2018 ANNUAL REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
MINNESOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

CONTENTS

2 HISTORICAL TIMELINE

4 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

6 STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

8 FIRE CODE TEAM

10 FIRE DATA TEAM

12 FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM

16 FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION TEAM

18 FIRE PROTECTION TEAM

22 FIRE SERVICE SPECIALISTS

25 HEALTH CARE TEAM

29 RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM

33 SCHOOL INSPECTION TEAM

37 SPECIAL TEAMS AND PROJECTS

39 SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM

41 MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

43 RETIREMENTS AND DEATHS

A LOOK BACK AT A PRODUCTIVE 2018

Welcome to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's "State Fire Marshal Division 2018 Annual Report."

I believe it is important to look back on what we as a division have done so we can learn from our successes and failures. I am always pushing our staff to improve and grow so that we can better help the Minnesota fire service and continue our work to reduce fire deaths and fire loss in our state.

State Fire Marshal Division staff focused last year on fire deaths. That's because we saw a particularly tragic 2017 with 68 fatalities — the most since 1995.

While even one fire death is tragic, our staff worked in 2018 with the Minnesota fire service to address the jump in fire deaths. Our increased attention on public education worked and we saw a 47 percent drop in fire deaths (36) last year. I'm hopeful that trend will continue in 2019.

Thank you for your continued support. As your state fire marshal, I am proud to provide you with our annual report.

Bruce West
State fire marshal

EVOLVING TO BETTER SERVE MINNESOTA AND ITS FIREFIGHTERS

The fire service is constantly changing and adapting to serve the citizens of Minnesota.

Likewise, the State Fire Marshal Division is also evolving to better serve fire departments and emergency responders across the state. We took on new responsibilities and added personnel in 2018 to assist fire departments in the most expedient and professional manner possible.

None of this would be possible without the exceptional work and dedication by our field, support, and supervisory staff. Our 2018 Annual Report reflects that hard work and dedication.

Most of all, thanks to everyone in the fire service for your continued commitment to making Minnesota a safer place to live, play and work.

Jim Smith
Chief deputy state fire marshal

MINNESOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1905
Legislation authorizing governor to appoint state fire marshal for two-year term. Funding through tax levy on insurance companies.

1907
Amendment authorizing two deputy state fire marshals. Authorization to pay fire departments $1 for reports submitted to the state fire marshal.

1913
All former acts repealed and new State Fire Marshal Department was created. Governor appointed fire marshal and two deputies.

1919
The appointing authority was given to the Commissioner of Insurance.

1925
Legislative action made the Commissioner of Insurance the Ex-Officio State Fire Marshal.

1937
Tax levy to fund the State Fire Marshal Department was raised to 1/2 percent of all insurance premiums to include Town Fire Insurance Company and Farmers Mutual.

1941
Legislature directed all monies collected by the State Fire Marshal for tax and license fees, etc., to be turned over to the General Fund. Fire Marshal Department to be operated under an appropriation by legislative action.

1969
Legislative action created a Department of Public Safety.

1970
The State Fire Marshal Department moved into the Department of Public Safety to be known as the State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD). Gene Weber transfers from the Insurance Commission to DPS to be the state fire marshal.

1972
Health care inspection program begins through a contract with the state health department. Wes Werner is appointed state fire marshal.

1975
Legislature adopted Minnesota's first fire code. (October) — Minnesota Uniform Fire Code (MUFC) adopted the 1973 edition of the Uniform Fire Code (UFC).

1977 (January 28)
17 people killed in a fire at Stratford Hotel in Breckenridge, Minn.

1977
State Fire Marshal Division receives a $20,000 grant from the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration (now the U.S. Fire Administration) to implement the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Minnesota becomes one of the first states to participate.

1978-79
Legislative action enabled local fire departments to enforce the MUFC without local adoption.

1978
Ten positions added to implement hotel/motel/resort inspection program as a result of the Stratford Hotel fire and others.

1979 (May)
First national fire incident reporting system conference is held in Minnesota.

1980
Minnesota is the first state in the nation to require smoke alarms in new and rental residential properties. Three fire code specialists were added.

1983 (April)
MUFC updated to 1982 edition of the UFC.

1987 (March)
Thomas Brace appointed state fire marshal.

MINNESOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1989
Three more positions were added to the SFMD: Two day care inspectors and one fire safety educator. The first edition of the Fire in Minnesota annual report is released. (October) — MUFC updated to 1988 edition of the UFC

1990
Legislation added five new positions to the SFMD to conduct school inspections in Minnesota.

1992
New program added to license fire sprinkler contractors, designers, and fitters. New program to develop operation of Hazardous Material Response Teams.

1993
Legislative action updated arson statutes. Legislation requires a smoke alarm in every dwelling (new and existing). (August) MUFC updated to 1991 edition of the UFC.

