massachusetts. To help mitigate the problem, Massachusetts State Police and the Department of Fire Services (DFS) collaborate on stemming the flow of illegal fireworks into the Commonwealth.

This summer's targeted enforcement patrols led to 16 summonses for violating MGL c. 148, s. 39, and the seizure of about \$20,000 worth of illegal fireworks. Local and State police also made additional fireworks seizures across Massachusetts in the course of their regular duties.

### Fireworks Fires and Injuries

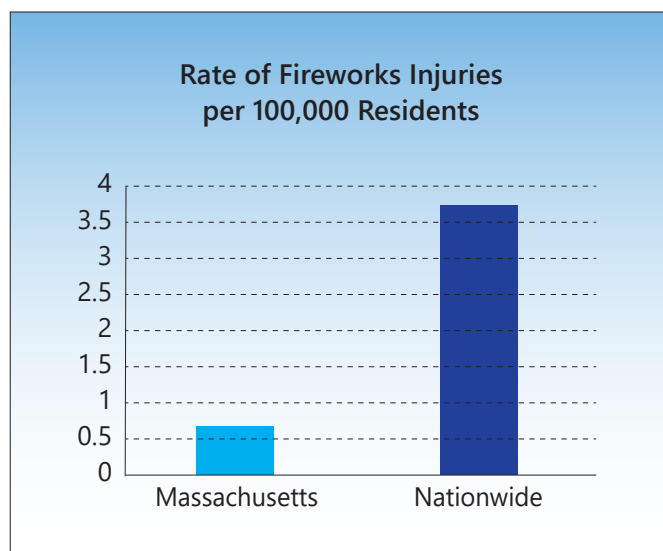
Unfortunately, the misuse of these dangerous devices continued to harm people and property in 2023. As in past years, most incidents occurred during the week of July 4.

- On May 21, a Kingston man who was allegedly manufacturing destructive devices for use as homemade fireworks suffered life-altering injuries to his hands, chest, and face. He was MedFlighted to Brigham and Women's Hospital. Additional devices found at the scene were secured and rendered safe by the State Police Bomb Squad.
- On July 3, commercial-grade fireworks caused a fire on the second-floor porch of a multi-family home in Chelsea. The State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit and Chelsea officials determined that commercial-grade aerial fireworks being discharged in front of a nearby masonry business struck the rear porch and ignited combustible materials. Additional fireworks were found nearby and seized.



*Unexploded commercial fireworks shells on Chappaquiddick.*

- On July 4, a West Yarmouth man was badly injured after attempting to discharge fireworks he bought in New Hampshire. He was transported first to Cape Cod Hospital and then to Brigham and Women's Hospital with severe injuries to his right hand and thigh.
- On July 5, a teenage boy lost part of his hand and a teenage girl suffered burn injuries after igniting fireworks in Hyde Park. Both were transported to the hospital for their injuries.
- On July 7, a residential structure fire in Danvers displaced four residents. State Police and Danvers fire investigators determined that it was caused by the unsafe use of sparklers in the home's basement during an Independence Day party. This was the second year in a row in which sparklers caused a fire that displaced all residents from a home: in 2022, a similar fire in Dracut went to three alarms.



### Licensing Actions

- On May 26 in Pittsfield and on June 24 in Easthampton, a licensed pyrotechnician used a torch and battery to hand-light unignited fireworks shells. In Pittsfield, he used the wrong squibs, and in Easthampton he failed to have the wiring or connections properly maintained. All of these actions constituted violations of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code. Following an investigation by the DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit, he agreed to a three-year license suspension.

*Continued on next page*



# MFA Awarded AFG Grant

## *for New Mobile Live Fire Training Prop*

In May 2023, the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy was awarded \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's FY2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant program. The funds will be used to purchase a Mobile Live Fire Training Prop (MLFTP) in a 53' trailer. This prop will allow firefighters to conduct structural firefighting training in a safe but realistic environment that simulates fires in a variety of residential scenarios, including kitchens, bedrooms, and other living areas. The trailer will contain all supplies, including a generator, gas cylinders, and a control/monitoring room to allow for self-sufficient operation at remote training sites.

The MFA delivers live fire training at all three of its campuses, but delivery of this training to individual fire departments is currently limited to a single trailer prop that's nearly 20 years old. The MFA receives about 40 requests for the prop each year but has been unable to fulfill all of them because of scheduling conflicts and maintenance downtime in recent years. The new, grant-funded MLFTP will both extend the life of the older prop and

replace it when the time comes. This will make live structural firefighting training more available to fire departments across Massachusetts, helping veteran firefighters maintain and refine the skills required for fighting specific types of fires, practice hose handling techniques, experience and respond to a rollover, and build teamwork across their department.

Once the new MLFTP is spec'd out and delivered, it will be housed at the DFS Springfield campus, allowing for more efficient service to fire departments in western Massachusetts. It will have a lifespan of at least 20 years. Training records suggest that approximately 200 firefighters will have the opportunity to train in this unit per year. With these projections, the MFA estimates that some 4,000 firefighters will utilize the MLFTP over its lifespan, making it a wise and fruitful investment in fire service training.



### **Fireworks Enforcement**, *continued from previous page*

Under the terms of the disposition, his license may be reinstated after 18 months if he successfully retakes the pyrotechnics examination.

- On July 5, a licensed pyrotechnician suffered a broken finger and a facial injury after a permitted fireworks display in Winthrop. The DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit determined that the pyrotechnician, in violation of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code, hand-fired several unexploded shells from the show and that one of them misfired, striking him with shrapnel. He surrendered his license and agreed to a three-year suspension, with one year to serve and the balance held in abeyance as a probationary period.
- From July 5–8, more than two dozen unexploded commercial fireworks shells washed up on Chappaquidick Island. The shells, which could have caused serious or even fatal injuries if mishandled by a person unfamiliar with their purpose, were from the permitted fireworks display in Edgartown on July 4. The pyrotechnician who shot the show had his license suspended as an immediate threat pending a July 26 hearing. Following an investigation by the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office and the DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement

Unit, the State Fire Marshal suspended licenses of the shooter who conducted the display and his employer. Anthony Marson's certificate of competency was suspended for 10 years, with five years to serve and the balance held in abeyance as a probationary period, and Central Maine Pyrotechnics' users certificate was suspended for two years, with the entire term held in abeyance as a probationary period.

