



# The **TRUMPET**

## **Holiday Fire Safety**

### **In this Issue...**

- **2020 Tom McGaughey Award**
- **Schools & Covid-19 Hazards**
- **Workplace Fire Safety**

## FROM THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

As we head into the busy holiday season, I want to remind Kansans not only to follow our holiday and winter fire safety tips in this issue of *The Trumpet*, but to share them with your family, friends and communities. Being aware and using simple precautions can make all of the difference when it comes to protecting lives and property.

I was honored to present the 2020 Tom McGaughey award to Lt. Frehe with the Topeka Fire Department for his heroic actions at a house fire which saved the life of a two-year old. He and his crew remind us of the impact we have on our communities as first responders.

As always, thank you for reading *The Trumpet*. We hope you will enjoy it and share it with friends, family and co-workers. We also share many of our safety messages and agency information on our social media pages. So please like and follow us at the links below. If you have any ideas or proposals that could benefit our mutual efforts to create a safer Kansas, please contact me at [doug.jorgensen@ks.gov](mailto:doug.jorgensen@ks.gov).

**Have a safe and joyous holiday season!**



Doug Jorgensen  
State Fire Marshal

### STAY CONNECTED



## CONTENTS

• Hot Spots @ OSFM	3	• Schools and Covid-19 Hazards	9
• Tom McGaughey Award	4	• Thanksgiving Fire Safety	10
• Winter Holiday Fire Facts	5	• Fire Hazard Recalls	11
• Heating Safety	6	• Christmas Tree Safety	12
• Workplace Fire Safety	7		

# HOT SPOTS @ OSFM

## OSFM Welcomes Three New Employees



Alex Lederer

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is pleased to welcome Alex Lederer, who has joined our Information Technology Division as the Technology Support Consultant. He comes to OSFM from the Kansas Department of Children and Families, where he worked as a network specialist. He brings over seven years of IT experience to OSFM.

Alex lives with his wife, MiKayla, and two sons in Topeka. He enjoys golf, working out, mixed martial arts and spending time with his family.

“I am looking forward to being a part of a collaborative work environment that is dedicated to making the lives of Kansans easier and safer,” Alex said.

OSFM Prevention Division welcomes Seth Hegwald and Jason Mowery. Seth comes to us as a Fire Prevention Inspector for Chase, Geary, Lyon, Marshall, Morris, Nemaha, Riley and Wabaunsee counties. Seth comes to OSFM from Chanute Fine Tube, where he worked on boilers.

Seth lives in Humboldt and has three dogs. He enjoys hunting and fishing in his spare time.

“I chose to take this position to put my college degree to use,” Seth said. “I am excited to have this new opportunity.”

Jason comes to us as a Fire Prevention Inspector for the counties of Graham, Rooks, Osborne, Smith, Trego, Ellis, Russell, Lincoln, Ness and Ellsworth. He comes to OSFM from after working as an Agricultural Loan Officer.



Jason Mowery

Jason lives with his wife, five children and four dogs in WaKeeney, and they are soon expecting their sixth child. He enjoys construction, shooting and off-roading.

“I’ve always had a desire to work with a fire department or agency and felt this would be a great opportunity,” Jason said.

Welcome, Alex, Seth and Jason!



Seth Hegwald



### OUR MISSION

The agency’s mission is to reduce the deaths, injuries, and property losses of Kansans through inspection, enforcement, regulation, investigation, education, hazardous material and search & rescue incident responses.

### OUR PURPOSE

To reduce the deaths, injuries, and property losses of Kansans through:

- Inspection
- Enforcement
- Plans Review
- Fireworks and Explosives Regulation
- Investigation
- Hazardous Material Incident Mitigation
- Public Education
- Coordination of Search and Rescue Efforts

### The TRUMPET

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For a list of OSFM current job openings visit

<https://firemarshal.ks.gov/Jobs.aspx>



# Topeka Firefighter Earns Tom McGaughey Award

## *Topeka Firefighter receives 2020 Tom McGaughey Fire Service Award for Heroic Actions*

Kansas State Fire Marshal Doug Jorgensen awarded a Topeka Firefighter with the 2020 Tom McGaughey Fire Service Award at the Topeka City Council meeting Tuesday. Each year, the Office of the State Fire Marshal joins with the Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs and Kansas State Firefighters Association to honor a firefighter or team of firefighters for heroic actions above and beyond the call of duty.

After being nominated by Topeka Fire Chief Craig Duke, Lieutenant Matthew Frehe, was selected for this year's Tom McGaughey Fire Service Award for his heroic actions, saving the life of a two-year-old child at a house fire in Topeka on the afternoon of Aug. 4, 2020.

