



Alcohol and  
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Enforcement

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Apprehension

Driver  
and Vehicle  
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Emergency  
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Minnesota  
State Patrol

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Communications

Office of  
Justice Programs

Office of  
Pipeline Safety

Office of  
Traffic Safety

State Fire  
Marshal



## State Fire Marshal

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The State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD) protects lives and property by fostering a fire-safe environment through fire prevention education, regulation, enforcement, investigation, data collection and emergency response.

Our division's primary customers include the fire service, law enforcement, general public, public and charter schools, health care facilities, business and industry, construction contractors, hotels and motels, and day care and foster care facilities.

The SFMD addresses key fire safety issues with the goal of preventing incidents that result in fire deaths, injuries and loss of property and have a negative impact on the general public and the economy of our state.

### **Department of Public Safety Commissioner John Harrington**

New DPS Commissioner John Harrington started Jan. 7 and has hit the ground running.

Commissioner Harrington has been in public safety more than 40 years. He served as chief for the city of St. Paul and Metro Transit police departments and was a state senator for two years.

Commissioner Harrington welcomed more than 260 fire officers at the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association Fire Officer School in Duluth on March 16. Commissioner Harrington announced during his welcome speech that the coordination and administration of all the state response teams (bomb squads, hazardous materials teams, Minnesota Task Force 1 and the Minnesota Air Rescue Team) will be transferred to the SFMD from Homeland Security and Emergency Management. The transition will start immediately and be completed on May 1. New contact information will be provided to the Minnesota fire service during the transition.

### **National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) James M. Shannon Advocacy Medal**

NFPA established the James M. Shannon Advocacy Medal in 2014 in honor of retiring NFPA President James M. Shannon to recognize individuals who further the NFPA mission through advocacy. I am pleased to announce that SFMD Fire Safety Supervisor Jon Nisja has been selected as the 2019 recipient.

The selection committee was impressed with Jon's involvement in code advocacy, data initiatives and work to make Minnesota safer for its citizens and first responders. The committee also mentioned Jon's support of programs such as the Coalition for Fire Safe Cigarettes, Fire Sprinkler Initiative and Alliance to Stop Consumer Fireworks. Jon truly embodies the spirit this medal is intended to recognize. The medal will be presented at NFPA's 2019 Conference & Expo on June 16 in San Antonio. Congratulations to Jon on receiving this very prestigious award.

## **SFMD Staffing**

### **Fire Investigations**

The SFMD is in the process of replacing retiring Fire Investigator Mark Germain. Interviews were held at the Brainerd Fire Department and the interview panel has made a recommendation to fill the vacancy. Thank you to Brainerd Fire Chief Tim Holmes for assisting the SFMD on our panel for this important position in central Minnesota. We anticipate an early April 2019 start date for the new investigator.

### **Residential Care and Lodging Team**

It is with great enthusiasm that I announce the SFMD has hired Marvin Forbragd to be our new metro region residential inspector covering Anoka, Hennepin and Ramsey counties. Marvin will start April 3. Marvin previously worked with the city of Minneapolis where he was a fire inspections coordinator for approximately seven years. Marvin was also a fire inspector and housing inspector for Minneapolis.

Marvin holds Minnesota Fire Service Certification Board Fire Inspector I and Fire Inspector II certifications and has attended Fire Inspection Principles and Fire Protection for the Built Environment training at the National Fire Academy. Marvin recently passed his National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies test on fire alarm systems. He also has experience in fire alarm system, and kitchen hood and duct system plan review. He comes highly recommended by his peers as a competent and meticulous inspector and a compassionate and empathetic public servant. Please join me in welcoming Marvin to the SFMD.

### **State Services and Support Team**

Amanda Swenson assumed her new role on Dec. 12 as the State Services and Support Team supervisor. Amanda had been on the SFMD's Fire and Life Safety Education Team since 2014. We are in the process of backfilling Amanda's fire and life safety education position. We received 35 applications and look forward to a new person starting in April.

## **NFPA 3000**

The SFMD recently brought Orange County Florida Fire Chief Otto Drozd to Minnesota to talk about the newly created NFPA 3000 — the Active Shooter Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Program. The sessions were well attended despite heavy snowfall. Participants engaged in very good discussion during the presentations. Thank you to all who attended this free training. Chief Drozd survived his experience in a Minnesota winter.