### **Massachusetts Fireworks Injury Rate Well Below National Average**

Massachusetts is the only state in the nation that requires permits and licensure to possess or use fireworks of any kind. The facts suggest that the law is effective: the Massachusetts Department of Public Health reported 142 fireworks-related injuries from 2019 to 2021, for an annual average of about .67 injuries per 100,000 residents. Nationwide, the annual average rate during this period was 3.73 injuries per 100,000 residents—more than five times higher.

As we prepare for next year's fireworks season, help spread the message to residents that these devices are illegal because they're dangerous. Don't risk life, limb, or a day in court: leave fireworks to the professionals.



# Reducing Cooking Fires

## *Creative Solutions Make a Difference*

Year after year, cooking fires remain the #1 cause of residential fires and civilian fire injuries in Massachusetts and across the nation. While the overall number of these incidents has dropped in the Commonwealth since 2017, their frequency remains stubbornly high: there were nearly 9,000 residential cooking fires in 2022, causing an estimated \$11.5 million in damages. Because cooking fires increase in the holiday season from Thanksgiving to the New Year, fall is a great time to promote cooking fire safety.

### Public Education is Key

Firefighter educators play a key role in teaching the public to prevent cooking fires. This year's theme for Fire Prevention Week is *"Cooking safety starts with YOU! Pay attention to fire prevention."* Read more about this year's Fire Prevention Week theme on the next page.

The Department of Fire Services has a cooking fire prevention toolkit that educators can use in their programs. The National Fire Protection Association and US Fire Administration have additional materials for classrooms, social media, and much more. Fire departments educate hundreds of people every year, and more education of more people is always called for in fire and life safety.

### Technology Can Provide Solutions Too

In Worcester, a nearly 10-year-old program has proven its worth by reducing cooking fires at Worcester Housing Authority properties from hundreds each year to zero where it was implemented. This program involved education, technology, and partnerships—key elements in fire prevention work.

In 2015, Worcester saw a 3.3% increase in cooking fires from the prior year. Fire prevention officials noticed that nearly a quarter of the 578 cooking fires in 2015 were concentrated in just four high-rise buildings owned by the

Worcester Housing Authority. These buildings housed older adults, 86% of whom had physical and/or mental disabilities. These residents were at highest risk for fire injuries and death. Property damage costs were above \$500,000. The residents and the city stood to gain a lot if these fires could be reduced.

Lt. Annmarie Pickett, Ret. of the Worcester Fire Department (WFD) saw an opportunity—to reduce the number of cooking fires in Worcester, target the highest risk populations, and build a model that could be replicated.

Lt. Pickett learned about a heat-limiting technology that could stop cooking fires before they began – the SmartBurner™ by Pioneering Technology, a plug-in burner that replaces a traditional electric burner. The SmartBurner™ will not ignite grease, fabric, or paper, yet it still cooks food well.

Next, Lt. Pickett partnered with the Worcester Housing Authority. Their existing relationship eased this task, and the WHA immediately understood the value of replacing electric burners with SmartBurners™ in all apartments in the four buildings.

Finally, Lt. Pickett and her partner in WFD Fire Prevention, Lt. Katie Harrington, worked to secure FEMA Fire Prevention & Safety grants over several years to help fund a cooking fire safety program that included education, training, and the SmartBurner™ products. The first successful grant application in 2015 secured funding that supported the technology purchases, tenant and manager education, and a protocol for measuring the impact of the program. Over five years and with four grant rounds, all 2,981 apartments in the four buildings were fitted with the new technologies, educated in fire safety, and monitored.

Since the program began in 2017 with 759 apartments, there have been zero stovetop fires involving the SmartBurner™ devices. Zero! No injuries, no deaths, no property

losses. There was also a 96% reduction in emergency responses to the four buildings that previously made up one quarter of the city's annual cooking fires. When two cooking fires happened in the buildings in 2019, investigators found that

*Continued on next page*





# Fire Prevention Week is October 8 - 14, 2023

*Fire Prevention Week runs from October 8–14, 2023. This year's theme is Cooking Safety Starts with YOU! Pay Attention to Fire Prevention.™*

Unsafe cooking practices are the leading cause of fires overall in Massachusetts, including about 70% of Massachusetts home fires. Cooking is also the leading cause of civilian fire injuries. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of these incidents. This year's Fire Prevention Week campaign works to educate the public about steps they can take to reduce the risk of fire when cooking, keeping themselves and those around them safe.

Use the Fire Prevention Week logo and other materials for teaching during Fire Prevention Week. Visit [www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org), [www.sparky.org](http://www.sparky.org), and [www.sparkyschoolhouse.org](http://www.sparkyschoolhouse.org) for information and materials. Fire Prevention Week cooking safety messages include:

- **Stand by Your Pan:** Keep a close eye on what you're cooking. For foods with long cook times (simmering or baking), set a timer to monitor them carefully.
- **Put a Lid On It:** Cover a fire on the stove top with a lid or cookie sheet to smother the flames, then turn off the burner. Never try to move a burning pan or douse it with water: this could spread the flames.
- **Keep it Clean:** Clean up grease spills and spatter so they don't catch fire. Clear the cooking area of anything that can burn, such as dish towels, oven mitts, food



packaging, and paper towels.

- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. This helps reduce bumps and spills that can cause fires and burns.
- Create a “kid and pet free zone” of at least three feet around the cooking area and anywhere else hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

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

- TV spots in English and Spanish
- Radio spots in English and Spanish
- Cooking safety recipe cards in English and Spanish
- Pamphlets in English, Spanish and Portuguese
- Newspaper ads
- Logos
- Customizable local press release
- A lesson plan
- Bookmark artwork

Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs). Search for *Cooking Fire Safety Toolkit*.

## Cooking Fires, *continued from previous page*

the heat-limiting burners had been replaced with old electric coils.

The program continues in Worcester with additional education, housing guidelines, and upkeep of the burners to keep everyone safe and cooking with a stellar fire safety record. Lt. Harrington has helped departments across the nation replicate the successful program.



## New Creative Solutions

Firefighters see problems and find solutions every day. Is the Worcester program one that may work for your community? What new solutions will your team bring to your community in the coming year? Start with fire prevention week and keep the momentum going. Keeping everyone safe is top priority!



# New Apparatus: Mobile Testing Vehicle

## *We got our MTV!*

The Department of Fire Services took delivery of a new Mobile Testing Vehicle on May 24, 2023. The MTV was designed for use by Bomb Squad, Hazmat, Joint Hazard Incident Response Team, and Clandestine Lab Enforcement Team technicians, and it was built by Farber Specialty Vehicles.

The MTV will be used during responses to chemical or industrial laboratories, meth lab investigations, CBRNE incidents, and scenarios like the one that unfolded in Marlborough last year. In that case, firefighters discovered large quantities of hazardous, reactive, and unknown chemicals in a fully occupied apartment building. In these circumstances, identifying the substances was crucial to determining the safest course of action – but technicians had to analyze and test them in an open-air parking lot, fully exposed to the elements except for tarps and pop-up tents. In another incident a few years ago, frigid temperatures affected the operability of meters that Hazmat techs were using.

The MTV, designated as Truck 73, resolves these and related issues. It provides a controlled, contained, laboratory-style environment for the process of identifying unknown, potentially hazardous substances in the field. The MTV is a business class freightliner with onboard



power generation, HVAC, fume hood, airtight glove box, and other features. It will be further outfitted with existing DFS and State Police equipment to best serve technicians' detection and analysis needs no matter what they might be. The result will be faster identification of hazardous substances in a secure location, reducing the hazards to first responders and minimizing disruption for the public.

**From the Fire Marshal, continued from page 1**

## **ASHER Deliveries**

At this writing, Massachusetts is the only state in the nation to adopt NFPA 3000, *Standard for an Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Program*, across all of its state-run public safety training agencies. In support of that initiative, the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy and Municipal Police Training Committee have been working closely with the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center and local departments to train fire/rescue and law enforcement instructors in Active Attack Integrated Response. These certified instructors are now training local first responders. You can read more about their progress on page 5.

## **Fire Prevention Week**

The first week of October is coming up fast, and that means Fire Prevention Week is nearly upon us. This year's theme addresses the leading cause of fires in Massachusetts and the nation: unsafe cooking practices. You can read more about this year's theme on page 9. As you plan Fire

Prevention Week activities, remember that there are plenty of resources to support you, including the National Fire Protection Association's website at [www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org) and cooking safety flyers, graphics, and recipes on the DFS website. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *cooking safety*. Cooking safety messaging is also important in the months ahead, when many families are cooking Thanksgiving meals and gathering for the winter holidays.

## **Mobile Testing Vehicle**

Shortly before I took office as State Fire Marshal, I had the chance to work on the new Mobile Testing Vehicle as part of the Joint Hazard Incident Response Team (JHIRT). What a great addition to the Hazmat, Bomb Squad, and JHIRT toolbox! Read about this custom-built laboratory on wheels on this page.

Are there topics you'd like to see covered in upcoming issues of the All Hands Herald? Let us know! Contact Jake Wark, public information officer, at [jake.wark@mass.gov](mailto:jake.wark@mass.gov).



# Massachusetts Fires in 2022

## 29,034 Fires - Up 14% From 2021

43 Civilian Deaths  
0 Fire Service Deaths  
239 Civilian Injuries  
515 Fire Service Injuries  
\$328.5 Million in Property Damage  
632 Reported Arsons



## Structure Fires

15,562 Fires - Up 3%  
37 Civilian Deaths  
0 Fire Service Deaths  
206 Civilian Injuries  
460 Fire Service Injuries  
\$294.6 Million in Property Damage  
177 Arsons Reported



## Motor Vehicle Fires

2,362 Fires - Up 2%  
3 Civilian Deaths  
15 Civilian Injuries  
18 Fire Service Injuries  
\$26.8 Million in Property Damage  
47 Arsons Reported

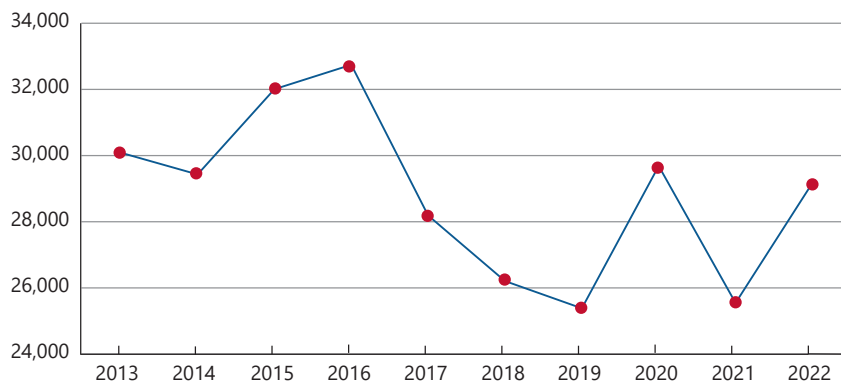


## Other Fires

11,110 Fires - Up 37%  
3 Civilian Deaths  
18 Civilian Injuries  
37 Fire Service Injuries  
\$7.1 Million in Property Damage  
408 Arsons Reported

