The TRUMPET

A publication from the Kansas Office of the State Fire Marshal | Winter 2016

Wichita Firefighter Honored for Heroic Actions

Home Heating Safety • Fireplace Safety • The Miracle of Fire Safety Inspections

Kansas Search & Rescue Program • Rose Rozmiarek Retires • Senior Fire Safety

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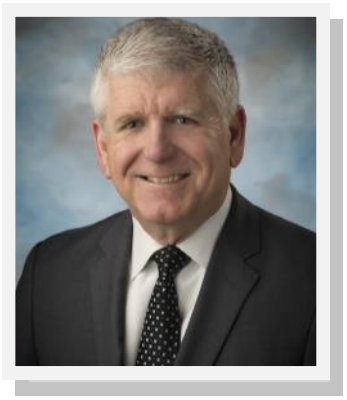
STAY CONNECTED

FROM THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Happy New Year!



With a New Year comes the prospect of a new legislative cycle. As always, I enjoy hearing ideas or suggestions from our Kansas Fire Service. If you have any ideas or proposals that could benefit our mutual efforts to create a safer Kansas, please contact me at doug.jorgensen@ksfm.ks.gov.

As Kansans attempt to keep themselves warm during these colder months, our office wants to be sure they are keeping fire safety in mind. In this issue of *The Trumpet,* you will find good information on how to stay warm *and* safe. In 2014 alone, 120 residential fires were heating-related, and we always see a marked increase in fires during the colder months. Together we can change that trend for 2015 and the future.

Thank you for reading the Winter issue of *The Trumpet.* We recently came across the original agency newsletter when it was renamed as *The Trumpet*—way back in 1981. It looks quite a bit different now than it did 35 years ago, but its focus remains on giving Kansans helpful information on our agency and ways to stay safe from fire, explosions, and hazardous chemicals.

We hope you'll enjoy this issue and please share it with friends, family and co-workers.

Sincerely,

Doug Jorgensen
Kansas State Fire Marshal

Cover Photo credit:

Wichita Eagle

HOT NEWS

Welcome to Randy Hill, new Search & Rescue Coordinator

Randy Hill has joined the staff of OSFM's Emergency Response Division as Search & Rescue Coordinator. In May of this year, the Office of the State Fire Marshal officially became the coordinating agency in charge of the Kansas Search and Rescue response program. Randy will be the point person for this program, working closely with Division Chief Hank DuPont to ensure the state is adequately prepared to respond to any kind of disaster in which search and rescue efforts are required. Read his article about the challenges ahead on page 12.

Full article

Scott Sinclair, Fire Prevention Inspector, Retires

Scott Sinclair, Fire Prevention Inspector, is retiring after serving the past 5 years with OSFM. He previously was employed by University of Kansas. Most recently, Scott has been covering a region of Northeast Kansas area which included Johnson and Douglas counties, among others. Best wishes Scott!

Welcome to Kip Richardson, new Fire Prevention Inspector

OSFM is pleased to welcome Kip Richardson as its new Fire Prevention Inspector, covering a multi-county region circling his hometown of Augusta.

Kip brings with him vast experience with the fire service. He joins our staff following a 32 year career with Boeing in Wichita, where he served as a manager with Security and Fire Protection Services. Full article.

BY THE NUMBERS

There were 811 cooking fires last year, with the busiest cooking day of the year being February 4—in the midst of a 72 hour snow and ice storm!

January accounts for 12-15% of residential home fires.

January is the busiest month for electrical and smoking fires.

20% of electrical-related fires occur in January.

16% of smoking fires occur in January.

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

EDITOR

Kevin Doel
Public Information Manager
kevin.doel@ksfm.ks.gov
785-296-3403

SUBMISSIONS

For information on receiving the State Fire Marshal Trumpet or to submit your meeting notices, training announcements, articles, photos, or other information, please contact Kevin Doel Photos should be submitted as a .jpg or .tif attachment to an email. All materials are due by the 20th of the month prior to publication.

CONTACT US

Office of the State Fire Marshal
800 SW Jackson, Suite 104
Topeka, KS 66612-1216

Be warm and safe with these Home Heating Safety Tips

As Kansans attempt to keep themselves warm during these colder months, our office wants to be sure they are keeping fire safety in mind.

In 2014 alone, 120 residential fires were heating-related, and we always see a marked increase in fires during the colder months. Since 2012, we have seen a drastic increase in reports of residential fires caused by heating in Kansas. Together we can change that trend for 2015 and the future.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), four out of five heating fire deaths (81%), more than two-thirds of the injuries (70%) and half of the property damage (51%) involve stationary or portable space heaters, including wood stoves.

