



Robert L. Quinn  
Commissioner

# State of New Hampshire

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

*Division of Fire Safety*

*Office of the State Fire Marshal*

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Sean P. Toomey  
State Fire Marshal

## **NH State Fire Marshal's Office – December 2023 Report**

*(For the period of November 1 through November 30, 2023)*

### **ADMINISTRATION:**

#### **Personnel:**

We currently have 2 part-time vacancies that we are actively recruiting for at this time:

Part-time Building Code Review Board Administrative Secretary

Part-time State Building Permit Coordinator

We welcome the following new staff to our office:

Michael Barry, Jr. joined in a full-time position as a Hazardous Materials Coordinator on November 17<sup>th</sup>

Michael Pinan joined in a part-time position as a Fire Protection Specialist on November 17<sup>th</sup>

Jane Sinotte joined in a full-time position as an Amendments Coordinator on December 1<sup>st</sup>

Steven Dunn joined in a full-time position as a Fire Protection Specialist on December 1<sup>st</sup>

#### **Legislation:**

The following bills are a summary of those we are currently monitoring:

HB 1059 Relative to the state building code

HB 1065 Relative to fire sprinkler requirements in residential buildings

HB 1215 Relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements and the regulation of building permits

HB 1332 Relative to prohibiting electric vehicles from parking in parking garages

HB 1352 Relative to firefighting personal protective equipment

HB 1386 Relative to prohibiting the disposal of lithium-ion batteries in solid waste landfill facilities, composting facilities, or incinerators.

HB 1387 Relative to revisions to the state building code

HB 1396 Relative to prohibiting municipal inspections of owner-occupied units of multi-unit housing

HB 1498 Establishing a state short term rental registry

HB 1510 Establishing a commission to identify barriers to and solutions for electric vehicle sales and use.

SB 430 relative to establishing a commission to study the impacts of electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and e-mobility devices on first responder response, the environment, building and fire codes, and life and safety property protection.

SB 437 Relative to local authority to amend the state building code.

There are still several LSR's that we are watching for language on and several bills that we will be updating on once we have more information.

*Saving lives and property through education, engineering and enforcement*

### **Board of Fire Control:**

The next Board of Fire Control meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2024. Everything is submitted to the legislature to update the State Fire Code to the 2021 editions of NFPA 1 & 101.

### **Foam Take-back Program:**

The contract for the foam take-back program was approved by the Governor & Executive Council at the end of June. DES has advised the project has been delayed due to trucking issues with the subcontractor. Additional information will be released as soon as we have it from DES.

### **Strategic Planning Initiative:**

Our office is working over the next several months to develop an updated strategic plan which will be part of an overall Department of Safety plan.

### **BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:**

In the month of November, we received 20 incident notifications resulting in 8 scene responses. The Bureau of Investigations currently has 20 open arson or suspected arson investigations.

### **New cases (synopsis of some of our cases are listed below):**

- On November 1, investigators responded to a motor-vehicle crash and fire in Derry that had resulted in a fatality later determined to be a trauma death, not a fire death.
- On November 4, investigators responded to a fireworks-related fire in Allenstown.
- On November 8, investigators and an IGL canine team responded to a structure fire in Fitzwilliam that was probably caused by an electrical issue.
- On November 13, investigators responded to Loudon to investigate a fire in a structure related to a barricaded subject incident. The cause of the fire is under investigation.
- On November 16, investigators responded to Merrimack to assist with the investigation of a fire in a storage container being used as a residence that resulted in burn injuries to the occupant. A space heater is suspected to have ignited bedding.
- On November 19, investigators responded to a burn injury in Rochester resulting from an accidental cooking fire.
- On November 20, investigators and an IGL canine team responded to a structure fire in Franklin that coincided with a barricaded subject and officer-involved shooting that resulted in the occupant's death. The cause of the fire is under investigation.
- On November 28, investigators assisted NH State Police with a homicide investigation in Goffstown. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

### **Youth Firesetter:**

- There were no youth fire setter assessments and 3 inquiries in November.

**Court:**

- FMO personnel presented a case to a Merrimack County Grand Jury for a Possession of Infernal Machine charge that occurred in Allenstown in 2021. Personnel also attended a sentencing hearing in Grafton County where the defendant failed to appear again, and a warrant was issued for his arrest.

