



Michigan **FIRE** Service Connection

Ronald Farr
State Fire Marshal

Bureau of Fire Services
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www.michigan.gov/bfs

December 2010

As I write this December letter I would like to extend special holiday wishes to all.

Recently, I participated in a meeting with other state fire marshals and was intrigued by a project that Iowa State Fire Marshal Raymond Reynolds has implemented dealing with reporting of success stories. Fire Marshal Reynolds promotes and publicizes success stories that are centered on “saves” that involve smoke alarms. I would like to start the same reporting program here in Michigan but at the same time expand the program to include “saves” that involve fire sprinklers.

I am encouraging fire departments that have success stories involving a “save” due to the activation of smoke alarms or fire sprinklers systems to send those success stories to the Bureau for publication in the Fire Service Connection.

Too many times we focus on what went wrong and I would like to move in another direction and promote what went right.

If these success stories are connected with a fire prevention/fire education program that has been implemented in your department, I encourage you to provide a brief overview of your accomplishments.

As we join forces to highlight the positives of fire prevention and education I hope that others will want to join in the battle to make Michigan a safer and more proactive state.

Sincerely,

Ronald R. Farr
State Fire Marshal

MISSION

The mission of the State Fire Marshal and the Bureau of Fire Services is to protect lives and property by fostering a fire safe environment through inspections, plan review, enforcement, regulation, fire fighter training, data collection and public fire education.



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Cooking Fire Safety

Many families gather in the kitchen to spend time together, but it can be one of the most hazardous rooms in the house if you don't practice safe cooking behaviors. Cooking equipment, most often a range or stovetop, is the leading cause of reported home fires and home fire injuries in the United States. Cooking equipment is also the leading cause of unreported fires and associated injuries.



Safe Cooking Behaviors

It's a recipe for serious injury or even death to wear loose clothing (especially hanging sleeves), walk away from a cooking pot on the stove, or leave flammable materials, such as potholders or paper towels, around the stove. Whether you are cooking the family holiday dinner or a snack for the children, practicing safe cooking behaviors will help keep you and your family safe.

Choose the Right Equipment and Use It Properly

- Always use cooking equipment tested and approved by a recognized testing facility.
- Follow manufacturers' instructions and code requirements when installing and operating cooking equipment.
- Plug microwave ovens and other cooking appliances directly into an outlet. Never use an extension cord for a cooking appliance, as it can overload the circuit and cause a fire.

Use Barbecue Grills Safely

- Position the grill well away from siding, deck railings, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas, and foot traffic.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area by declaring a 3-foot "kid-free zone" around the grill.
- Put out several long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames when cooking food.
- Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below grill so it cannot be ignited by a hot grill.
- Use only outdoors! If used indoors, or in any enclosed spaces, such as tents, barbecue grills pose both a fire hazard and the risk of exposing occupants to carbon monoxide.

Charcoal Grills

- Purchase the proper starter fluid and store out of reach of children and away from heat sources.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited, and never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to get the fire going.

Propane Grills

- Check the propane cylinder hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. A light soap and water solution applied to the hose will reveal escaping propane quickly by releasing bubbles.
- If you determined your grill has a gas leak by smell or the soapy bubble test and there is no flame:
 - Turn off the propane tank and grill.
 - If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again.
 - If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not attempt to move the grill.
- All propane cylinders manufactured after April 2002 must have overfill protection devices (OPD). OPDs shut off the flow of propane before capacity is reached, limiting the potential for release of propane gas if the cylinder heats up. OPDs are easily identified by their triangular-shaped hand wheel.
- Use only equipment bearing the mark of an independent testing laboratory. Follow the manufacturers' instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.
- Never store propane cylinders in buildings or garages. If you store a gas grill inside during the winter, disconnect the cylinder and leave it outside.

Watch What You Heat

- The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.
- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.
- Stay alert! To prevent cooking fires, you have to be alert. You won't be if you are sleepy, have been drinking alcohol, or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy.

Keep Things That Can Catch Fire and Heat Sources Apart

- Keep anything that can catch fire – potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels, or curtains – away from your stovetop.
- Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.
- Keep pets off cooking surfaces and nearby countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.
- Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and catch fire if it comes into contact with a gas flame or electric burner.

Use Equipment for Intended Purposes Only

Cook only with equipment designed and intended for cooking, and heat your home only with equipment designed and intended for heating. There is additional danger of fire, injury, or death if equipment is used for a purpose for which it was not intended.

Protect Children from Scalds and Burns

- Young children are at high risk of being burned by hot food and liquids. Keep children away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove.
- Keep young children at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from any place where hot food or drink is being prepared or carried. Keep hot foods and liquids away from table and counter edges.
- When young children are present, use the stove's back burners whenever possible.
- Never hold a child while cooking, drinking, or carrying hot foods or liquids.
- Teach children that hot things burn.
- When children are old enough, teach them to cook safely. Supervise them closely.