To be warm and safer from fire hazards this winter, we offer these tips:

- Select heating equipment that is rated by the manufacturer for the size of space you intend to heat.
- Have any installation done by a professional, if possible, and make sure all fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside.
- Keep combustibles, such as blankets, paper, walls, etc., at least three feet away from your heating equipment. Interior walls were the top point of ignition for residential fires last year.
- Do not leave portable heaters unattended. Turn them off when going to bed.
- Be sure to plug portable heaters directly into the outlet and not into power strips or extension cords.
- Have your heating equipment inspected and cleaned before heating season.
- Always use the right kind of fuel specified by the manufacturer for fuel burning space heaters.
- Cooking appliances should not be used to heat a home.
- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping room and on every level of the home. Test them once a month.

These heating tips are equally important to apply to outbuildings and detached garages, where heaters are plugged in during work in the colder months. These buildings often do not have smoke alarms and store highly combustible materials, making them even more dangerous.

9 Fireplace Safety Tips

A nice roaring fire in the fireplace can add warm and ambience to your home in the Winter, but can also increase the chances of a home fire. Please follow these tips so you can enjoy your fireplace safely:

1. Only burn dry, cured wood logs that have been split, stacked, and dried for eight to 12 months. Cover your log pile on top, but leave the sides open for air flow.
2. Burn firewood and only firewood! Crates, lumber, construction scraps, painted wood, or other treated wood releases chemicals into your home, compromising air quality. Log starters are fine for getting your wood fireplace going, but they burn very hot; generally only use one at a time.
3. Close the damper when not using your wood fireplace to prevent warm indoor air—and the dollars you're spending to heat it—from rushing up the chimney.
4. Keep bi-fold glass doors open when burning a fire to allow heat to get into the room. On a factory-built, prefab wood fireplace with a circulating fan, keep doors closed to prevent unnecessary heat loss.
5. Have a chimney cap installed to prevent objects, rain, and snow from falling into your chimney, and to reduce downdrafts. Caps have side vents so smoke escapes.
6. Replace a poorly sealing damper to prevent heat loss. A top-mounted damper that also functions as a rain cap provides a tighter closure than a traditional damper for your wood fireplace.
7. Install carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors in your house near your wood fireplace and in bedroom areas.
8. Get your chimney cleaned twice a year if you burn more than three cords of wood annually.
9. To burn a fire safely, build it slowly, adding more wood as it heats. Keep the damper of your wood fireplace completely open to increase draw in the early stages. Burn the fire hot, at least occasionally—with the damper all the way open to help prevent smoke from lingering in the fireplace and creosote from developing.

The Miracle of Fire Safety Inspections!

A major responsibility of the Office of the State Fire Marshal is fire prevention. One of the most important functions of our office to reduce the number of fires is by conducting fire safety inspections.

Our goal with these inspections is simple: to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and the amount of property loss caused by fire.

Through the inspection process, we identify problem areas as set by federal and state regulations, National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) 101 Life Safety Code, Uniform International Building Code and Uniform International Fire Code. By working with facility managers and business owners to identify potential fire risks and fixing those problems, if a fire were to occur, damage should be limited as much as possible and firefighters will be able to operate efficiently and safely.

Practicing fire prevention and addressing fire hazards is a great investment!

Our inspectors, located throughout the state, conduct these annual inspections in schools, preschools, home daycares,

colleges, restaurants, hotels, hospitals, nursing homes and many other facilities where people live or congregate. Altogether, our inspectors annually conduct inspections in over 7,000 facilities across the state!

Our inspectors conduct 7,000 inspections across the state annually

We also work with many fire departments who wish to conduct their own fire safety inspections in their own jurisdictions (they must be in a city classified as 1st or 2nd class city to conduct their own). When we add to our total the number of inspections conducted by local fire departments, the total of facilities inspected is over 1,500!

After the inspection, our inspector provides the facility manager or business owner with a report of any violations found. Violations must be addressed immediately.

With the exception of serious life safety violations, which should be addressed immediately, those who have received inspection reports must provide our office with a Plan of Correction addressing all violations cited during our inspection.

Those who are facing a pending inspection shouldn't be intimidated or afraid of the process. Our goals are the same – to provide the safest environment for Kansans to live and congregate.

