



PREVENTION

Highlights

Statewide Prevention Team 2018



In This Issue

Winter Fire Safety

Code Footprint: 2018

What to Expect When You're Inspected

PREVENTION Highlights

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 3
Edu-Note by Joel
Page 4
Winter Fire Safety
Page 5
Fire Doors in Healthcare Facilities Require “Qualified” Inspections
Page 6
Code Footprint: 2018
Page 7
Holiday Decorations Guidelines for Schools and CMS Facilities
Page 8
What to Expect When You’re Inspected
Page 9
Healthcare Laundry Fire Hazards
Page 10
Spot the Violation
Page 11
Christmas Tree Safety



Our Mission

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is dedicated to protecting lives and property from the hazards of fire or explosion and will promote prevention, educational and investigative activities to mitigate incidents, promote life safety and deter crimes.

The Fire Prevention Division

The goal of the Fire Prevention Division is to reduce the potential impact of fire and explosion hazards where people live, work and congregate (other than one- or two-family dwellings) through code enforcement, inspections, plans review, licensing, and public education.

Prevention Highlights

Prevention Highlights is published quarterly to provide facility managers and others with information necessary to operate fire-safe facilities.

Brenda McNorton.....Chief of Prevention

Joel Beckner.....Education Consultant

Jill Bronaugh.....Communication Manager

Connect with us!



firemarshal.ks.gov

800 SW Jackson
Suite 104
Topeka, KS 66612

(785) 296-3401

prevention@ks.gov



Edu-Note

by Joel



CONTACT JOEL

Phone: (785) 296-0659

Email: joel.c.beckner@ks.gov

This time of the year is always exciting with many things to do during all of the holidays. I greatly enjoy it, though, because I get the opportunity to spend more time with schools and help them with the fire code.

This year has been especially beneficial with the new changes to school drills. I was able to spend three days in the middle of November at the Greenbush Maintenance Forums with school maintenance directors talking all things fire. This is the second year in a row I have been able to participate in these forums, and the time there is always time well spent.

As the new year is coming closer, I am looking forward to getting out more and being able to do much more training with schools, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted livings and businesses. The great thing about this job is being able to devote my resources to helping those across this great state.

As I always say, if you need training or have any questions, please reach out to me by email joel.c.beckner@ks.gov or by phone at 785-296-0659.

-Joel Beckner, Education Consultant

Welcome, New Prevention Staff!



We are pleased to welcome **Billy Brewer**, who has joined our Prevention Division as a Deputy Boiler Inspector for Johnson County. Billy joins the Office of the State Fire Marshal after three and a half years as the maintenance supervisor at Arkansas City High School. He brings over 15 years of experience to OSFM.

Billy is in the process of moving to Kansas City, Kan. with his wife, Samantha. He enjoys buying, selling and trading at flea markets.

"I am happy to be moving closer to family with this new position," Billy said. "I hope to be a positive influence in my new community."

We are also pleased to welcome **Trevor Hallagin**, who has joined our Prevention Division as a Deputy Boiler Inspector for the North/Central Region in Kansas. Trevor comes to the OSFM from Trego County-Lemke Memorial Hospital, where he worked in general maintenance for 11 years.

Trevor lives in Wakeeney with his wife, Tammy, and their three dogs and two cats. They have one daughter and are expecting their first grandchild.

"I'm excited for this opportunity," Trevor said. "I really like working on boilers and hope my experience will make a good fit with OSFM."

Welcome, Billy and Trevor!





According to NFPA, space heaters accounted for 43 percent of U.S. home heating fires and 85 percent of associated deaths between 2011 and 2015. Space heaters can be very useful during the cold winter months, but obviously, they can be very harmful. If you are planning on using one of these devices, please follow these safety tips.

Portable Heater Safety Tips

- Look for a heater that is listed with a nationally-recognized testing laboratory. These heaters are tested to meet specific safety standards, and manufacturers are required to provide important use and care information to the consumer.
- Before using the heater, read and follow the instructions for its operation and maintenance.
- Never run the heater's cord (or any cord) under rugs, carpeting or furniture.
- Plug portable heaters directly into a wall outlet. Do not plug a space heater into a surge protector, multi-outlet box or extension cord. The high current flow can cause components to deteriorate.
- Do not leave the heater operating unattended or operating while sleeping.
- To prevent electrical shocks and electrocutions, always keep portable electric heaters away from water. Never touch an electric heater if you are wet.
- Do not use an electric heater as a dryer by placing clothing over it.
- Keep the heater in a safe working condition, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Replace missing guards, controls or frayed wiring at once. Never operate a defective heater.
- Do not place the heater where children might play near it or where people might trip over or bump into it.
- Place the heater on a level surface for stability.