Prevent Scalds and Burns

- To prevent spills due to overturn of appliances containing hot food or liquids, use the back burner when possible and/or turn pot handles away from the stove's edge. All appliance cords need to be kept coiled and away from counter edges.
- Use oven mitts or potholders when moving hot food from ovens, microwave ovens, or stovetops. Never use wet oven mitts or potholders as they can cause scald burns.
- Replace old or worn oven mitts.
- Treat a burn right away, putting it in cool water. Cool the burn for 3 to 5 minutes. If the burn is bigger than your fist or if you have any questions about how to treat it, seek medical attention right away.

Install and Use Microwave Ovens Safely

- Place or install the microwave oven at a safe height, within easy reach of all users. The face of the person using the microwave oven should always be higher than the front of the microwave oven door. This is to prevent hot food or liquid from spilling onto a user's face or body from above and to prevent the microwave oven itself from falling onto a user.
- Never use aluminum foil or metal objects in a microwave oven. They can cause a fire and damage the oven.
- Heat food only in containers or dishes that are safe for microwave use.
- Open heated food containers slowly away from the face to avoid steam burns. Hot steam escaping from the container or food can cause burns.
- Foods heat unevenly in microwave ovens. Stir and test before eating.

How and When to Fight Cooking Fires

- When in doubt, just get out. When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire. Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number after you leave.
- If you do try to fight the fire, be sure others are already getting out and you have a clear path to the exit.
- Always keep an oven mitt and a lid nearby when you are cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan (make sure you are wearing the oven mitt). Turn off the burner. Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan is completely cool.

- In case of an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent flames from burning you or your clothing.
- If you have a fire in your microwave oven, turn it off immediately and keep the door closed. Never open the door until the fire is completely out. Unplug the appliance if you can safely reach the outlet.
- After a fire, both ovens and microwaves should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

If Your Clothes Catch Fire!

If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop, and roll. Stop immediately, drop to the ground, and cover face with hands. Roll over and over or back and forth to put out the fire. Immediately cool the burn with cool water for 3 to 5 minutes and then seek emergency medical care.

Nuisance Smoke Alarms

- Move smoke alarms farther away from kitchens according to manufacturers' instructions and/or install a smoke alarm with a pause button.
- If a smoke alarm sounds during normal cooking, press the pause button if the smoke alarm has one. Open the door or window or fan the area with a towel to get the air moving. Do not disable the smoke alarm or take out the batteries.
- Treat every smoke alarm activation as a likely fire and react quickly and safely to the alarm.



Decorating homes and businesses is a long-standing tradition around the holiday season. Unfortunately, these same decorations may increase your chances of fire. Based on data from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), an estimated 250 home fires involving Christmas trees and another 170 home fires involving holiday lights and other decorative lighting occur each year. Together, these fires resulted in 21 deaths and 43 injuries.

Following a few simple fire safety tips can keep electric lights, candles, and the ever popular Christmas tree from creating a tragedy. Learn how to prevent a fire and what to do in case a fire starts in your home. Make sure all exits are accessible and not blocked by decorations or trees. Help ensure that you have a fire safe holiday season.

Christmas Trees

What's a traditional Christmas morning scene without a beautifully decorated tree? If your household includes a natural tree in its festivities, take to heart the sales person's suggestion – "Keep the tree watered."

Christmas trees account for hundreds of fires annually. Typically, shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters or matches start tree fires. Well-watered trees are not a problem. A dry and neglected tree can be.

Selecting a Tree for the Holidays

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long and, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.

Caring for Your Tree

Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

Disposing of Your Tree

Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service.

Holiday Lights

Maintain Your Holiday Lights

Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets

Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires – they should not be warm to the touch.

Do not leave holiday lights on unattended!

Holiday Decorations

Use Only Nonflammable Decorations

All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents. If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

Don't Block Exits

Ensure that trees and other holiday decorations do not block an exit way. In the event of a fire, time is of the essence. A blocked entry/exit way puts you and your family at risk.

Never Put Wrapping Paper in the Fireplace

Wrapping paper in the fireplace can result in a very large fire, throwing off dangerous sparks and embers that may result in a chimney fire.

Candle Care

Avoid Using Lit Candles

If you do use lit candles, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.

Never Put Lit Candles on a Tree

Do not go near a Christmas tree with an open flame – candles, lighters or matches.

Reminder to Consumers: Water Your Tree Daily; a Dry Holiday Tree is a Recipe for Disaster

To reduce the chance of a holiday tragedy, the Bureau of Fire Services (BFS) is urging homeowners to thoroughly water their holiday tree daily.

