



Robert L. Quinn  
Commissioner

# State of New Hampshire

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

*Division of Fire Safety*

*Office of the State Fire Marshal*

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Sean P. Toomey  
State Fire Marshal

## **NH State Fire Marshal's Office - January 2024 Report**

*(For the period of December 1 through December 31, 2023)*

### **ADMINISTRATION:**

#### **Personnel:**

We currently have 4 part-time vacancies that we are actively recruiting for at this time:

Part-time Building Code Review Board Administrative Secretary

Part-time State Building Permit Coordinator

Part-time Community Risk Reduction Specialist

Part-time Accreditation Manager

#### **Legislation:**

The following bills are the bills that we are currently monitoring:

HB 1059 Relative to the state building code

HB 1065 Relative to fire sprinkler requirements in residential buildings

HB 1215 Relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements and the regulation of building permits

HB 1332 Relative to prohibiting electric vehicles from parking in parking garages

HB 1352 Relative to firefighting personal protective equipment

HB 1386 Relative to prohibiting the disposal of lithium-ion batteries in solid waste landfill facilities, composting facilities, or incinerators

HB 1387 Relative to revisions to the state building code

HB 1396 Relative to prohibiting municipal inspections of owner-occupied units of multi-unit housing

HB 1498 Establishing a state short term rental registry

HB 1510 Establishing a commission to identify barriers to and solutions for electric vehicle sales and use

HB 1635 Relative to the definition of short term rental

SB 221 Establishing a study committee to examine day care access and affordability

SB 365 Relative to the sale or use of lithium-ion batteries for electric bicycles, scooters, or personal electric mobility devices

SB 373 Relative to the state building code

SB 430 Relative to establishing a commission to study the impacts of electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and e-mobility devices on first responder response, the environment, building and fire codes, and life and safety property protection

SB 437 Relative to local authority to amend the state building code

### **Board of Fire Control:**

The next Board of Fire Control meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2024. Everything is submitted to the legislature to update the State Fire Code to the 2021 editions of NFPA 1 & 101.

### **Foam Take-back Program:**

The contract for the foam take-back program was approved by the Governor & Executive Council at the end of June 2023. DES has updated that they are now working on some facility disposal items with the vendor and anticipate the program remaining in a delayed status until late spring.

### **Strategic Planning Initiative:**

Our office is finalizing an updated strategic plan which will be part of an overall Department of Safety plan. Please reach out with any thoughts.

### **BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:**

In the month of December, we received 20 incident notifications resulting in 9 scene responses. The Bureau of Investigations currently has 18 open arson or suspected arson investigations.

### **New cases (synopsis of some of our cases are listed below):**

- On December 6, investigators responded to a double fatal in Claremont. The deaths were initially believed to have been due to CO poisoning, but the autopsies determined they were not caused by CO. The official cause and manner of death is pending.
- On December 8, investigators responded to Pittsfield for a consult for an accidental electrical fire.
- On December 9, an investigator responded to Warren for a fire investigation, with injury. The victim was transported to Boston for medical treatment. The fire cause is undetermined.
- On December 12, investigators responded to Gilmanton for a consult on an accidental electrical fire.
- On December 15, investigators responded to North Hampton for the passing of a Rye Fire Department Lieutenant, that had occurred within hours of completing a shift.
- On December 20, investigators responded to Colebrook for an accidental fire in a vacant cabin.
- On December 20, investigators responded to Bartlett for a fire in an 8-unit condominium. The cause of the fire was likely an accidental electrical issue.
- On December 31, investigators responded to Campton for a RV fire. The cause of the fire was determined to be accidental.

### **Fatal Fire/CO Incidents:**

- On December 7, an investigator responded to Conway for a CO death investigation. The death was determined to be a suicide.

### **Arrests:**

- There was 1 arrest by the FMO in December. The arrest stemmed from a joint investigation with the Bradford Police and Fire Departments. Nathan Nichols was arrested and charged with five counts of felony level arson which involved multiple outside fires, two of which involved structures. These fires occurred between May 2022 and September 2023 in the towns of Bradford and Warner. Nichols was released on personal recognizance bail and an arraignment is scheduled in February.

### **Training/Committees:**

- Members of the FMO attended a three-day training presented by Dr. David Icove, a professor from the University of Tennessee, who specializes in fire investigations and fire protection engineering.

## **BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:**

### **State Building Permit System:**

We processed the following permits in the month of December:

- Building: 10
- Electrical: 20
- Plumbing: 6
- Mechanical Fuel Gas: 4
- Mechanical Non-Fuel Gas: 9
- Fire Protection: 8
- Fire Alarm: 6

### **Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:**

We initiated 11 educational and 7 healthcare plan reviews, completed 179 inspections and 124 technical consults in the month of December.

### **Variance Requests:**

We processed 11 variance requests in the month of December.

### **Modular Building Program**

We completed 10 modular building inspections in the month of December.

## **BUREAU OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION:**

### **Hazardous Materials:**

Hazardous Materials response, coordination and consultation is available through the on-call FMO supervisor.