The **Life Safety Code, NFPA 101, section 19.7.8** prohibits the use of portable space heaters in health care occupancies but provides the following exception: *Portable space heating devices shall be permitted to be used in non-sleeping staff and employee areas where the heating elements of such devices do not exceed 212 degrees Fahrenheit.* This requirement applies to all hospitals and medical office buildings.

Following these safety tips will help keep you warm, but not too warm!





Fire Doors in Healthcare Facilities Require “Qualified” Inspections

Fire door inspections in healthcare continue to be an issue of concern. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 80 says that all fire rated door assemblies must be inspected and maintained by a qualified person. NFPA 80 3.3.95 defines a qualified person as, “A person who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, professional standing, or skill, and who, by knowledge, training, and experience, has demonstrated the ability to deal with the subject matter, the work, or the project.”

How does one become qualified?

For facilities to have their own personnel qualified as inspectors, they can take the *NFPA 80 (2016) Inspection, Testing and Maintenance Requirements for Swinging Fire Doors* online training class. This class covers information regarding how fire doors work, and more specifically, the 13 items that must be checked when doing a fire door inspection.

If a facility decides to train their own employees to do the fire door inspections, they must make sure that the certificate(s) they receive for passing the NFPA 80 class are available and on hand for review. The name on the certificate(s) must be assigned to the individual that is performing the fire door inspections. Facilities cannot have a single certificate for all employees who want to do the inspection, but they must have a certificate for each individual person if there are multiple.

As always, if you have any questions regarding this information, please reach out to me at joel.c.beckner@ks.gov or 785-296-0659.

The online class, *NFPA 80 (2016) Inspection, Testing and Maintenance Requirements for Swinging Fire Doors*, can be found at <https://www.nfpa.org/Training-and-Events/By-type/Online-Training>.



CODE FOOTPRINT: 2018

Complying with state law to protect your occupants.



If your facility (other than a one- or two-family dwelling) is planning to build a new building or remodel your existing building, you will need to submit that information to our office. The Office of the State Fire Marshal will also require written notice from your licensed architect or engineer 30 days prior to the date on which 50 percent and 100 percent of the construction will be completed.

Our office has three Fire Protection Specialists (FPS) and one direct supervisor for the FPS to take care of the plan review process. Code footprints must be submitted to make sure the new building or remodeling plans are following the fire code.

A code footprint is a document which shows a structure owner's compliance with state law to protect occupants from the dangers of fire and explosions. It is also an architect's or engineer's written and graphic description of the intended life safety features in a public building.

It is important to note that our FPS have 30 days to respond to the request from the architect or engineer and will proceed through the requests in the order in which they are received.

If you have code consultation questions, we have a new form called "Code Consultation Form" that can be found at firemarshal.ks.gov/formzone. A FPS will respond to your code footprint question in a timely fashion, and just like reviewing the code footprint, these will be reviewed in the order in which they are received.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to reach out to me directly at 785-296-0659 or joel.c.beckner@ks.gov.



Holiday Decorations Guidelines for Schools and CMS Facilities



Holiday time means enjoying the festivities and gearing up for tinsel and tissue paper. While most of us enjoy decorating and getting into the holiday spirit, we have to remember what code does and doesn't allow in schools and healthcare facilities.

Schools often are having Winter formals and holiday dances, or elementary schools are preparing for classroom parties. Keep in mind when adding decorations to your classrooms or hallways that you keep safety a priority.

- Code does not allow any exit doors obstructed or blocked. This includes disguising the doors with decorations.
- Remember to keep sprinkler heads free from obstructions such as hanging items from them or the piping.
- Artwork should be limited on the walls of the corridors to no more than 20 percent of the wall area in Group E Occupancies.

In healthcare facilities, we often find that doors are disguised for memory care purposes. This is also a code violation. Deterring patients from going out exit doors is certainly a concern. However, being able to quickly exit in the event of a fire is priority in the Life Safety Code.



While code does not allow live trees in healthcare facilities, artificial trees can be used if they are fire retardant. (i.e. NFPA 701)

When we are trying to keep occupants safe inside our buildings, we have to remember that a little decoration can go a long way. Adding "fuel," such as combustible material to a fire, can make it burn longer and hotter.

Keeping decorations to a minimum helps to reduce this risk. Be aware that even applying a flame-retardant product to decorations can still pose an issue if the product is not used correctly or may not be the proper product to be used.

Be sure to keep the documentation available for the inspector to view.