If a tree has already become too dry, State Fire Marshal Ronald Farr says to remove the tree from the home. "When a holiday tree catches fire there are literally only seconds to escape safely," said Farr. "Removing a dry tree and subsequently the chance for a deadly fire to occur is easier to live with than the consequences such as the loss of your home, or even worse, family members. A holiday tree is replaceable – but your loved ones are not, so don't take the risks."

The BFS asks consumers to follow these tips for holiday tree safety:

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." Although this label does not mean the tree will not catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and do not break when bent between your fingers. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.



- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. Because heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.
- Holiday trees should be checked daily and at the first sign of dryness be removed from the home. The drier the tree, the greater the fire hazard.

To see video clips illustrating what happens when fire touches a dry tree and a properly maintained, well-watered tree click below:

http://www.fire.nist.gov/tree_fire.htm

NFIRS News

NFIRS Number vs. FDID Number

Please note: Your NFIRS number for FEMA is your FDID number with a 0 in front to make it a 5-digit number.

Using the NFIRS Data Entry Tool (DET) with Windows 7

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) shares ways other users have found to get the NFIRS Data Entry Tool to work with Windows 7. The following workaround has proven to work:

Disable Aero for Windows 7 and use Windows Classic instead.

1. Right-click on the desktop and choose Personalize from the menu.
2. Scroll the themes down until the Basic and High Contrast themes are seen.
3. Click Windows Classic, and OK. The desktop should change to Windows Classic that will apparently allow the Client Tool to run.
4. When the session is over, change back to the default.

Michigan Fire Service Directory

PLEASE check your department's E-MAIL address in the directory. The Bureau has noticed that a lot of the email addresses are not up to date. The online directory can be found at: http://www.dleg.state.mi.us/fire_directory/. **Please note that the directory is updated quarterly. Changes to department contact information may not be reflected in the directory immediately.**

Below is a link to update your department's information in the directory. You may submit the form by fax to (517) 335-4061, e-mail to howardr2@michigan.gov, or mail to Bureau of Fire Services, Attn: Rhonda Howard, PO Box 30700, Lansing MI 48909. Thank you in advance for your help to keep the most accurate information in the directory.

Fire Service Directory Update Form:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dleg/Fire_Service_Directory_Information_UpdateDESIGN_rev.1.31.09_270867_7.pdf

You may also locate the form on our website at www.michigan.gov/bfs, click on Forms and Publications.

Reminder to Submit NFIRS Reports Online

As of January 1, 2008, the Bureau of Fire Services no longer accepts paper reports. The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) is available online and the Bureau of Fire Services requests that all fire departments enter these reports using this online system. If you need assistance in setting up this program please contact Rhonda Howard (contact information is listed below).

Fatal Fire Reporting

UPDATED FATAL FIRE REPORT FORM NOW AVAILABLE

In addition to the basic NFIRS report, the Bureau of Fire Services also tracks all fire-related deaths. These statistics are used for program development, legislation, and prevention programs. Fire departments responding to a fatal fire are required to submit the "Michigan Fatal Fire Report" within 24 to 48 hours of the death. The report form is available at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dleg_bccfs_fatalrep_94417_7.pdf

Civilian Fatal Fire Statistics 2009 and 2010

2010 – Reported as of 11/24/10

January	19	June	5
February	18	July	4
March	15	August	3
April	15	September	1
May	6	October	8

Questions?

If you have questions regarding your department, NFIRS reporting functions or fatal fire reporting, please contact Rhonda Howard at (517) 241-0691 or howardr2@michigan.gov.

Office of Fire Fighter Training



News and Notes from the OFFT

By Joseph A. Grutza, Director, Office of Fire Fighter Training



New Contact Information for Region 1 Supervisor, Dan Hammerberg

Region 1 Supervisor Dan Hammerberg's office has moved to the state office building in Escanaba, effective Friday, November 19, 2010. His new contact information is listed below. His email address will remain the same. The OFFT is asking that you please make note of this information if you have not already been notified. We are also asking that you please forward this information to all of the instructors, course managers, and CTC chairpersons you have in your address books and remind them to start sending their Region 1 final course paperwork to the Escanaba Office effective immediately.

New Contact Information Effective 11/19/2010:

Dan Hammerberg, Region 1 Supervisor
Office of Fire Fighter Training
305 Ludington St.
Escanaba, MI 49829

O: (906) 786-0760 F: (906) 233-9706

Email: hammerbergd@michigan.gov



22nd Annual Juvenile Firesetter Seminar

March 1 & 2, 2011
Mt. Pleasant, MI

**Seminar Cost:
\$145.00**

**After February 1st:
\$165.00**

**1 Day Registration:
\$75.00**

Seminar Location:

Comfort Inn - Mt.
Pleasant
2424 South Mission
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Reservations Call:

989.772.4000

Room Rate:

\$72.00 / night + tax

Please let the Hotel know that
you are with the MAPC when
making your reservation.