## **Fire Code Academy**

SFMD staff have been meeting to set the course of study for the first Fire Code Academy May 13-17 at Camp Ripley. The course will be a combination of classroom and hands-on training. The academy is currently full but we are looking at adding another one later in 2019.

## **Fire Code Adoption**

SFMD staff Forrest Williams and Tom Jenson have reviewed the Minnesota State Fire Code rule draft with Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) legal services. DOLI will now send the rule draft to the Office of the Revisor of Statutes. With the exception of one, every change proposal that made it through the code committee process also made it through the legal review. This doesn't mean that the rule has been finalized, as we expect changes to be necessary based on comments from the state revisor. The proposed effective date for the 2020 Minnesota State Fire Code is March 31, 2020. This is also the proposed effective date for the State Building Code. This date assumes everything goes smoothly from this point on, so it's not set in stone.

### **Extractor/Dryer Awards**

The SFMD recently awarded \$600,000 to 73 Minnesota fire departments for gear washers and dryers. Approximately \$1.7 million dollars was requested from 166 fire departments across the state. Congratulations to the award recipients. Of the 73 awards, 30 were for washer/extractors; 27 were for dryers and 16 were for both extractors and dryers. We are not sure if any funding will be available for Fiscal Year 2020. For more information, please contact Nolan Pasell at [nolan.pasell@state.mn.us](mailto:nolan.pasell@state.mn.us)

### **Fire Marshal Conference**

Save the date for the Fire Marshal Conference presented by the Fire Marshals Association of Minnesota (FMAM). The dates are April 16-17. Registration information will be on our website and the FMAM website.

### **Minnesota Fire Incident Reporting System (MNFIRS)**

Submit your 2018 MNFIRS reports to our office as soon as you can. Contact Nora Gierok at [nora.gierok@state.mn.us](mailto:nora.gierok@state.mn.us) or Scott Radke at [scott.radke@state.mn.us](mailto:scott.radke@state.mn.us) with questions.

### **Fire Investigations**

The Fire Investigation Team continues to be extremely busy, with nearly 700 case files pulled in 2018. Even though the staff is busy, do not hesitate to call for assistance. Our Fire Investigation Team provides properly credentialed fire investigators to Minnesota fire departments. Please call the Minnesota Duty Officer at 651-649-5451 or 800-422-0798 to request an investigator. We will respond to calls from the fire service and Minnesota law enforcement agencies. Contact Jim Iammatteo at [james.iammatteo@state.mn.us](mailto:james.iammatteo@state.mn.us) if you have any questions. Remember: Minnesota State Statute 299F.04 puts the responsibility of determining the origin and cause of fires on the local fire chief.

### **Minnesota Pipeline Awareness Training**

The Minnesota Pipeline Community Awareness Emergency Response (MNCAER) Association is preparing to bring its Coordinated Response Exercise (CoRE) programs to an area near you this spring. These programs enhance awareness and knowledge of pipeline safety and the capability to respond to an incident, and are designed for both experienced and new first responders. CoRE's primary objective is to bring first responders and pipeline operators together to pre-plan for pipeline emergency response. Investing time in a CoRE training is the best way to learn pipeline response. You can register for meetings online at [rsvp.pdigm.com](http://rsvp.pdigm.com).

### **2019 Legislative Session**

The 2019 legislative session started on Jan.8 and the legislative agenda for the Minnesota Fire Associations Coalition (MnFAC) is getting finalized by its Legislative Chairperson BJ Jungmann. Some of the legislative priorities for 2019 are the Fire Safety Account, creation of fire protection districts, and railroad and hazardous substance safety. Other issues MnFAC is supporting or monitoring include MNFIRE initiatives, a ban on flame retardant chemicals and others. Contact BJ Jungmann at [legislative@msfca.org](mailto:legislative@msfca.org) with questions.

### **Fire Fatalities**

There were 36 fire fatalities in 2018 compared with 68 in 2017, according to preliminary numbers. As many of you remember, the number of fire fatalities in 2017 was the most since 1995. There have been nine fire fatalities in Minnesota so far this year compared with 16 at this time in 2018. Thank you to all 775 Minnesota fire departments for the additional fire and life safety education in your communities last year. We know that working together with the Minnesota fire departments is the best way to lower fire deaths across the state.