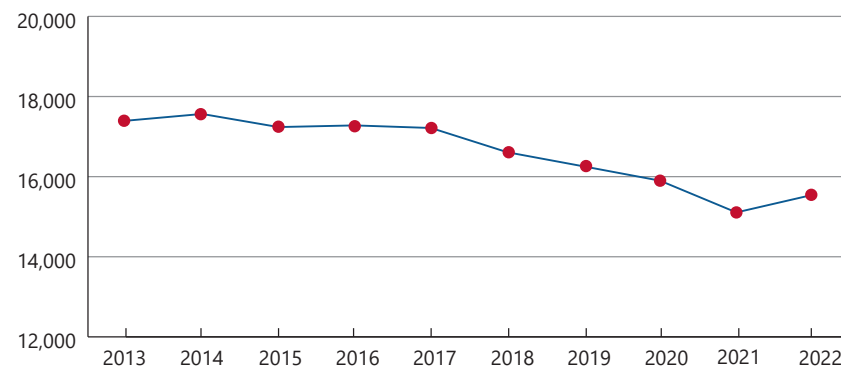


## Massachusetts Fires by Year



Fires in 2022 slightly exceeded the previous 10-year average of 28,953.

## Structure Fires by Year



Structure fires increased slightly over 2021, but remained below the previous 10-year average of 16,821.



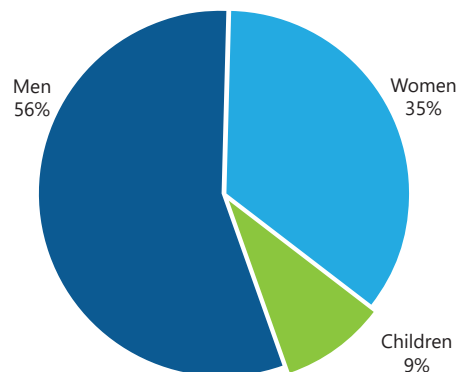
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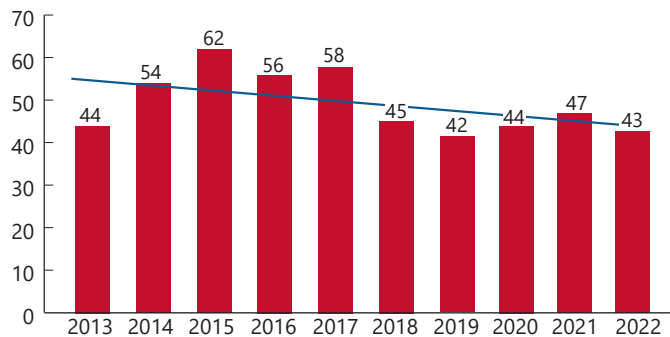


# Massachusetts Fire Deaths in 2022

## Civilian Fire Deaths

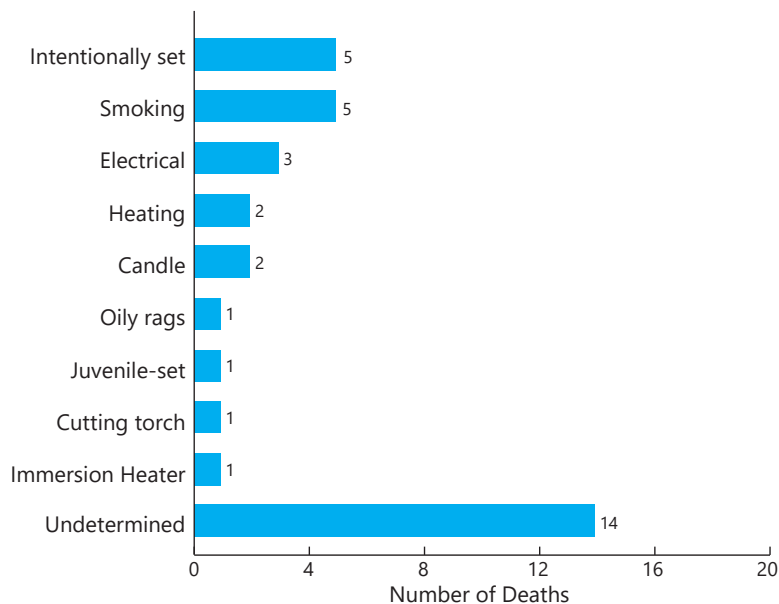


## Fire Deaths by Year



- 40 fatal fires killed 43 civilians: 24 men, 15 women, and 4 children.
- 15 of these victims (35%) were age 65 or older.
- 35 of these fatalities (81%) occurred at home.
- No firefighters died in fire-related incidents.
- Five people died in two fires that were intentionally set. One of these fires claimed the life of the person that set it. The other fire killed four people and was charged as arson.

## Causes of Residential Structure Fire Deaths



**81% of fire deaths in 2022 took place at home. Be sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home, test them every month, and replace them every 10 years!**



**Department of Fire Services**

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# Fire Investigation News

## Incendiary Fires

### North Adams

Two men were charged with arson and conspiracy in connection with the May 17, 2023, fire that consumed a home in North Adams. Brandon Navom is accused of paying Gabriel McLenithan to set fire to the unoccupied building at 28 Morgan Ave. Both were identified in the course of an ongoing investigation by the North Adams Fire Department, North Adams Police, and State Police fire investigators assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office. They are being prosecuted by the Hampshire County District Attorney's office.

### Brockton

On June 2, 2023, a Plymouth County jury convicted a brother and sister of arson, attempted murder, and other charges for setting fire to an occupied home in 2019. After the 10-day trial, a judge sentenced Jonathan and Lucnalie Jironvil to terms of 8 to 10 years in state prison. The Plymouth County District Attorney's office proved that the siblings were responsible for the structure fire that destroyed a Sinclair Road home in the early morning hours of July 18, 2019. The incident was investigated by Brockton Fire, Brockton Police, and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office.

