



JANUARY 2023 - VOLUME 1 - ISSUE 1

HOT TOPICS

The latest news and updates from the North Dakota State Fire Marshal's office

Bismarck Deputy Fire
Marshal Laura Toth,
Dickinson Deputy Fire
Marshal Kaylyn Lucas,
Fargo Deputy Fire
Marshal Kirstin Greaney-
Stanger, Minot Deputy
Fire Marshal Jess Sinerius
and Grand Forks Deputy
Fire Marshal Doug Pierre



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FIRE MARSHAL MUSINGS

Doug Nelson



Happy New Year to all! As we enter into a new year there are a number of new items that I would like to introduce to everyone. We look forward to these changes and are excited for what else 2023 will bring.

We have decided to separate the message from the State Fire Marshal's Office and the monthly fire report. This will allow us to expand on the update from our office into a more formalized newsletter approach. It will also allow us to expand and focus our monthly fire report on statistics. With the increase in reporting fire departments at 73%, we are excited to see what statistics we can report and what they show us about the fire problem in North Dakota.

In conjunction with the Bureau of Criminal Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol,

Tobacco and Firearms, we have launched a Fire Arson Strike Team. This team ensures that all agencies are notified of every fire investigation requested, and allows for earlier communication and coordination between the three organizations. Often this results in our ability to work scenes together from the start. This has been in practice since October and the State Fire Marshal's Office made it our official policy in November. This is a great team effort to try to make sure we conduct as thorough and safe of fire investigations as possible. Be aware that when you are requesting any of these organizations for a fire investigation response, you may see a team response as well. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns about how this team will operate with you on your fire scene.

Thanks to the staff that we are lucky to have, we hope that these changes will help to connect you with our office, highlight the services we provide, and give a better and more complete product to fire departments in the State.

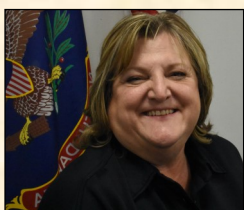


We have quarterly staff meetings that generally include a training. The pic on the far left is from a June training where we learned about fires resulting from road flares. The next two are from the September training where we learned about our sifter.



BURNING NEWS FROM THE CHIEF DEPUTY

Kimberly Ersland



Hello all! I am Chief Deputy Kimberly Ersland.

Although I have had the opportunity to work with many of you on fire investigations, inspections or plan review I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself. I have been with the Fire Marshal's Office for five years; three as Chief Deputy and the first two as Deputy Fire

Marshal in District 1 (Minot). Prior to coming to the Fire Marshal's Office, I was an investigator in the insurance industry and have had training and conducted fire investigations for over twenty years. If you have ever been

around me when conducting a fire investigation, you probably already know that I am one of the very lucky people whose passion is also their career.

Fire investigations were once considered 'junk science' or an 'artform'. This is no longer accurate, and the ND State Fire Marshal's Office conducts investigations based on fire science and utilization of the scientific method. Over the coming months, we look forward to sharing about how origin and cause investigations are conducted, discussing fire science, presenting case study examples, and delving into the standards required to be a fire investigator. We look forward to this journey with you and hope you enjoy it as much as we do.

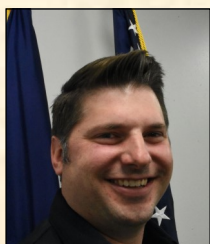


**A recent investigation
the SFM conducted**



ON THE ROAD WITH DEPUTY FIRE MARSHAL

Doug Pierre



My name is Doug Pierre, I have been with the State Fire Marshal's Office for 4 years. Previously I was a firefighter in the Air Force for the prior 15 years where I was a Captain. When I saw there was an opportunity to work with the State Fire Marshal's Office, I had to take it. I enjoy working with such a wonderful group of people that push each other to enhance fire safety for the residents of North Dakota.

Recently I got the opportunity to work with a local fire chief about a potential fire code issue in their local fire district. The issue was about a potential buyer of a structure wanting to change the use of the structure, changing the occupancy use. We discussed the updates to the structure to make it safe for the new usage of the structure, and to be compliant with the current International Fire Code. The potential buyer of the structure decided to go a different route instead of updating an existing structure to meet the required fire code and is now going to build a new structure that the North Dakota State Fire Marshal's Office will work on reviewing the building plans to ensure that the structure will be safe for the occupants.

I enjoy working with the local fire departments particularly during a fire investigation. I enjoy the interactions with the members of each department that I get to work with. Getting to take all the data available at a fire scene and start putting it together, is like taking a puzzle that has the pieces spread out in a room and gathering them up and start putting them together to see the final picture and sharing that experience with the local fire departments and their members.



Photo of arcing in a receptacle by Doug Pierre received an honorable mention at 2018 IAAI convention



ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT AREA

Marcy Ost



Happy 2023 and welcome to my corner of the world! I'm really excited you're here!