**Training/Committees:**

- The BOI Bureau Commander attended an internal affairs training class at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia in November.
- Several members of the FMO attended law-enforcement accreditation training in November. This will be an ongoing practice in advance of obtaining national accreditation.

**BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:**

**State Building Permit System:**

We processed the following permits in the month of November:

- Building: 16
- Electrical: 9
- Plumbing: 3
- Mechanical Fuel Gas: 3
- Mechanical Non-Fuel Gas: 6
- Fire Protection: 2
- Fire Alarm: 1

**Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:**

We initiated 13 educational and 7 healthcare plan reviews, completed 241 inspections and 145 technical consults in the month of November.

**Variance Requests:**

We processed 11 variance requests in the month of November.

**Modular Building Program**

We completed 5 modular building inspections in the month of November.

**BUREAU OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION:**

**Hazardous Materials:**

In the month of November, we welcomed our new, full-time Hazardous Materials Coordinator Michael Barry. He is looking forward to getting out and meeting department and Haz Mat team members.

Hazardous Materials response, coordination and consultation is available through the on-call FMO supervisor.

We are available for PEAC Software training for fire departments. PEAC is used for documentation of Tier II facilities and chemical storage.

In the month of November, we provided training on the Suspicious Package Protocol to the Southeastern NH Haz Mat Team and provided technical assistance to the Franklin Fire Department during a gasoline incident. We also attended the Haz Mat Collaborative Meeting, the monthly PEAC Software Training and attended a planning meeting for the NH Haz Mat Conference. We continue to work with HSEM on the HMEP Grant applications.

### **Electric Vehicles and Lithium-Ion Batteries**

We have held several meetings to discuss the challenges of electric vehicle fires and lithium-ion batteries. The meetings have included representatives from the State Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Academy, HSEM, State Police, DMV, DES, DOT, Tow Association, Auto Dealers Association, Clean Energy NH, NH Chiefs of Police and the NH Association of Fire Chiefs. The next meeting is scheduled on January 16, 2024.

The International Code Council has established an ad-hoc group to evaluate building and fire code impacts from electric vehicles and lithium-ion batteries. The National Fire Protection Association Research Foundation is conducting a study. UL's Fire Safety Research Institute is also conducting a study. UL FSRI launched a lithium-ion battery educational outreach initiative in mid-November.

### **Incident Reporting:**

End of year is here! We ask that you please submit your 2023 data as soon as possible. Your commitment to ensuring we have great data to accurately show the fire problem in NH is greatly appreciated! If you are having difficulty sending your data or need assistance, please reach out to our team.

Did you know that we are transitioning away from accepting data via email attachments? If you are a department that submits via email attachment and have not yet created a Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) Account, please reach out to our team for assistance. Our goal is to have all departments submitting data via the SFTP on or before January 1, 2024.

Have you looked at your .err files lately? These are important files that you likely receive on a monthly basis that contain invalid incidents, a.k.a. error messages. We can help you through the process so that you can resubmit any invalid incidents and receive full credit. Please contact us at [nhfirs@dos.nh.gov](mailto:nhfirs@dos.nh.gov).

We continue to work with the team at the Fire Academy as departments implement the NHESR program, available free of charge, for incident reporting. If you are interested in having a presentation on the program or would like to request one, please email [NHESR@dos.nh.gov](mailto:NHESR@dos.nh.gov).

We released the latest edition of our NHFIRS Quarterly Newsletter and our brand new NHFIRS Incident Coding Guide, a resource we think will help those responsible for incident reporting – both new and veteran reporters! The guide covers topics such as:

- How to calculate property loss
- Plus-one codes
- Incident type scenarios
- Impact reporting has on communities – local, state and national

In May, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) announced their effort to launch a new fire information and analytics platform, known as the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), for the American fire and emergency services. Please find more information here: Media Advisory: USFA Announces New Fire Information Platform ([fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)). Once NERIS is developed and operational, USFA will work to migrate fire and emergency services departments onto the new platform. The legacy NFIRS will remain operational throughout the transition process so all fire and emergency services departments should continue to use the current NFIRS

data system and maintain status quo until migrated to the new platform. For more information, please check out this on demand webinar:

[Now Available: On Demand Access to Modernizing the U.S. Fire Data System - An Introduction to the National Emergency Response Information System | UL's FSRI – Fire Safety Research Institute](#)

A follow-up webinar, *Understanding the Proposed NERIS Data Framework*, was held on December 14, 2023 from 1:00-2:00PM.