Our Hazardous Materials Coordinators are available for PEAC Software training for fire departments. PEAC is used for documentation of Tier II facilities and chemical storage.

In the month of December, our Hazardous Materials Coordinators attended the Haz Mat Collaborative Meeting, the monthly PEAC Software Training, the EPA Webinar on Ammonia Facility Operations and Safety, the DEA Clandestine Lab Training and the Radiation Response Training with the NH National Guard CST. In addition, they assisted the Seacoast Haz Mat Team with SHSP Grant applications.

Also, in the month of December, one of our Hazardous Materials Coordinators attended the Hazard 3 Lithium Battery Program at the Massachusetts Fire Academy. This program discussed dealing with Lithium-Ion Batteries during incident responses and establishing ideas on how to stabilize what is happening safely.

### **Electric Vehicles and Lithium-Ion Batteries**

A stakeholder meeting to discuss the challenges of electric vehicle fires and lithium-ion batteries will be held on January 16<sup>th</sup> at the IPOC. These meetings have included representatives from the State Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Academy, HSEM, State Police, DMV, DES, DOT, Tow Association, Auto Dealers Association, Clean Energy NH, NH Chiefs of Police and the NH Association of Fire Chiefs.

### **Regional Outreach/Chief's Roundtables:**

We continue to partner with the Commissioner's Office, other Department of Safety Leadership and the NHAFC to conduct regional outreach/Chief's Roundtables. Please reach out if you are interested in hosting a meeting.

### **Incident Reporting:**

If you have not yet submitted your 2023 data, we ask that you please submit it as soon as possible. Your commitment to ensuring we have great data to accurately show the fire problem in NH is greatly appreciated! If you are having difficulty sending your data or need assistance, please reach out to our team.

Did you know that we are transitioning away from accepting data via email attachments? If you are a department that submits via email attachment and have not yet created a Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) Account, please reach out to our team for assistance.

Have you looked at your .err files lately? These are important files that you likely receive on a monthly basis that contain invalid incidents, a.k.a. error messages. We can help you through the process so that you can resubmit any invalid incidents and receive full credit. Please contact us at [nhfirs@dos.nh.gov](mailto:nhfirs@dos.nh.gov).

We continue to work with the team at the Fire Academy as departments implement the NHESR program, available free of charge, for incident reporting. If you are interested in having a presentation on the program or would like to request one, please email [NHESR@dos.nh.gov](mailto:NHESR@dos.nh.gov).

In May, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) announced their effort to launch a new fire information and analytics platform, known as the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), for the American fire and emergency services. Please find more information here: [Media Advisory: USFA Announces New Fire Information Platform \(fema.gov\)](#). Once NERIS is developed and operational, USFA will work to migrate fire and emergency services departments onto the new platform. The legacy NFIRS will remain operational throughout the transition process so all fire and emergency services departments should continue to use the current NFIRS data system and maintain status quo until migrated to the new platform. The latest NERIS webinar, *Understanding the Proposed NERIS Data Framework*, was held on December 14, 2023. This one hour session highlighted the project's advancements, key attributes of the new framework, opportunities to offer feedback, and tangible benefits the system will offer to first responders, agencies, and the public. Watch the recording here: [On Demand Access to NERIS Draft Data Framework Webinar \(fsri.org\)](#).

In addition, the USFA and FSRI have announced a 30-day national engagement period for the NERIS Draft Data Framework. During this critical phase, they are seeking input on the newly developed data schemas that make up the Framework. These schemas, which are integral to the operations of NERIS, include a Fire Department Specification schema, a Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) schema, and an Incident Data schema. Your input is sought after reviewing the Core NERIS Data Framework and schemas. Please find the Draft NERIS Data Framework, schemas and access to the Feedback Form here: [National Engagement Open Now for NERIS Draft Data Framework | UL's FSRI – Fire Safety Research Institute](#). **Feedback must be received by January 19, 2024.**

If you have questions or you are having difficulties, please reach out to the NHFIRS data team using the following email: [NHFIRS@dos.nh.gov](mailto:NHFIRS@dos.nh.gov).

### **Outreach Events:**

On December 7th, the SFMO participated in a Career Spotlight at the White Mountains Regional High School. We spent the morning with the entire student body in grades 9-12, discussing the roles and responsibilities of the SFMO. Students also enjoyed an Ignitable Liquide Detection Canine Demonstration. The afternoon was spent with the school's criminal justice students for a more detailed discussion about fire investigation.