My position with the State Fire Marshal's (SFM) office does a lot of the things you would expect from an administrative assistant - answering phones, filing and coordinating calendars. I also do a lot of work with the "special programs" the State Fire Marshal's office

administers. Over the next several months you'll hear a lot more about those programs which consist of:

- Certificate of Existence
- Fire Safer Cigarettes
- National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)
- Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG)
- Property Loss Insurance Reporting (PILR)
- Delegation of Authority

Besides info about our long standing special programs my page of the newsletter will have information about our newest Special Program, Community Risk Reduction (CRR).

We're really excited to be delving into this important area of the fire service. The blue box on the right will have some suggested social media (Facebook for now) focuses and posts along with some suggestions for organizations to follow. Following these organizations serves two purposes: 1) they have content that might be of interest to you or you can share to boost your page interaction and 2) they might follow you back ;)

January Social Media Focus

The social media focus in January and February is severe weather along with Community Risk Reduction Week January 16-22.

Suggested posts:

- ◆ Reminders to clear outside vents and fire hydrants
- ◆ Never use oven or stove to heat your home
- ◆ Install and test carbon monoxide alarms
- ◆ Staff spotlights

⇒ Did you know USFA has a digital media library? Lots of useful stuff you should check out [here!](#)

Organizations you should be following:

- * ND Forest Service
- * ND Firefighter's Assoc.



FIRE DATA ASSISTANT ZONE

Lydia Citta



I am Lydia Citta, the North Dakota Fire Marshal's Fire Data Assistant. I work part time for the Fire Marshal and full time for the Bismarck Rural Fire Department as a firefighter/EMT. I have 13 years in the fire service and have worked with a few different reporting systems and seen them evolve.

If there is ever a question, don't hesitate to reach out to me. If I see something, I will reach out to you. I am truly here to be of any assistance I can be. If I do not have the answer, I will reach out to the people who would likely have the answer and get back to you.

My goal is to help fire departments have their incidents accounted for. You do the work; we want you to get the credit you deserve. My goal is to be the help any fire department and its members with their reporting needs. I am striving to help fire departments not to be stressed when they enter the incidents into their reporting system.

The State Fire Marshal's Office can only accept fires reported in a manner that is compliant and compatible with the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). There are four options available to meet this:

- Report fires directly into eNFIRS
- Report using a third party software that is compatible and current with NFIRS
- Report using State (Department of Forestry) contract with Emergency Reporting (ER)
- Report using the NFIRS paper form (acceptable but does not get entered into state or federal database)

Our office will release submitted incident reports into the NFIRS Database monthly.

If you report fires directly into eNFIRS (<https://www.nfirs.fema.gov/NFIRSWeb/login>)

For questions or support for ER (844)253-9337 or support@emergencyreporting.com.



**North Dakota Office of the Attorney General
State Fire Marshal's Division
2021 Fire Report
State Fire Marshal
Douglas Nelson**



If you haven't seen the 2021 annual report it can be found [here](#).

MONTHLY REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS

If you report fires directly into eNFIRS

Ensure reports are entered, complete and submitted.

In eNFIRS this means to SAVE a lot and make sure that your incident page says “successful” once complete and saved.

If no fires or incidents occurred in the previous month, please enter a “no activity report” by completing the following steps:

In eNFIRS, click on the “Incidents” Tab

Click “Create Incident” from the dropdown menu

Check/mark the “No Activity” box

Fill both the incident number and exposure fields with zeros.

The incident date field should be the last day of the month of no activity.

SAVE the incident

Now your department/District will count as actively reporting even though no incidents occurred.

If you report using a third party software compatible with NFIRS:

Ensure your reports are entered, complete and submitted.

Submit your incidents to nfirs@nd.gov in a .txt file that can be imported into eNFIRS.

We will report back to you with any discrepancies or notification of successfully completed import.

*FEMA releases NFIRS updates every year in October. It is a good idea to contact your third party software and make sure they are compliant with NFIRS updates.

If you report using the State provided contract with Emergency Reporting:

Ensure your reports are entered, complete and “reviewed” (i.e. the “Lock” Logo is GREEN). If not reviewed, they cannot be released to the SFM’s Office or imported into eNFIRS.

In Emergency Reporting, you MUST ensure that the “Lock” Logo is GREEN in order for your incident to be complete and available for our office to export.

• If reporting fires using the NFIRS paper form:

(acceptable but does not get entered into state or federal database)

Ensure all required modules on report are complete and legible.

Required modules for all fires include:

Basic Module

Fire Module (Wildland Module may be used with this for applicable fires)

Structure Fire Module

Civilian Fire Casualty Module

Fire Service Casualty Module

Mail or email completed paper forms to the State Fire Marshal’s Office.

Paper reports submitted without all required incident information will not be accepted.

For any questions on this process, reporting of fire incidents, or eNFIRS user account assistance, please contact the State Fire Marshal’s Office.