A free brochure, "What to expect when you're inspected", is available upon request. Or, the information can be found in the Facility Inspection section of our website.

Rose Rozmiarek Retires

Long-time Chief of Investigations looks back on 32-year law enforcement career

At a special reception in her honor on December 17, 2015, Rose Rozmiarek marked the end of her accomplished law enforcement career – including the past 14-1/4 as OSFM's Chief of Investigations. She and Tana, one of OSFM's two current accelerant detection canines, are looking forward to the retirement years ahead.

Rose shared with The Trumpet about her career and what it takes to be a successful Fire Investigator.

How long have you been a fire investigator?
I have been a fire and explosive investigator, exclusively, for 14-1/4 years. I also conducted fire investigations as part of my law enforcement duties for 17-1/2 years before that.

What got you started in that career?
As a law enforcement officer / investigator I wanted to specialize in a field. I also wanted to apply my academic degree in Criminalistics more in my profession. I thought the uniqueness of fire investigations would be a good area to specialize in.

What key skills do you think are required of a fire investigator?
Due to the scientific method that is used in fire investigations, analytical skills are necessary to interpret and form our expert opinions.

Communication skills are also important. Fire investigators must collect data from various resources and one main resource is information from witnesses and victims. Communication and interview skills are a must to obtain as much information and accurate information from people. Also, investigators must not only take in information, but they must also document and produce it in a logical, detailed, and organized manner.

Social skills and professionalism will assist in dealing with various people involved such as the victims, suspects, other public safety personnel, legal system, and other professional experts.

And, last but not least, fire investigators need to be able to continue obtaining knowledge and new skills to keep up-to-date with changes in processes, technology, and legal updates.

What are the main tools in your investigation toolkit?

The main tools in our toolkit are note-taking materials. If we do not document it, it did not happen. A good high quality camera is a must. Our main evidence is the photographs of the scene, to illustrate the fire damage, fire patterns, and evidence related to the cause of the fire.

How are dogs used as part of a fire investigation?

Accelerant detection canines are tools to assist investigators at the fire scene. They assist in locating the presence of ignitable liquids at a scene. They reduce the time investigators are on the scene because the investigator does not need to dig the whole scene for deciding where to take samples for analysis. Once areas for sampling are identified, the samples pin pointed by the canine will be better samples and less samples are needed. This also reduces the number of samples the chemist at the laboratory must analyze.

What are some of the signs that a fire scene is arson?

There wouldn't be just one evidentiary item by itself that would lead us to call a fire scene arson. We look at the whole scene, evidence, and witness statements. Some items may be multiple fires, no accidental causes in the area of origin, and no utilities. These are just a few items that may lead to a possible intentionally set fire.

What is the fire investigator's role in the arrest and prosecution of an arsonist?

Fire Investigators must do a complete and thorough scene investigation as well as background and follow up investigation. The investigator then presents the case to the prosecutor for review and potential charges being filed against the suspect. Once a suspect is charged, the investigator will assist the prosecutor with any other information needed to assist in the trial. The fire investigator will also testify at any court proceeding such as preliminary hearing and case trial. Once the case is turned over to the prosecutor, the fire investigator plays an assisting role to the prosecutor.

What are you most looking forward to in this new chapter of your life?

I am looking forward to less of a structured work schedule and not having as many phone calls or interruptions of my sleep. I will still be associated with public safety work but in more of a volunteer capacity. I will still be a fire fighter and non-commissioned fire investigator for my local rural fire department as well as a medical first responder as an Advanced EMT. I will be continuing fire investigations on the private sector side and will have the opportunity to take the accidental fires to the next level that the public sector does not pursue.

I am also looking forward to spending more time Jeepin throughout the country and enjoying the grandkids and the family as a whole. I have made many lasting friendships during my career and will enjoy continuing those relationships on a non-work basis.

Older Adults and Fire Safety

By Mende Barnett, Education Consultant

Many senior adults unfortunately have never been taught the importance of fire safety. They may think, “My home is safe” or “It takes money to make my home safe and I am on a fixed income.” They need to be taught that fire does not discriminate. It can happen no matter what type of home you live in or what your income is.

Adults over the age of 65 are two times as likely to die in a fire. There are multiple reason why older adults are at a higher risk but let’s take a look at what the data shows first.

From 2010 to 2014, 42 fire deaths for victims over the age of 65 have been reported to the Kansas Fire Incident Reporting System (KFIRS). In 2015, there were 14 fire-related deaths among those over the age of 65. Almost all of these deaths were caused by a fire that could have been prevented. Cooking fires are the #1 cause, with heating coming in at the #2 cause -- primarily caused by space heaters and portable heating devices. However, there are many preventable causes that should be addressed.

