



HOT TOPICS

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

We're moving!





FIRE MARSHAL MUSINGS

Doug Nelson



We are moving!

Beginning July first, we will be located on the fifth floor of the Capitol building located within the Insurance Department's offices. Please allow a little extra patience with us as we transition to our new location. Our new official address will be:

ND State Fire Marshals Office
600 East Boulevard Ave.
Department 401 Fifth Floor
Bismarck, ND 58505

Each of our outlying offices will also be moving from their current locations into local fire departments. We appreciate the partnerships and willingness to work with our office to establish offices within their stations.

With the moves come additional positions that we are excited to fill. Our Deputy Fire Marshal position in Bismarck is still vacant, and we have two new DFM positions to fill. We are open to ensuring we find the best candidate for the position, but to start the process we are opening them up with the idea of offices located in Williston and Jamestown. If you or anyone you know is interested in becoming a Deputy Fire Marshal for the State of North Dakota, please pass this information along to them or direct them to our office. We are willing to train on the job and hope to have these positions filled prior to the winter.

In preparation for Independence Day and the time of year when we see the most fireworks, I want to share the State Century Code that covers this material. ND Century Code 23-15 can be found [here](#). A quick synopsis includes but is not limited to; fireworks may be sold during the period of June 27th – July 5th each year; retail licenses to sell fireworks should be made to the County Sheriff's; public displays of fireworks should be pre-approved by the local authority having jurisdiction fifteen days prior to the event. Please have a safe start to the summer and contact our office with any questions or concerns.





BURNING NEWS FROM THE CHIEF DEPUTY

Kimberly Ersland



As a really short spring season transitions into summer it won't be long before fireworks go on sale. The investigation of fires involving fireworks involves the same methodology as other fires but as you investigate it may be helpful to keep a couple of things in mind.

remains of pyrotechnic devices and the area they were lit. Weather conditions, especially wind direction and moisture levels, should be documented in conjunction with area of origin and where fireworks were lit. Interviews can help in data collection including the type of pyrotechnic, process of ignition, safety prior to and after lighting and method of disposal. Don't forget to talk to neighbors and others to help establish correct timelines of events.

NFPA 921 Chapter 27 states that "Fireworks provide means of ignition through sparks and flaming debris..." Those are the most common ignition sources due to pyrotechnics. Sparklers have temperatures ranging over 1000°F with some recorded as hot as 1800°F! (Side note, yes those hot sticks we put in children's hands are over 1,000°F! But I digress...). Sparklers are not common causes of fire (more burn injury) but they have a metal core that remains hot after the sparkler appears to be extinguished. Most pyrotechnics are cardboard or plastic and may have paper wrapping. After the fun, unburned debris is gathered up, placed in a receptacle, or piled for cleanup. The scenario creates ideal conditions for fire with the first fuel (packaging, wrapping, paper), ignition source (still hot embers or sparks) and ambient air for oxygen all present.

Other ignition sequences that are common with fireworks include the flaming debris igniting combustible materials. Hot debris landing on a roof or in a gutter can ignite dried leaves, twigs and/or branches or it can ignite vegetation and start a grass fire. It may not be an immediate ignition as smoldering may occur for some time before it transitions to flames. The person lighting the pyrotechnics may not be aware of the issue and leave the area before the fire is discovered.

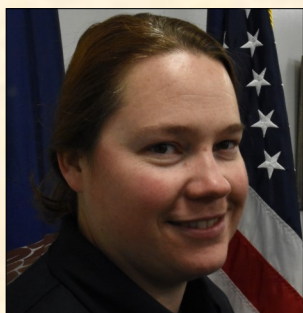
One of the interesting things about the investigation of pyrotechnic fires is the evidence of the fire cause may not be at the location the fire occurred. The remains of the flaming ember or spark can be destroyed by the ensuing fire. Where we often find the proof is in the area around the fire scene. If it is not on the property where the fire occurred make sure you have the proper authority to enter, search and investigate. Conducting a grid search around the fire scene is helpful in identifying





ON THE ROAD WITH DEPUTY FIRE MARSHAL

Kaylyn Lucas — District 3



With the beginning of summer, the 4th of July is right around the corner. The upcoming 4th brings the fireworks season. Fireworks are a cause of fires and injuries, so it is time to prepare and plan for fireworks.