Blocked rooms are limited.

Tuesday - March 1, 2011

7:00 - 8:00am	Registration
8:00 - 8:15 am	Welcome - Introductions
8:15 - 10:15 am	After The Fire: Teachable Moments Robert Crandall, Fireproof Children
10:15 - 12:00 pm	The Impact of Social Media on Risky Fire Use Karla Klas, BSN, RN, CCRP U of M Hospital - Trauma Burn Center
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 - 2:00 pm	Overcoming Mental Health Issues in Firesetting Youth Sgt. Paul Zipper, Massachusetts State Police
2:00 - 5:00 pm	Truth or Fabrication?: Interviewing Sgt. Paul Zipper, Massachusetts State Police

Wednesday - March 2, 2011

8:00 - 11:00 am	Kids & Bombs: Strategies for Intervention Trooper Bob McCarthy Massachusetts State Police
11:00 - 12:00 pm	Contents Of Your Juvenile File Sgt. Paul Zipper, Massachusetts State Police
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 - 4:00 pm	Complex Legal Issues in Juvenile Firesetting Sgt. Paul Zipper, Massachusetts State Police
4:00 - 5:00 pm	Bringing It All Together: Case Reviews Sgt. Paul Zipper, Massachusetts State Police

Continuing Education Points:

- State of Michigan Certified Fire Inspector Points and MCOLES approval pending.
- The University of Michigan Health System's Educational Services for Nursing is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.
- Contact Hours for nursing and social work have been applied for and are pending review.



22nd Annual Juvenile Firesetter Seminar

March 1 & 2, 2011
Mt. Pleasant, MI

Full Registration Includes:

MAPC Juvenile School and handout materials. Hotel reservations for the school MUST be made on your own and NOT through the MAPC.

Payment for the school only should be made out to Michigan Arson Prevention Committee. Credit cards are not accepted.

Hotel payments MUST be made separate through the Comfort Inn - Mt. Pleasant

Comfort Inn - Mt. Pleasant

989.772.4000

2424 South Mission
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

The MAPC has reserved a block of rooms at a rate of \$72.00 / night + tax. Please let the hotel know you are with the MAPC when making your reservation. Blocked rooms are limited.

The seminar is designed for a multi-disciplinary audience, including: Fire Service, Police, Juvenile Legal and Court Personnel, Educators, Juvenile Intervention Specialists, Injury Prevention Clinicians and Educators, Social Workers, Case Workers, Probation Officers, Arson Investigators, School Personnel (Teachers, Nurses, Counselors, Administration, & Resource Officers), Youth Assistance, Social Service Agencies, Mental Health Clinicians, Community Health Educators, First Responders, and Healthcare Personnel.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Department: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please submit this form along with payment to:

Sorry but the MAPC does NOT accept credit cards.

MAPC
c/o Jim LaBuhn
23 Old Course
St. Clair, MI 48079

NO Refunds after February 1, 2011

810.326.1477



**The Southeastern Michigan
Association of Fire Chiefs
proudly presents its annual**

**Register online
now!**

**www.smafc.org
248.506.3401**

**March 31,
2011
10 am - 3 pm**

**Rock
Financial
Showplace
46100 Grand
River
Avenue
Novi, MI
48374**

Midwest Fire Rescue Expo

SPECIAL PRE-SHOW PRESENTATION

8:30 a.m. ~ Bobby Halton, Editor-In-Chief,
“Fire Engineering Magazine”

SPECIAL GUEST: Mike Lombardi, actor
that plays Mike Silletti on FX’s “Rescue Me”

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED/Includes Lunch

Pre-Show Presentation plus Vendor Show \$35 pp

Vendor Show Only \$20 pp

Walk-Ins Pay Additional \$10

***Midwest’s Largest One-Day
Fire & Emergency Services
Vendor Show***

Details and Registration Information @ www.smafc.org

Thanks to all of you for the continued articles, information, photos and comments – your input is important. Any questions regarding the Bureau of Fire Services newsletter may be directed to Terry Fobbs at (517) 373-8331 or fobbst@michigan.gov.

For additional information about the Bureau of Fire Services and to subscribe or unsubscribe to the “Michigan Fire Service Connection” go to:

http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-28077_42271---,00.html



<http://www.michigan.gov/dleg>



DELEG is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids, services and other reasonable accommodations are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.