In Kansas, 14% of the population are over the age of 65 and 13% of population live in poverty. (United Stated Census) This data tell us that we need to reach those specifically who are in need.

So what can be done to help educate our older adults on fire safety? First, we need to begin with our own families, extended families, and people we know. We have to educate them on how to be safe.

The best place to begin is with a home assessment. Take a look at where they live. Do they live in an apartment, house, high-rise,

mobile home, or basement of a home? What are their habits, behaviors, and day-to-day routines? Do they smoke, take medication, and are they on oxygen? Do they need assistance or are they physically able to get themselves out of their home should a fire occur? All of these questions should be asked and investigated.

Even if they know how to escape a fire, can they? Are their exits free from obstructions? Can their windows be easily opened? Do they have a working smoke alarm?

A lot of these questions can be asked or assessed by using a checklist. FEMA has a fire safety checklist available to caregivers and older adults who would like to evaluate their home.

Many senior adults are taking various prescription medications. Knowing which medications they are on can help you determine what type of safety precautions they may need to take. Medications may make them sleepy, or cause them to be impaired -- affecting their ability to get themselves out of their burning home. Cooking while taking certain medications can also cause them to make poor decisions such as leaving a pan on the stove or not remembering to turn off a burner when they are finished.

Those who smoke should do so outside and never smoke in bed. Most fires that are started from smoking materials happen while being in bed.

Another safety precaution that is commonly overlooked is the overloading of electrical outlets or powerstrips. An overloaded outlet or powerstrip can result in an electrical fire. Make sure to unplug any electrical appliance when you are finished with it and plug large appliances, such as refrigerators, TV's, and freezers, directly into the wall.

Many national websites, such as FEMA, United States Fire Administration, and NFPA have free information available to you. You can also contact your local fire department or our office for assistance and more information.

Our office will be implementing a statewide Senior Fire Safety Program within the next few months. This program will consist of new partnerships and the ability to help a large portion of the Kansas population. Keep your eye out for more information to come.

Fire prevention is more than just educating those about the potential of fire. There also needs to be action taken so these adults can live safely in their own homes.

Preparing for the Worst, new Search & Rescue Coordinator lays out challenges ahead

By Randy Hill, Search & Rescue Coordinator

In May 2015 the OSFM was officially given responsibility for the search & rescue program in Kansas. On December 14th I was hired to coordinate that program. While much work has been done over the last several years to develop and coordinate our ability to respond to a natural or man-made disaster, that work was largely directed by a "boots on the ground" group of concerned responders with no real authority to make or enforce change statewide. HB 2097 changed all of that by providing the oversight that the state's Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) program was lacking. And while a lot has been accomplished since that working group was first established in 2007, just prior to the massive tornado that hit Greensburg, Kansas, there are many challenges ahead.

Program Development

HB 2097 must be supported with administrative regulations, policies & procedures, and standard operating guidelines. Developing contracts and agreements between the OSFM and regional US&R assets across the state will ensure that expectations are understood and met by all parties. In addition, relationships with other essential resources must be developed. Besides the professional rescuers employed by many of our Fire Departments, an effective disaster response must include other deployable resources such as search canines, structural engineers and physicians.

Strategic Planning

Figuring out where we are and where we want to go will be critical to developing a "road map" for the future. We need to know precisely what our regional capabilities are in order to provide a coordinated response at the state level. Initial and ongoing dialogue in each of the seven regions will help us determine where we go from here with regards to our US&R capability, and will be essential to effective strategic planning. With shrinking budgets, maximizing those regional efforts will be necessary to make the state program cost effective and efficient!

Resource Management

The National Incident Management System (NIMS), which the State of Kansas adopted in 2005, provides for the standardization and typing of disaster response assets from all disciplines. That system, along with the recently released US&R national standards, establishes criteria for the administrative, operational, and logistical readiness of US&R resources.

It is the OSFM's intent to recognize and adopt those US&R standards as we move forward to make the state's search & rescue program more professional and credible, and ultimately more effective! Properly standardizing our personnel and equipment in the state's resource management database, the Comprehensive Resource Management & Credentialing System (CRMCS), will ensure consistency and visibility statewide. Not only that, but properly typing and credentialing our US&R resources will ensure consistency nationwide so that a Type 3 US&R Task Force in Kansas has the same capability as one in New York or California!