Whether you are in the city or in rural areas, fireworks can be a hazard to the life safety of people and property. Statistics report that firework-related injuries are showing an upward trend and many fires started around the

holiday are started by fireworks. For facts and information regarding fireworks, visit NFPA's fireworks page [here](#).

To assist in managing fires related to fireworks during this season, a plan review of firework displays should be completed. The process begins with a plan submittal for review that includes the following:

- The location of the display
- The fireworks being utilized
 - * Sizes
 - * Types
 - * Number of each kind
- The fallout area

Information regarding fireworks can be found in NFPA 1123.

Considerations for the review should include the weather, the dryness of the area that the display would be located in, and the resources available during the show. Updated fire danger and/or burn ban information is very important. You can find that information [here](#).

It is important to have a policy in place and agreed upon by all parties relating to the cancellation of the show. A few suggestions to be included in the cancellation policy:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| • Fire Danger Level | • Burn Bans |
| • Drought | • High Winds |
| • Storm Warnings | * Speeds |
| * Thunderstorm | * Gusts |
| * Tornado | * Direction |

As with any plan review, an inspection should be completed of the display and fallout area. Check to make sure that what was submitted is what was set up and that the cancellation policy is in place. Have a Safe and Happy 4th of July!





ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT AREA

Marcy Ost



Back to our regularly scheduled (special) program!

The fourth in our series is the Fire Safer Cigarette program.

[NDCC 18-13](#) states "...a cigarette may not be sold or offered for sale in this state...unless the cigarette has been tested...". This means cigarette manufacturers must have their products tested for ignition propensity. NDCC 18-13 further mandates cigarette

manufacturers submit testing information and product packaging to the North Dakota State Fire Marshal (SFM) every three years for certification. There is an application fee of \$250 per brand.

This program has a lot of moving parts. First of all it's the only program we administer that brings in money so there is a deposit to be made. The Fire Marshal must review the packaging materials to verify the FSC markings. My part comes next. I enter the data, create an updated report that can be found [here](#), and finally we send a letter to the company letting them know that everything is complete.

I'm guessing what caught your attention is the \$250 per brand! If you've ever checked out the area behind the cashier in a convenience store you know there are a lot of cigarette brands out there. The trick is we can't use that money for anything besides the FSC program!

On another subject—did you know the NFPA has an "Educational Messages Desk Reference"? It's 48 pages of educational messages by topic on everything from college and university housing to youth firesetter to pet fire safety. Every section has several messages perfect for social media. It's where I get most of the "suggested posts" in the big blue box!

Go [here](#) to get your free download.

June Social Media Focus

Charge Lithium-Ion Batteries Safely

Lithium-ion batteries supply power to many kinds of devices including smart phones, laptops, e-scooters and e-bikes, e-cigarettes, smoke alarms, toys and even vehicles. If not used correctly, or if damaged, these batteries can catch on fire or explode.

Suggested posts:

- ◆ Keep lithium-ion batteries at room temperature.
- ◆ Only use the battery that is designed for the device.

⇒ USFA has lithium-ion outreach materials including graphics [here](#).

⇒ NFPA has a tip sheet [here](#).

Also happening in June:

National CPR and AED Awareness Week

National Lightning Safety Awareness Week

Wildland Firefighter Week of Remembrance

Pages you should consider following:

- * Local Government—City, Public Works, Public Health, Emergency Services, Police and Schools



FIRE DATA ASSISTANT ZONE

Lydia Citta



Reminder, please have all 2022 Incidents in no later than June 30. After this date they are no longer counted, and your work will not be accounted for. You all did the work; please get your incidents to get the credit you deserve. You may think to yourself, 'Why do I need to make a report? It was just a small incident, it doesn't matter. My little incident doesn't make a difference.' Let me tell you, it does make a difference. Seeing trends on matters such as ditch fires, false calls, or even bigger incidents such as wildland or vehicle fires all have a reason to be reported. Looking at areas that could potentially be having an issue with a fire setter could be caught sooner, or a region who are having small fires started due to farming incidents, could possibly help find a solution.

