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STEPHEN D. COAN
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heads of Fire Department

FROM: Stephen D. Coan
State Fire Marshal

DATE: August 1, 2014

SUBJECT: **Special Effects in School Productions**

As we approach another school year, we suggest you meet with your public and private school officials to review the state law regarding the use of special effects in school plays and at special events. We have in the past, received inquiries about the use of flash paper and flash powder. This is a reminder that the use of flash paper and flash powder is prohibited by law, unless under the direct supervision of a person holding a current Certificate of Competency for Special Effects.

Because of the obvious hazards in working with special effects devices by unlicensed individuals, the Division of Fire Safety (Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit) is asking that you reach out to the schools in your community to alert them to the fact that any type of special effect in their school productions must be conducted by properly licensed and permitted individuals. School officials should closely review the plans for each production, and notify the fire department to determine permitting requirements, regardless of quantity of materials involved.

Further assistance is always available through the Division of Fire Safety on this and similar issues. Feel free to call the Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit or Technical Services at either (978) 567-3300 or in Western, MA at (413) 587-3181.