### Holden

A man staying with relatives was charged with arson and related offenses for allegedly setting a fire to their Juniper Lane home on June 6, 2023. The investigation by Holden Fire, Holden Police, and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office determined that he intentionally set the fire in the attached garage. The fire extended upward into the residence and went to two alarms. The suspect, Evan Kelley, was arrested shortly after the initial call reporting a fire. He is being prosecuted by the Worcester County District Attorney's office.

### Concord

On July 7, 2023, the State Police Fire Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office joined officials from Concord Fire, Concord Police, ATF, the U.S. Postal Service, and the National Park Service to investigate a series of fires at various locations in town. Investigators determined that the fires at the Beede Swim & Fitness Center, U.S. Post Office, and Minute Man National Park were intentionally set, and they soon identified a suspect. With the assistance of Arlington Police, the 60-year-old woman was located and taken into custody that evening and sent for a mental health evaluation.

## Fatal Fires

### Methuen

A two-alarm fire in an apartment without working smoke alarms claimed one resident's life. The Methuen Fire Department responded to Phillips Street shortly before 6:00 p.m. on May 14. Firefighters located the adult male victim inside and rescued him from the home. He was immediately transported to an area hospital and later passed away. Firefighters were able to contain the fire to the unit of origin, but three occupants of the lower floors were temporarily displaced. Methuen Fire, Methuen Police, and State Police assigned to the offices of the State Fire Marshal and Essex County District Attorney determined that the fire began in a top-floor bedroom on the left side of the triple-decker. They further determined that it was accidental and found the most likely cause to be smoking materials.

Nearly every month, residents of Massachusetts die in buildings without working smoke alarms. Continue to educate your communities: Working smoke alarms save lives.

### Rowley

An older adult was found deceased after a four-alarm house fire in Rowley on April 21, 2023. The Rowley Fire Department responded to a Railroad Avenue home after a passerby spotted smoke at about 4:09 a.m. On arrival, they observed smoke and flames in the home. They made entry and located one person, an older adult male, inside the residence. He was transported to an area hospital and pronounced deceased. Investigators found no working smoke alarms at the scene. Rowley Fire, Rowley Police, and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office and Essex County District Attorney's office determined that the fire was accidental and most likely the result of an electrical event in the basement ceiling.



*Continued on next page*





## Cummington

A survivable house fire in Cummington turned fatal when one occupant attempted to save personal items and perished inside. The single-family home on Thayer Corner Road was sold in 2022 and as a result had working smoke alarms installed according to the Fire Code. Those alarms woke the residents just after 5:30 a.m. on April 28, 2023. One occupant escaped and called 9-1-1; the other went to retrieve personal effects and never made it out. The Cummington Fire Department responded a short time later to find the single-family home fully involved. The Cummington Fire Department, Cummington Police, State Police Fire Investigation Unit, and Northwestern District Attorney's office determined that the fire was not suspicious and most likely caused by an electrical event. The smoke alarm activation demonstrated the importance of 26F smoke alarm inspections prior to home transfers; tragically, the outcome serves as a stark reminder that we should get out, stay out, and call 9-1-1 in the event of a fire.

## Mashpee

Outdoor burning claimed an older adult's life in the back yard of his Mashpee home. In violation of open burning regulations, the 86-year-old man was burning trash on May 15, 2023. The Mashpee Fire Department responded to the area of Hooppole Road after a 9-1-1 call and discovered the man deceased at the scene of the fire. Mashpee Fire, Mashpee Police, and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office and Cape & Islands District Attorney's office determined that the fire accidentally grew beyond its intended size.

## Belchertown

At about 12:20 pm on July 10, the Belchertown Fire Department responded to a report of a house fire on Daniel Square. On arrival, they found the single-family home well involved, with heavy smoke venting through all the

windows and heavy fire showing in the rear. Firefighters mounted an aggressive exterior attack and then moved inside until conditions forced them from the building. One person, an adult male, was found deceased inside. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will determine the cause and manner of his death, and the exact cause of the fire is under investigation by Belchertown Fire, Belchertown Police, and State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal and Northwestern District Attorney.

## Palmer

A shed fire claimed a man's life in Palmer on the afternoon of July 17. The Palmer Fire Department responded to West Ware Road at about 1:20 p.m. after a passing motorist reported seeing smoke. On arrival, firefighters found a shed fully involved near the rear of the residence, with fire threatening to spread to the home and nearby woods. They immediately deployed an attack line to suppress the fire, called for mutual aid, and were able to extinguish the fire a short time later. One resident, an adult male who had been unaccounted for, was discovered deceased inside the shed. Power equipment, gasoline, and other items were found in the area. The fire does not appear suspicious but remains under investigation by the Palmer Fire, Palmer Police, State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and State Police assigned to the Hampden County District Attorney's office.

## Explosion Investigations

### Newburyport

A fire and explosion at a Newburyport chemical processing site claimed a worker's life in April and is the subject of ongoing investigations by local, state, and federal agencies.

The Newburyport Fire Department responded to the area of 9 Opportunity Way following multiple notifications at about 12:39 a.m. on April 4. They observed heavy fire



## A fire and explosion at a Newburyport chemical processing site claimed a worker's life in April and is the subject of ongoing investigations.

and a large debris field from an explosion in the structure. Four employees were transported to an area hospital and later released. Tragically, a fifth employee suffered fatal injuries. State Police fire investigators recovered him from the building.