All these incidents have the potential to make a difference on making our communities safer. We need the data to see the trends to make a difference and that starts with you at the department reporting your incidents. Not to mention reporting helps your department get grants, making the argument for needing more personnel or a certain piece of equipment that your department has been needing. We are here to help your department get started or answer any questions you may have.

With the approaching summer, firework use tends to jump causing a plethora of fires. Last year in 2022, North Dakota had 36 fires reported that were due to fireworks. 33 of those fires were reported June-September. When reporting a firework incident, remember that fireworks are considered a 'heat source' not a fire cause or incident type.

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:

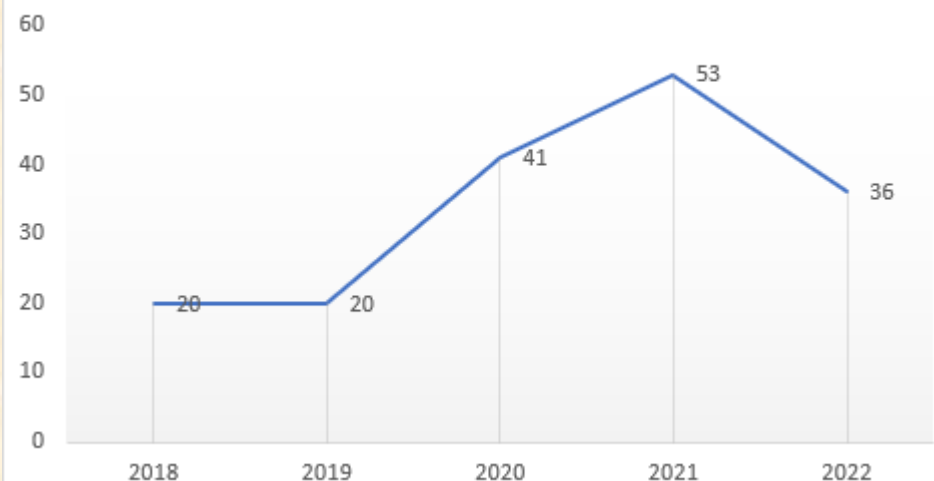
- Report fires directly into eNFIRS
- Report using a third party software that is compatible and current with NFIRS
- Report using State (Department of Forestry) contract with Emergency Reporting (ER)
- Report using the NFIRS paper form (acceptable but does not get entered into state or federal database)

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.

Firework Heat Source trend line



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.

RESOURCES

Links from this issue:

North Dakota Century Code 23-15 <https://www.ndlegis.gov/cencode/t23c15.pdf#nameddest=23-15-01>

North Dakota Century Code 18-13 <https://www.ndlegis.gov/cencode/t18c13.pdf#nameddest=18-13-01>

NFPA Fireworks page <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Seasonal-fire-causes/Fireworks>

Burn Ban Restrictions & Fire Danger Maps <https://www.ndresponse.gov/burn-ban-restrictions-fire-danger-maps>

Fire Safer Cigarettes program <https://attorneygeneral.nd.gov/licensing-and-gaming/licensing/tobacco>

NFPA Educational Messaging <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Teaching-tools/Educational-messaging>

USFA outreach material <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/gallery/home-hazardous-materials.html>

NFPA safety tip sheet <https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Public-Education/Resources/Safety-tip-sheets/LithiumIonBatterySafety.ashx>

One of the gif's USFA has
available



Stay fire safe when flying.

Remove spare, loose lithium batteries from your checked luggage and keep them with you on the plane.