"It is an honor to be able to recognize Lt. Frehe and the Topeka Fire Department," Jorgensen said. "Firefighters put their lives on the line every day, without hesitation, to save the lives of strangers. This award is our way of saying thank you. Your sacrifice makes a difference."

The Topeka Fire Department was dispatched to a reported structure fire located at 710 SW Polk Street. The crews were informed that there was fire coming from the second floor of a two-story residential structure. Callers were also informing dispatchers that there may be a child trapped on the second floor of the structure.

An occupant of the house informed Captain Brian Ginter and Lt. Frehe that her two-year-old daughter was still inside the burning structure in a bedroom located on the second floor. Capt. Ginter and Lt. Frehe immediately went to side of the structure where the mother showed them the window of the bedroom. Utilizing a ladder that neighbors had tried to use to enter the second story bedroom window, Lt. Frehe, without hesitation, ascended the ladder and entered the smoked-filled bedroom in an attempt to locate the child. Lt. Frehe made a coordinated search of the bedroom in an attempt to locate the child. As he crawled through the bedroom in search of the child, he located what seemed to be bunk beds. Lt. Frehe, unable to locate the child on the bunk beds, was about to move further around the room when he found the child on the floor of the room. Lt. Frehe carried the lifeless body of the child back to the bedroom window and was able to make his way out the window, where he handed the child to personnel on the ground. The lifeless, non-breathing child was tended to by medical personnel on the scene and was transported to Stormont Vail Hospital. The child was



**Tom McGaughey**  
Wichita Fire Chief  
1961-1968

The award was adopted in 1971 in memory of Wichita Fire Chief Tom McGaughey who perished in a fire, along with three others (Chief Fire Inspector Merle O. Wells, Firefighter Jimmy L. Austin and Firefighter Dale J. Mishler) at the Yingling Auto Dealership on November 21, 1968.

It is to be presented each year at the Fire Chief's Conference to the fire department and the firefighter or firefighters whose bravery and courage went above and beyond the call of duty.

*Story continued on page 8...*

# Winter Holiday Fire Facts

## Christmas trees

- Between 2013 and 2017, U.S. fire departments responded to an average 160 home fires that started with Christmas trees per year. These fires caused an average of three deaths, 15 injuries, and \$10 million in direct property damage annually.
- On average, one of every 52 reported home fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in a death, compared to an average of one death per 135 total reported home fires.
- Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 44% of home Christmas tree fires.
- In one-quarter (25%) of the Christmas tree fires, some type of heat source, such as a candle or equipment, was too close to the tree.
- One-fifth (21%) of Christmas tree fires were intentional.
- Roughly three-quarters of Christmas tree fires occurred in December or January.
- Two of every five (39%) home Christmas tree fires started in the living room.

## Holiday decorations

- U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 780 home structure fires per year that began with decorations, excluding Christmas trees, in 2013-2017. These fires caused an annual average of three civilian fire deaths, 34 civilian fire injuries and \$12 million in direct property damage.
- Nine percent of decoration fires were intentional.
- The decoration was too close to a heat source such as a candle or equipment in more than two of every five (44%) fires.
- One-fifth (21%) of the decoration fires started in the kitchen. Sixteen percent started in the living room, family room or den.
- One-fifth (20%) of the home decoration fires occurred in December.



## Candles

- On average, 22 home candle fires were reported each day between 2013-2017.
- Three of every five (60%) candle fires started when something that could burn, such as furniture, mattresses or bedding, curtains, or decorations, was too close to the candle.
- Candle fires peak in December. January ranked second. Eighteen percent of December candle fires started in the living room and 8% started in the dining room compared to 14% and 3% for those areas during the rest of the year.
- The two peak days for candle fires were Christmas and Christmas Eve.

## Holiday cooking

- Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve.
- Cooking equipment was involved in one of every five (19%) home decoration fires. This can happen when a decoration is left on or too close to a stove or other cooking equipment.

# Heating Safety

There is something about the winter months and curling up with a good book by the fireplace. But did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions you can prevent most heating fires from happening.

## BE WARM AND SAFE THIS WINTER!

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet (one metre) away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Have a three foot (one metre) "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month.



## Heating Equipment Smarts

**Install** wood burning stoves following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation. All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

**Install** and maintain CO alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. If you **smell** gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.



## FACT

Half of home heating fires are reported during the months of **December, January, and February.**



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# Workplace Fire Safety

Every year in the United States there are 17,000 office and store fires that cause over \$800 million in direct property damage.