Firefighters battled the fire for about an hour before bringing it under control, but the site presented numerous challenges to first responders even after the fire was extinguished. The structure was badly damaged by the explosion, making it unsafe to enter at first, and substances used on the premises were reactive and potentially hazardous. The Northeast Massachusetts Technical Rescue Team and heavy equipment were necessary to make the structure safe for investigators to enter. In the days that followed, Hazmat techs monitored the area continually for potential dangers to first responders or the community and extracted dozens of drums of reactive chemicals from the site for transport or appropriate disposal.

The incident ultimately went to seven alarms, drawing mutual aid from the fire departments of Amesbury, Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, Ipswich, Newbury, North Andover, North Reading, Salisbury, Rowley, Westborough, West Newbury, East Kingston, NH, Exeter, NH, Hampton, NH, North Hampton, NH, Salem, NH, and Seabrook, NH. The fire departments of Danvers, Lawrence, and Topsfield provided station coverage. The Department of Fire Services deployed an Incident Support Unit to assist incident commanders with audio, video, communications, and conferencing capabilities; two Rehab units to support firefighter health at the scene; and a drone unit to provide aerial and interior imagery of the site.

While the explosion appears related to a chemical manufacturing process and does not appear suspicious, the exact cause remains under investigation by Newburyport Fire, the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and State Police assigned to the Essex County District Attorney's office. The Department of Fire Services' Boiler & Pressure Vessel Program and Code Compliance & Enforcement Units are providing assistance. A parallel investigation by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration is also underway.

### Truro

The April 20, 2023, fire and explosions that destroyed a home on First Light Lane in Truro were most likely related to a propane leak that was ignited by home heating equipment. The massive damage meant that multiple potential factors could not be ruled out, but the Truro Fire Department, Truro Police Department, and State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit determined that the area of origin was in the basement near the left rear corner of the home. A water heater and furnace, both badly damaged, were located in this area. The most likely scenario involved propane leaking into the basement, where it was ignited by the water heater or furnace, causing a fire and explosion that then caused a 120-gallon propane tank to explode. There was no evidence of an intentionally set fire.

The investigation was supported by the DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit. Inspectors found that the propane tank was manufactured in 1989 and was past



due for a requalification examination. Inspectors also found that the tank was recently filled with 5.5 gallons of propane, in violation of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code. Specifically, the Fire Code states that propane tanks may only be filled after determining that they comply with the requalification requirement and other provisions. Inspectors issued a notice of violation to the individual who filled the tank on behalf of F.A. Days & Sons.

### Berlin

An unrelated explosion in Berlin a few days earlier tragically claimed an older adult's life. Like the one in Truro, the Berlin explosion was found to be related to a propane leak. In that case, the Berlin Fire Department was notified of an explosion on Pleasant Street shortly before 3:30 a.m. on

*Continued on page 17*



# Three New S.A.F.E. Young Heroes

Three local fire departments celebrated the accomplishments of young heroes in recent months, and Department of Fire Services (DFS) leaders were on hand to support them. These brave kids used the fire and life safety lessons they learned through the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program to protect themselves, their families, and others.

## Bridgewater

On Sunday, March 19, 2023, 12-year-old Aiden Liles was directed by his parents to call 911 for a medical emergency at home. Despite the chaotic scene unfolding in the background, Aiden was calm and clear in his communication to the dispatcher, and was able to ask his parents the right questions to get helpful information for first responders. Bridgewater Fire Chief Michael MacDermott and Firefighter William Lieb later said Aiden “clearly went above and beyond what is expected of a 12-year-old” and played a critical role in getting emergency assistance when it was needed most. On June 7, Aiden was recognized as a Young Hero in a ceremony with Chief MacDermott and the Bridgewater Fire Department, Bridgewater Police, Town Manager Michael Dutton, and former State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey.



Bridgewater

## Turners Falls

On Sunday, April 16, 2023, 11-year-old Jayden Weber was home alone when he heard smoke alarms and realized smoke was filling the house. Using the skills he learned from Turners Falls firefighters through the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program at school, he knew to get out, stay out, get to the family meeting spot, and call 9-1-1. Firefighters quickly responded and extinguished the fire. Turners Falls Fire Chief Todd Brunelle and Captain Luke Hartnett were deeply impressed by Jayden's ability to keep cool during the crisis. On June 26, Deputy State Fire Marshal Maribel Fournier joined Chief Brunelle, Captain Hartnett, and members of the Turners Falls Fire Department to recognize Jayden as a Young Hero.



Everett

## Everett

Ten-year-old Angela Landaverde-Portillo was at home on Saturday, May 13, 2023, when a family member noticed a fire on the back porch of a neighbor's home. Angela quickly made sure everyone got out of her home and called 9-1-1 to report the emergency. Angela remained calm throughout this ordeal and even made sure that her dog was safe. “Had it not been for Angela, this fire would have caused much more damage to the home and possibly the surrounding businesses,” said Everett Fire Chief Scott Dalrymple and



Turners Falls

Deputy Chief William Hurley. “Her heroic actions saved property and possibly lives. Angela is a true hero.” On June 13th, Angela was recognized as a Young Hero by Deputy Chief Hurley, former State Fire Marshal Ostroskey, and leaders from Angela's school.

Do you know a young hero? Publicly recognizing them helps draw attention to their individual bravery and emphasizes the value and importance of fire and life safety education in Massachusetts schools. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *young heroes* to learn more.

# EK-9 Teams Graduate in Bridgewater

On June 29, 2023, the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit's K-9 training team held a ceremony to recognize its latest class of graduates. Sergeant Paul Horgan and EK-9 Balto, Trooper Gerry Harris and EK-9 Koala, and Trooper Tim Sova and EK-9 Kermit are all assigned to the Massachusetts State Police Bomb Squad. Detective Trooper Vienna Gildea and EK-9 Tessa hail from the Vermont State Police, while Officer John Bedard and EK-9 Hero are with the Endicott College Police Department.