### **Public Education:**

The USFA's Fire and Life Safe Communicators Initiative theme for the month of January is Escape Planning. Fire is fast. Plan ahead to save lives. Start the year by creating and practicing your home fire escape plan to keep you and your loved ones safe. #FireEscapePlan

**Fire and Older Adults**

**Did you know?** In 2020, older adults in the United States:

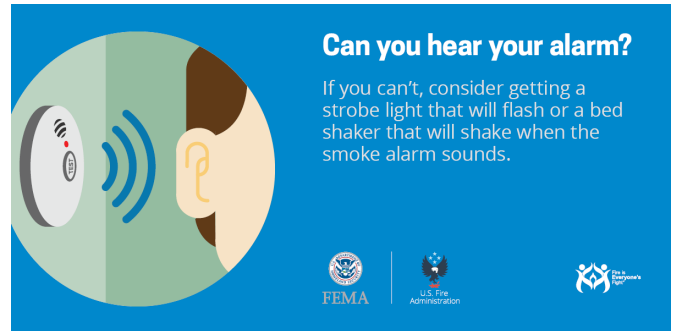
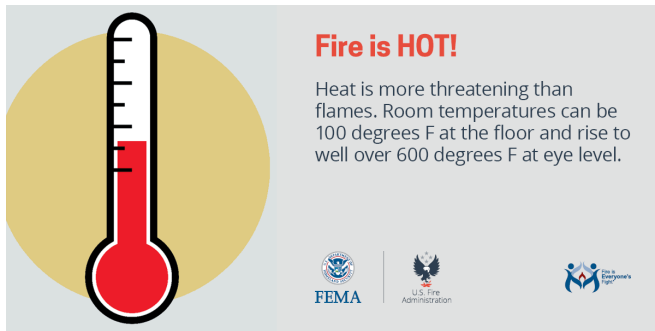
- Had a 2.5 times greater risk of dying in a fire than the total population.
- Ages 85 and over were 4.0 times more likely to die in a fire than the total population.
- Ages 85 and over had the highest fire death rate.**

Logos for U.S. Fire Administration and Department of Justice are present at the bottom.

**Fire is FAST!**

There is little time to escape. It only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill your home.

Logos for FEMA, U.S. Fire Administration, and Department of Justice are present at the bottom.



Escape Planning Video: <https://youtu.be/EKnUjC5xlgw>

For more information on this initiative, or to find outreach materials on the monthly topics (examples below), please visit: [Fire and Life Safety Communicators Initiative \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov/fire-and-life-safety-communicators-initiative)

### **Training Opportunities:**

FM Global provides the FM Global Fire Service Learning Network to deliver critical training for the fire service in FM Global's focus areas, including fire protection in commercial and industrial properties. The network offers online training programs, including FM Global's popular "Fighting Fire in Sprinklered Buildings" course, and fire service resources. Available resources include FM Global Data Sheets, pocket guides, and pre-incident planning materials guide. All training and resources are free. Create an account and log in to access the fire service training and resources here: [Fighting Fire In Sprinklered Buildings | Fire Service Learning Network \(fmglobalfireserviceresources.com\)](https://www.fmglobalfireserviceresources.com)

### **Pre-Incident Planning for the Fire Service Certificate (New Training Opportunity)**

Pre-incident planning is the key to effective and efficient response to fires and other emergencies in sprinklered buildings. It can mean the difference between a routine suppression call and a total loss. The FM Global Fire Service Learning Network now offers a Pre-Incident Planning for the Fire Service Certificate for firefighters, fire officers, and executive officers to expand their pre-incident planning skillset. Complete 4 online programs to earn the certificate and 7 hours of continuing education credit. For More Information or the Begin the Program, please visit [Pre-Incident Planning for the Fire Service \(fmglobalfireserviceresources.com\)](https://www.fmglobalfireserviceresources.com)

### **Upcoming SFMO Led Classes:**

#### **Application of the NH State Fire Code: A Scenario-Based Training**

**Thursday, January 11, 2024**

**6:00PM-9:00PM**

#### **Raymond S. Burton Training Academy**

*This session is designed to assist the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or his designee with the application of the state fire code to frequently asked questions and common violations encountered in the enforcement of NFPA 1 and NFPA 101. This class will include scenario-based instruction and allow participants to use their knowledge, and that of their peers, to discuss how they would approach certain situations.*

**Registration Link:** <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

**Application of the NH State Fire Code: A Scenario-Based Training**

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024**

**6:00PM-9:00PM**

**New London Fire Department**

*This session is designed to assist the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or his designee with the application of the state fire code to frequently asked questions and common violations encountered in the enforcement of NFPA 1 and NFPA 101. This class will include scenario-based instruction and allow participants to use their knowledge, and that of their peers, to discuss how they would approach certain situations.*

**Registration Link:** <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

**Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections**

**Wednesday, February 28, 2024**

**6:00PM-9:00PM**

**New London Fire Department**

*A review of the State Fire Code relative to NFPA 54: National Fuel Gas Code, NFPA 58: Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code, and NFPA 31: Standard for the Installation of Oil-Burning Equipment. This session will give the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or his designee a better understanding of how to navigate these codes and standards.*

**Registration Link:** <https://forms.office.com/g/BSXjQRb7mK>

Additional locations and offerings will be announced soon.

Please reach out to Deputy Stacey Dubois at [stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov](mailto:stacey.l.dubois@dos.nh.gov) if you are interested in hosting one of these sessions, a past or future session, or would like to suggest a future training topic.