Here are some tips to help prevent workplace fires, keep workers safe and keep businesses open.

## Employees should:

- Eliminate fire hazards:
- Check for damaged or overloaded electrical outlets, cords and cables.

- Keep anything that can burn away from electrical equipment.
- Never leave portable heating devices unattended.

## Employers need to prepare for emergencies:

Make sure smoke alarms and fire sprinklers are properly installed and working.

Post clear fire escape plans on every level of a building.

Teach employees about exit locations, escape routes, and fire protection equipment.

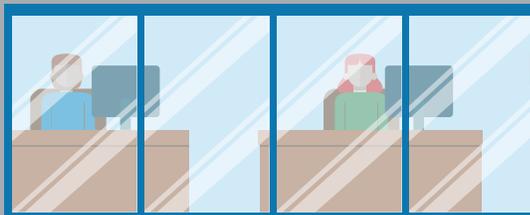
## If there is a fire:

Call 911.

Notify co-workers of the fire.

Never use the elevator. Walk, don't run, down the stairs.

If you can't evacuate, remain calm. Seal door gaps with jackets and wait at the window.



For more information on fire safety in a variety of workplaces, visit [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

Visit [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov) for more free fire-safety resources.



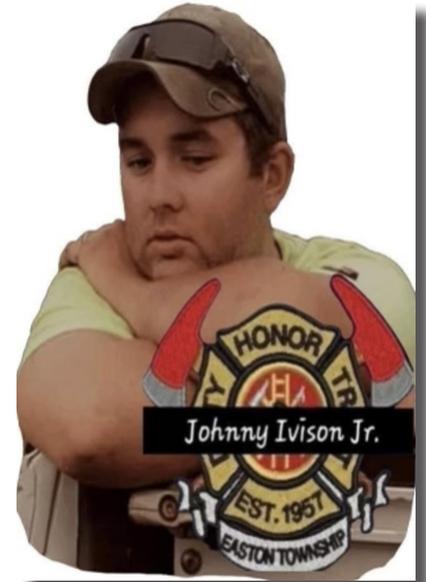
*In Memory of*  
*Firefighter Johnny D. Ivison*  
*January 18, 1997 - November 8, 2020*

The Office of the State Fire Marshal would like to offer our sincerest condolences to the family of firefighter Johnny D. Ivison, Jr., 23, Leavenworth, who passed away Sunday, Nov. 8, 2020. He was a firefighter for the Easton Township Fire Department.

Johnny was born on January 18, 1997 in Leavenworth, Kansas to Johnny Deel Ivison Sr. and Naomi Ann Guliford. He was raised in Leavenworth, Kansas and graduated from Pleasant Ridge High School in 2015. He had worked for the Kansas Department of Transportation full time and Grease Monkey part time. He faithfully served the citizens of Easton Township for two years. He married his high school sweetheart Tiffanee Trexler on June 28th, 2015 in Leavenworth, Kansas. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, and serving his community.

Johnny is survived by his wife, Tiffanee Ivison of Leavenworth, Kan., and his two sons, Timothy Lee Ivison (6) and Caleb Deel Ivison (1). He is also survived by his parents, John (Jennifer) Ivison and Naomi (Earl) Guliford, a brother, Michael Ivison, a sister, Meaghan Ivison, a stepbrother, Andrew Snyder, a stepsister, Keyara Guliford, his grandparents, and several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Johnny is preceded in death by his uncle Marvin Biddle, cousin Joanie Nicks, and grandfather Charles Ivison.



**(Tom McGaughey Award)**  
**...Continued from page 4**

resuscitated and remained in the hospital before being released eight days later.

"The professionalism and teamwork Lt. Frehe and the crew showed that day was amazing," Duke said at the presentation of the award at the City Council meeting. "I am so proud of Topeka Fire Department and everything they do every day."

The Tom McGaughey Fire Service Award recognizes exemplary accomplishments and acts of heroism by firefighters and other persons at fire-related incidents in Kansas. The individual or team is recognized for their acts above and beyond their basic duties and responsibilities, and for exemplifying the finest traditions of the fire service. The award is named in memory of Wichita Fire Chief Tom McGaughey who perished in a fire, along with three others (Chief Fire Inspector Merle O. Wells, Firefighter Jimmy L. Austin



State Fire Marshal Jorgensen (center) with Lt. Frehe (right) and Captain Ty Christian (left) at the Nov. 10 Topeka City Council Meeting.

and Firefighter Dale J. Mishler) at the Yingling Auto Dealership on November 21, 1968.