All five teams completed 13 weeks of extensive training at the DFS Bridgewater campus and other locations. Each team also passed a final Odor Recognition Test led by State Police chemists before being certified as Explosive Detection Canine Teams by the New England State Police Administrators Conference. Command staff



from all involved agencies were in attendance to recognize their accomplishments.

## New Legal Quick Reference Guide

The Department of Fire Services' (DFS) legal team often receives requests for guidance from fire chiefs and other members of the fire service. To assist local departments, the DFS General Counsel's office has Quick Reference Guides that answer some of the most common questions. In June 2023, the General Counsel's office issued a new Quick Reference Guide on filing a criminal complaint for fire code violations.

M.G.L. c. 148A authorizes any local or state code enforcement officer empowered to enforce violations of the Building Code or Fire Code to give a written notice of a code violation as an alternative to initiating criminal proceedings. However, there may be times when criminal

proceedings are appropriate, such as when the fire department is unable to obtain compliance through the non-criminal ticketing or administrative process.

The *Filing a Criminal Complaint for Violation of the Fire Code and M.G.L. c. 148* Quick Reference Guide addresses the background, penalties, and process for seeking a criminal complaint in a district court. You can find this Quick Reference Guide and others covering a wide variety of fire service legal topics by visiting [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and searching for *Legal Quick Reference Guides*.



### Fire Investigation News, continued from page 15

April 14, 2023. On arrival, firefighters observed that the 2½-story, single-family home had sustained catastrophic damage, with heavy fire showing. One adult was transported from the scene with injuries that were not life-threatening. Tragically, an older adult was located deceased at the scene.

The explosion was investigated by the Berlin Fire Department, Berlin Police Department, State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit, and State Police assigned to the Worcester County District Attorney's office. They

determined that the explosion was caused when propane gas leaked from a recently replaced tank at the rear of the structure into the basement. Because of the damage to the home, the exact ignition source remains undetermined.

The investigation was supported by the DFS Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit, which issued a notice of violation to the Knight Fuel Company. The notice covered nine violations of the State Fire Code related to propane storage, permitting, container requalification, and notification requirements.



# Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Graduations



Class #311



Class #S32



Class #312



Class #BW25

## Career Recruit Firefighter Training

In the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program, students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Recruit Program, all students have met the national standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001 and are certified to the level of Firefighter I and II, and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operational Level by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications. Training is held at the Stow headquarters of DFS, the Springfield campus, and the Bridgewater campus.

### Class #311

On June 2, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #311 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 23 graduates represent the 12 departments of Beverly, Blackstone, Concord, Hudson, Lexington, Methuen, North Andover, Phillipston, Salem, Somerville, Waltham, and Westford.

### Class #S32

On June 9, 2022, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #S32 graduated at the Springfield Campus. The 26 graduates represent the 12 departments of Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Easthampton, Franklin, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Newton, Oxford, Pittsfield, Southbridge, Turners Falls, and West Barnstable.

### Class #312

On June 14, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #312 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 23 graduates represent the 9 departments of Amesbury, Chelsea, Devens, Gardner, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Peabody, Swampscott, Watertown, and Winchester.

### Class #BW25

On June 16, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #BW25 graduated at the Bridgewater Campus. The 24 graduates represent the 15 departments of Barnstable, Bridgewater, Chatham, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Eastham, Framingham, Hingham, Norwell, Peabody, Raynham, Rockland, Seekonk, Wellfleet, and Whitman.



### **Class #313**

On August 18, 2023, members of Career Recruit Firefighter Class #313 graduated at the Stow Campus. The 23 graduates represent the 15 departments of Beverly, Billerica, Devens, Falmouth, Foxborough, Hingham, Medway, North Reading, Saugus, Sudbury, Wayland, Westborough, Westford, Westwood and Woburn.

### **Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighting Training**

The Call/Volunteer Firefighter Recruit Training Program is unique in that it delivers a standard recruit training curriculum, meeting national standards, on nights and weekends to accommodate the schedule of firefighters in suburban and rural areas. Making the training more accessible means more firefighters can participate and allows them more time to practice training skills with instructors. The MFA, a division of the Department of Fire Services, has offered the program since 2003.

“First responders are on the front lines of any crisis and these newest firefighters are needed now more than ever,” said MFA Director Jeffrey P. Winn. “The rigorous training they’ve completed provides them with the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary to protect their communities safely and effectively.”

### **Class #104**

On May 23, 2023, members of Call/Volunteer Firefighting Class #104 graduated at the Bridgewater Campus of the Department of Fire Services. The 20 graduates represent the 11 fire departments of Acushnet, Dighton, Freetown, Hanover, Lakeville, Norwell, Onset, Plympton, Rehoboth, Swansea, and West Bridgewater.

### **Class #105**

On June 29, 2023, members of Call/Volunteer Firefighting Class #105 graduated at the Stow Campus of the Department of Fire Services. The 32 graduates represent the 19 fire departments of Blackstone, Bolton, Carlisle, Dover, Grafton, Harvard, Holliston, Hubbardston, Merrimac, Millbury, Millis, Millville, Paxton, Pepperell, Sherborn, Somerville, Townsend, Tyngsborough, and Weston.

### **Class #106**

On June 28, 2023, members of Call/Volunteer Firefighting Class #106 graduated at the Springfield Campus of the Department of Fire Services. The 23 graduates represent the 14 fire departments of Granby, Hampden, Lee, Leicester, Lenox, Northfield, Orange, Palmer, Russell, Shelburne Falls, Sunderland, Three Rivers, Ware, and Warwick.





# DFS Transitions

## New DFS Staff



### State Fire Marshal

State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine was selected by the Massachusetts Fire Service Commission to serve as the Commonwealth's top fire official following State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey's retirement. State Fire Marshal Davine stepped down from his position as chief of Northampton Fire Rescue and took office on July 31,

2023. Our new Fire Marshal has a long history with DFS that includes graduating from the Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program, Chief Fire Officer Management Training Program, and many courses in between. He also served as a technician on the District 4 Hazmat team and Joint Hazard Incident Response Team. Welcome, Marshal!

### Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Director

W. Scott Cluett came to the Department of Fire Services (DFS) on May 22, 2023, as our first Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) director. In April 2022, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security adopted the NFPA 3000 standard as the statewide framework for hostile event planning, response, and recovery. As DFS ASHER director, Scott is coordinating policy, planning, training, and support to local communities. He works with his counterpart at the Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee and represents the fire service to develop a fully integrated approach by law enforcement, fire/rescue, and other stakeholder personnel across the Commonwealth.



Prior to taking on his new role, Scott served as director of the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services. He has held a series of leadership and program management positions in emergency medical services, including director of mobile integrated health for EasCare Ambulance, critical care transport specialist for

Boston MedFlight, and senior paramedic with the FDNY Dignitary Protection Unit. Great to have you aboard, Scott!

### Fire Data & Public Education Unit Coordinator

Sheryl Hedlund started as the DFS Fire Data & Public Education Unit coordinator on July 3, 2023. As a key leader in the Fire Safety Division, she oversees the collection and use of data through the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) and the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (MBIRS), coordinates the Student



Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and Senior SAFE grant programs, and more. The effective use of data helps the fire service and the public understand hazards and take action to keep themselves and their communities safe.

Sheryl has a long history in fire and life safety education. Prior to joining DFS, she was the COVID-19 education liaison for the New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services, where she developed, modified, and implemented programs that helped residents navigate the unprecedented health crisis that the pandemic presented. Prior to that, she served with the New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's office for nearly a decade as a public education specialist, utilizing the very skills that have already made her a valued member of the team. Welcome, Sheryl!

## Retirements

### Former State Fire Marshal

Former State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey retired on August 4, 2023, after a 40-year career in the fire service. He came to DFS from the Uxbridge Fire Department, serving as Deputy State Fire Marshal from 2012 until 2016, when he was appointed Marshal. His tenure included confronting some of the Commonwealth's most serious crises, including the Merrimack Valley gas explosions and



*Continued on next page*

COVID-19 pandemic, and one of its greatest accomplishments—the reduction of child fire deaths to zero for more than two and a half years, the longest period on record. Congratulations and farewell, Marshal!

### MFA Deputy Director

**Joseph Klucznik** retired from a career in the fire service on June 2, 2023. As the deputy director of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy for more than a decade, Joe helped to maintain the steady pace of training for thousands of Massachusetts firefighters at every level of experience. His organizational and administrative skills and his

encyclopedic knowledge of the firefighter's vocation—gained through 20 years at the East Providence Fire Department, from which he retired as chief—made him a trusted, valued resource across the agency. We wish you the very best in this new chapter, Joe!



## 2023 License Examination Schedule

### Fire Safety Division

The Department of Fire Services' Fire Safety Division issues licenses, permits, and certificates of competency (licenses) to people and companies engaged in fireworks, blasting, explosives, special effects, cannon and mortar firing, commercial cooking exhaust system cleaning and inspection, hood cleaning, special hazard systems, portable fire extinguishers, marine fueling facilities and above ground tanks. Register for exams and see detailed information at [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.mass.gov/dfs). Search for *BPV Exams*. For questions contact the Boiler & Pressure Vessel Program at (978) 567-3780 or at [BPV.Exams@mass.gov](mailto:BPV.Exams@mass.gov).

### Licensing Status

To see the licensing status of an individual or company, visit the DFS License Look Up. Go to [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *DFS licensing*.

Examination Schedule	Examination Dates	Deadlines for Applications
FSD Exams	Exams Start at 10:00 a.m.	
Fire Suppression and Commercial Hood Cleaning	November 15, 2023	October 20, 2023
Cannon/Mortar, Fireworks and Special Effects, Blasting and Blasting R&D	October 18, 2023	September 22, 2023
BPV Exams	Exams start at 9:00 a.m.	
Oil Burner, Fireman & Engineer (all classes)	September 27, 2023 October 25, 2023 November 29, 2023 December 27, 2023	August 25, 2023 September 29, 2023 October 27, 2023 November 24, 2023





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Fall 2023

## Senior Fire Officer Forums

Sign up now for Fall Senior Fire Officer Forums. These forums give Massachusetts senior officers the opportunity to learn from national fire service experts without the time and expense of traveling to national conferences. All Massachusetts officers can attend. Fall Forums include:

October 5, 2023

### **Leadership Lessons Learned on the Line and Behind-the-Scenes Decision-Making at the World Trade Center**

*Dr. Dennis Onieal, Former Deputy U.S. Fire Administrator*

In a pair of two-hour presentations, Dr. Onieal will first deliver a practical exercise designed for fire officers or those who aspire to be one, and then explore the behind-the-scenes decision-making at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, and in the days that followed. Course code SFS.

November 2, 2023

### **Short Staffed Operations**

*Captain Arthur Ashley, Lexington (KY) Fire Department*

This class will look for ways to streamline short-staffed companies to make them better for the community that they protect. Through experience, knowledge, and some "street-smart" know-how, students will learn how to be much more efficient at performing their tasks. Strategies include placing those tasks in an order of priority to complete them, understanding coordination with other companies, using incident command, and more. Course code SFT.

December 2, 2023

### **Wildland Fires: Science, Ecology, and Management**

*Dr. Kennedy H. Clark*

This program will explore the fire environment from the perspective of wildland fire. Participants will be able to explain how fuels, weather, and topography influence wildland fire behavior and how these influences affect structural and wildland fire differently. Dr. Clark will be joined by representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) who will provide guidance on wildland firefighting strategies and tactics. Course code SFU.

Visit the DFS Learning management System at <https://hraccess-us.technomedia.com/mfa/> for more information and to register.