If you have questions or you are having difficulties, please reach out to the NHFIRS data team using the following email: [NHFIRS@dos.nh.gov](mailto:NHFIRS@dos.nh.gov).

### **Outreach Events:**

In the month of November, members of the SFMO attended Safety Week at the Penacook Elementary School on November 13<sup>th</sup>. We visited grades K-5, sharing fire safety information and performing K9 demonstrations with each group. Members also participated in and handed out safety information at an evening Generator Public Safety Panel in Milford on November 17<sup>th</sup>. On November 29<sup>th</sup>, members of the SFMO provided general and campus specific fire safety information to students at Saint Anselm College.

### **Public Education:**

Are you familiar with the USFA's Fire and Life Safety Communicators Initiative? This initiative is a collaboration among the fire and emergency medical services to speak with "one voice" on fire and life safety. They believe in working together to present consistent messages. The theme for 2023 is "Step Up for Fire Safety" and takes a #BeKnowDo approach. The them for the month of December is Holiday Fire Safety.

Decorating homes and businesses is a long-standing tradition around the holiday season. Unfortunately, these same decorations may increase your community's chances of a fire.



Holiday Fire Safety Videos: <https://youtu.be/ixPiiw81nOY> and <https://youtu.be/26A-49Wb2F4>

For more information on this initiative, or to find outreach materials on the monthly topics (examples below), please visit: [Fire and Life Safety Communicators Initiative \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov)

### **Training Opportunities:**

Have you visited the FM Global Fire Service Learning Network online?

#### **Pre-Incident Planning for the Fire Service Certificate (New Training Opportunity)**

Pre-incident planning is the key to effective and efficient response to fires and other emergencies in sprinklered buildings. It can mean the difference between a routine suppression call and a total loss. The FM Global Fire Service Learning Network now offers a Pre-Incident Planning for the Fire Service Certificate for firefighters, fire officers, and executive officers to expand their pre-incident planning skillset. Complete four online programs to earn the certificate and 7 hours of continuing education credit. For More Information or the Begin the Program, please visit [Pre-Incident Planning for the Fire Service \(fmglobalfireservicerresources.com\)](http://fmglobalfireservicerresources.com)

#### **Upcoming SFMO Led Classes:**

##### **Application of the NH State Fire Code: A Scenario-Based Training**

**Thursday, January 11, 2024**

**6:00PM-9:00PM**

##### **Raymond S. Burton Training Academy**

*This session is designed to assist the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or his designee with the application of the state fire code to frequently asked questions and common violations encountered in the enforcement of NFPA 1 and NFPA 101. This class will include scenario-based instruction and allow participants to use their knowledge, and that of their peers, to discuss how they would approach certain situations.*

**Registration Link:** <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

##### **Application of the NH State Fire Code: A Scenario-Based Training**

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024**

**6:00PM-9:00PM**

##### **New London Fire Department**

*This session is designed to assist the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or his designee with the application of the state fire code to frequently asked questions and common violations encountered in the enforcement of NFPA 1 and NFPA 101. This class will include scenario-based instruction and allow participants to use their knowledge, and that of their peers, to discuss how they would approach certain situations.*

**Registration Link:** <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

##### **Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections**

**Wednesday, February 28, 2024**

**6:00PM-9:00PM**

##### **New London Fire Department**

*A review of the State Fire Code relative to NFPA 54: National Fuel Gas Code, NFPA 58: Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code, and NFPA 31: Standard for the Installation of Oil-Burning Equipment. This session will give the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or his designee a better understating of how to navigate these codes and standards.*

**Registration Link:** <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

Additional locations and offerings will be announced soon.

Please reach out to Deputy Stacey Dubois at [stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov](mailto:stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov) if you are interested in hosting one of these sessions, a past or future session, or would like to suggest a future training topic.