"Thank you so much," Topeka Mayor Michelle De La Isla added, "for putting your life in danger so others don't have to."

# Schools & Covid-19 Hazards

As we enter into this new school year, there are so many concerns pertaining to safety, compliance and Covid-19. We have had many questions filter through our office in regards to schools and how to handle certain situations.

## Door Stops

Propping open doors with door stops is against fire code. The guidelines from the CDC, the Governor, and the Department of Education have provided ways to protect students and staff from the spread of germs during this pandemic. These precautions include wearing face masks, cleaning hands frequently, and additional classroom cleaning and sanitation. The Office of the State Fire Marshal will not be allowing doors to be propped open because of the pandemic.



## Drills

The tornado drills are required in September and March. If you have no in-person classes in process during those months you will not need to do the tornado drills. If you have students and staff in your buildings during those two months, conducting the tornado drills one class at a time would be acceptable.

The fire alarm drills will need to be accomplished when and if you have staff and students in your buildings. These can also be done one classroom at a time, but every class needs to be documented if you chose to do it this way.

The three crisis drills are very flexible and can be accomplished with just staff, or even with an online presentation of some type. The legislature left it up to the individual districts to determine what their crisis drills looked like.



# Thanksgiving Safety

The kitchen is the heart of the home, especially at Thanksgiving. Kids love to be involved in holiday preparations. Safety in the kitchen is important, especially on Thanksgiving Day when there is a lot of activity and people at home.



- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food.
- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks or bags.
- Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet.
- Never leave children alone in room with a lit candle.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

## Did you know?



Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment.

**Have activities** that keep **kids out of the kitchen** during this busy time. Games, puzzles or books can keep them busy. Kids can get involved in Thanksgiving preparations with recipes that can be done **outside** the kitchen.



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# Latest Fire Hazard Recalls from CPSC

**Name of product:**

Ring Video Doorbells (2nd Generation)

**Hazard:**

The video doorbell's battery can overheat when the incorrect screws are used for installation, posing fire and burn hazards.

**Remedy:**

New Instructions

**Recall date:**

November 10, 2020

**Units:**

About 350,000 (In addition, about 8,700 were sold in Canada)



**Name of product:**

Oakmont LP fire pit tables

**Hazard:**

An incorrectly installed burner kit hose can melt and ignite, posing a fire hazard.

**Remedy:**

Replace

**Recall date:**

November 10, 2020

**Units:**

About 10,900



**Name of product:**

Electric Throw Heated Blankets

**Hazard:**

The recalled blankets can overheat, posing fire and burn hazards.

**Remedy:**

Refund

**Recall date:**

November 12, 2020

**Units:**

About 7,050



**Name of product:**

SONOMA Goods For Life branded three-wick candles

**Hazard:**

The candle's high flames can ignite the surface of the wax or cause the glass to break, posing fire and burn hazards.

**Remedy:**

Refund

**Recall date:**

November 10, 2020

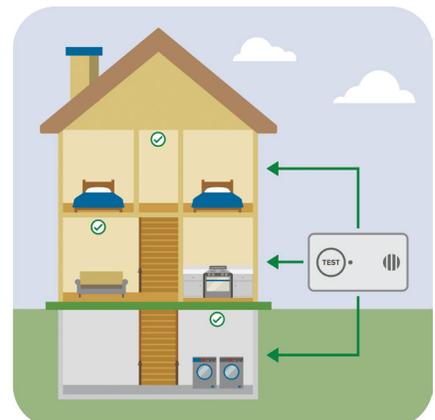
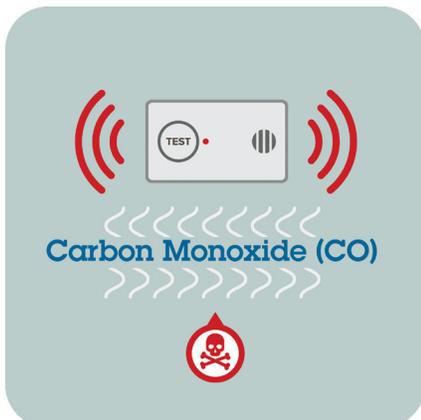
**Units:**

About 512,000



For more information on these recalls and others and to sign up for direct recall notifications, please visit [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

**November is Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month! Install carbon monoxide alarms outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home.**



# 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.



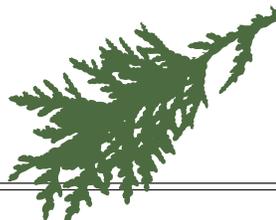
## PLACING THE TREE

- 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

- ! More than **one of every four** 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 **one in every four** of the fires.



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