What to Expect When You're Inspected

A major responsibility of the Office of the State Fire Marshal is fire prevention. One method employed to reduce the number of fires is by conducting fire safety inspections.

Our office conducts inspections in accordance with federal and state regulations. We want to work with you to ensure that if a fire were to occur, damage is limited as much as possible, and firefighters can operate efficiently and safely. Practicing fire prevention and addressing fire hazards is a great investment. In order to prepare for your inspection, we recommend reviewing the list of requirements below.

EXITS

- Aisleways are clear.
- Stairways and fire escapes are not used for storage and are easily navigated.
- Illuminated exit signs are well maintained and operating properly.
- Exit doors are kept clear and are in a serviceable condition.
- Emergency lighting is in operable condition.



FIRE/ALARMS/SPRINKLERS

- Fire alarm and smoke detectors are operable and have had their annual testing within the last 12 months.
- Fire sprinkler system is functional and all required inspection, testing and maintenance is current and documented.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

- Extension cords and temporary wiring is not used as source of permanent power.
- Extension cords cannot serve permanent appliances.
- Electrical panels are kept clear of storage and junction boxes are closed.
- Electrical panels have 36" clearance.
- Power strips are plugged directly into the wall outlet (not into an extension cord or other power strip).



FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- An adequate number of extinguishers are provided.
- Proper fire extinguishers are utilized for each occupancy type or hazard.
- Fire extinguishers are charged and in proper working condition.
- Fire extinguishers are properly installed and mounted, visible and accessible.
- Fire extinguishers have had an annual servicing.

MISCELLANEOUS

- No unsafe accumulation of rubbish/debris.
- Address is visible and is the proper size according to how far the building is from the road.
- Fire hydrants must be visible and kept clear from obstruction by at least 3 feet on all sides.
- There are no penetrations in ceilings and walls that would allow fire extension into other areas of the building.

REMEMBER

This is NOT a comprehensive list. Violations may exist which are unique to your facilities.





Healthcare Laundry Fire Hazards

Laundry rooms in facilities must be staffed when dryer is in use.

Laundry rooms in facilities are essential to the operation of a facility. However, they can also be a serious fire hazard.

Many fires occur each year in laundry rooms because of improper processing of chemical and grease laden rags. Chemical and grease laden rags have been known to build up heat and spontaneously combust due to the chemical reaction when put in dryers or confined spaces right after getting out of the dryer. It is always important for those rags be air dried only.

For healthcare facilities, whenever the dryer is in use, the laundry room must be staffed. In addition, the staff shall be knowledgeable in operating the dryer, and the contents of the dryer.

When it comes to home fire safety and dryers and washing machines, here is a great fact to know:

The leading factor contributing to the ignition of home fires involving clothes dryers is the failure to clean the dryer. That accounts for one-third of the dryer fires each year, according to NFPA.

With that in mind, do not use a dryer without a lint filter, and if you do have a lint filter, make sure you clean it out before or after each load of laundry.

As always, if you have any further questions, please reach out to me at joel.c.beckner@ks.gov or 785-296-0659.



SPOT the violations

A



B



C



D



A

B

C

D

Answers on Page 12



Christmas Tree Safety



As you deck the halls this holiday season, be fire smart. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow large very quickly.



PICKING THE TREE

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.



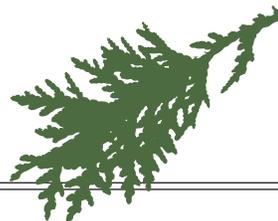
PLACING THE TREE

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.



LIGHTING THE TREE

- Use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

FACTS

- ! **One** of every three home Christmas tree fires is caused by electrical problems.
- ! Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes roughly **one in every four** of the fires.



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards





HOLIDAY SAFETY MESSAGE: EXTENSION CORDS

With the holiday season upon us, here are some dos and don'ts for extension cord usage to keep in mind:

DO:

- Check cords for damage before use;
- Make sure the cord is UL Listed; and
- Always unplug extension cords when not in use.

DON'T:

- Don't use a cord outside that is marked for indoor use;
- Don't daisy-chain (plug one cord into another);
- Don't run extension cords through walls, floors, ceilings or doors;
- Don't cover a cord with rug or carpet; and
- Don't overload the extension cord.



Answers to Spot the Violations (page 10)

A. Smoke alarm covered from working; B. Exit passageway fully blocked; C. Extension cord frayed; D. Nursing home exit doors disguised from being seen as an exit.



Working smoke alarms save lives!

Free Smoke Alarm Program

GetAlarmedKS.org