The Good News

Since taking this job several people have asked, "After 32 years in the fire service and almost four years of retirement, why would you take on such a challenge and how will you do it?" The why is simple. Since I made a trip to Haysville in 1999 to see the destruction caused by a major tornado, I've been passionate about emergency management and disaster response!

As for the how, that answer is also simple. "Not alone!" To complement the leadership from the OSFM, there are a lot of good people in Kansas and across the country eager to help. From the FEMA US&R Director in Washington, D.C to the Fire Chief in Neodesha, Kansas, many people want to see the search & rescue program in Kansas be successful. So while the challenges ahead may often seem daunting, all I have to do is ask for help and realize that everything can't happen overnight. Because like the old lion said when asked how you eat an elephant…"one bite at a time!"

Wichita Firefighter earns McGaughey Award

Lt. Rob Kanaga recognized for heroic actions in March 2015 apartment fire

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 for heroic actions above and beyond the call of duty. This year, the agencies are delighted to bestow the 2015 Tom McGaughey Fire Service Award upon Lieutenant Rob Kanaga of the Wichita Fire Department.

Lieutenant Kanaga was nominated for the award by Wichita Fire Chief Ronald Blackwell for Kanaga's life saving actions at a multi-story apartment building fire on March 15, 2015. Lt. Kanaga was among the brave first responders to arrive at the scene and commenced extinguishing the fire in one of two apartments that were ablaze. Upon hearing an announcement that an occupant remained inside the adjacent apartment, Lt. Kanaga entered the apartment through heat, smoke, and reduced visibility, located a barely conscious person and was able to successfully remove the victim to safety.

"Lieutenant Kanaga's efforts resulted in saving the life of the victim," said Chief Blackwell. "His selflessness and compassion portray the image of a true public servant."

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

Kansas Fire Marshal Doug Jorgensen presented Lt. Kanaga with the award at the November 17 meeting of the Wichita City Council.

KANSAS FIRE SAFETY
TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR HOME

IN 2014 THERE WERE **2,933** RESIDENTIAL FIRES.

1ST PLACE

For the second straight year, Isaiah Cardona is the champion of our Visualize Fire Safety graphic design contest. Isaiah is a graphic design student at Johnson County Community College.

1. KITCHEN FIRES

In 2014, 28% of structure fires started in the kitchen. There were a total of 810 fires in commercial and residential structures specifically caused by cooking or malfunctions of appliances during the cooking process. Make sure appliances are in good condition and that you have proper extinguisher. ABC combination extinguishers can handle grease fires but a Class K extinguisher is rated specifically for kitchens. Don't use water.

2. BEDROOM FIRES

Kitchens may be the most common room where a fire starts, but bedrooms are #2, with 188 fires, 13 injuries, and three fatalities reported in 2014. An unintended or unsupervised person is the leading factor in ignition of home fires. Bedrooms also happen to be the most common room where children start fires.

3. FIRE BURNS, SMOKE KILLS

10 out of 11 reported fatalities with causes were smoke inhalation/breathing related. Burning modern furnishings shed toxic gases loaded with particles and vapors, effectively poisoning any person inhaling them. If a person is sleeping, the toxins put the resident into a deeper sleep. Working smoke alarms reduce your chances of dying in a fire by 50%. Alarms should be kept clean with good batteries and be installed in the right place.

4. MAKE A PLAN

Develop an emergency plan with your family. Set a designated meeting spot that is easy to find like a mailbox, driveway, or neighbor's house. Teach family members to stay low and crawl to keep under the smoke. Also give children a backup plan. Teach them to shut the door if they can't get out. Stuff blankets and clothing around the door. This will also help stop the spread of the fire, giving you precious minutes of safety.

5. CALM THE FEAR

Teach children early about fire safety and procedures. Explain to children that they should never hide in closets and that firefighters are there to help. The mask can be scary to children. If possible, let your child see a firefighter in full gear. Even firefighters known to a child will look and sound different.

6. POTTED PLANTS

Potting soil often contain peat moss, coir fiber (coconut fiber), and composted pine bark. All three ingredients are flammable. Potted plants are especially vulnerable to fire when the soil dries out. Add in a plant that had dried or died from lack of water and the ignition probability increases quickly. With dry conditions just waiting for a spark or ember, the last thing that should be added to the mix are cigarettes.

Created by Isaiah Cardona for Visualize Kansas Fire Safety, 2015 sponsored by the Kansas Office of the State Fire Marshal.