1995
Licensing of operators of public fire-works displays. One fire investigator position added.

1996
The Attorney General formed a task force to study the crime of arson in Minnesota. The division received a federal grant of $400,000 to study arson as it relates to the criminal or abusive use of alcohol and/or drugs.

1998
As a result of the Arson Task Force, two new positions were added to the SFMD: One arson investigation trainer and one juvenile fire setter interventionist. (June) — MUFC updated to 1997 edition of UFC. One inspector for the Fire Protection Team was added.

1999
The arson data specialist position was filled. Legislation added funding for a part-time code specialist position, to be hired in FY 01.

2000
National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) — Version 5 introduced and implementation begun.

2003 (March)
Fire code changed to adopt the 2000 edition of the International Fire Code (IFC); became known as the Minnesota State Fire Code (MSFC). (June) — Jerry Rosendahl appointed state fire marshal.

2005 (April)
100th anniversary of the State Fire Marshal Division.

2007 (July)
MSFC updated to 2006 edition of the IFC.

2008
Online fire reporting software system purchased for fire departments to use. Minnesota is the first state fire marshal to have such a system.

2009 (January 1)
All fire reporting to meet NFIRS Version 5 (electronic reporting).

2012 (August 1)
Fire protection system demonstration Trailer placed into service

2013 (December)
Bruce West appointed state fire marshal.

2014 (September)
25th anniversary of *Fire in Minnesota* is published using an updated format.

2015 (April)
110th anniversary of the State Fire Marshal Division.

2016 (May)
The 2015 Minnesota Fire Code was adopted on May 2.

MINNESOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART — STAFFING

JIM IAMMATTEO
Chief Investigator

Fire Investigation Team

Vacancy
Andrea Bexell
Kevin Mahle
Toby McLain
Bruce McLaughlin
Brian Petersen
Ron Rahman
Rich Sellman
John Steinbach
Casey Stotts
Steve Wolf

RYAN WHITING
Fire Safety Supervisor

Residential Care and Lodging Team

Travis Ahrens
Dan Beeson
Travis Cole
Marvin Forbragd
Kevin Sedivy
George Shellum

Robert Rexeisen
- RC&L Inspections
- Fireworks/Explosives Specialist

FORREST WILLIAMS
Fire Safety Supervisor

School Team

Joe Faust
Kurt Kastella
Kevin McGinty
John Swanson

MINNESOTA STATE FIRE MARSHAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART — STAFFING

BRUCE WEST
State Fire Marshal

STEVE FLAHERTY
Executive Director
MBFTE

JIM SMITH
Chief Deputy
State Fire Marshal

MARGARET KOELE
Licensing Coordinator

TOM LINHOFF
Fire Safety Supervisor

Health Care Team
William Abderhalden
James Anderson
Bob Baumann
Larry Gannon
Steve Jurrens
Roy Kingsley
Kimberly Swenson

Kerry Queen
- DOC Inspections
- FSCC Program
- BLSC Inspections

JON NISJA
Fire Safety Supervisor

Fire Protection Team
Dan Kaiser
Ryan Kunst
Ralph Peterson

State Fire Code Team
Tom Jenson
(Code Specialist)
Jake Lindquist
(Code Training and Development)

Information Management Team
Nora Gierok
Joel Paylor
Scott Radke

AMANDA SWENSON
Fire Safety Supervisor

Fire Service Specialists
John Ehret
(NE Region)
Tate Mills
(Central Region)
Jared Rozeboom
(South Region)
Steve White
(NW Region)

Public Education/ YFPI Team
Vacancy
Kathi Osmonson

Fleet Management
Nolan Pasell

BARB LUNDBERG
Office Manager

Support Services
Kathleen Donovan
Nathan Le
Randi Samuelson
Becky Schmidt
Marian Whitney

CONTACT INFORMATION

ABDERHALDEN, Bill
Health Care Inspector | Otsego
(C) 507-361-6204

AHRENS, Travis
Residential Inspector | Owatonna
(C) 507-308-4189

ANDERSON, James A.
Health Care Inspector | Little Falls
(H/O) 320-616-2463

BAUMANN, Robert
Health Care Inspector | Alexandria
(C) 612-430-1276

BEESON, Dan
Residential Inspector | Brainerd
(C) 612-270-9402

BERGSTRAND, Glen
Residential Supervisor | Duluth
(H/O) 218-721-4447

BEXELL, Andrea
Investigator | Thief River Falls
(C) 218-684-1007

COLE, Travis
Residential Inspector | Grand Rapids
(O) 651-769-7785

EHRET, John
Fire Service Specialist | Lake Elmo
(C) 651-323-7134

FAUST, Joe
School Inspector | Lonsdale
(C) 507-602-0651

FLAHERTY, Steve
MBFTE Director | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7258 (C) 651-248-8726

FORBRAGD, Marvin
Residential Inspector | Oak Grove
(C) 651-769-7783

GANNON, Larry
Health Care Inspector | Janesville
(C) 651-769-7779

IAMMATTEO, James
Chief Investigator | Keewatin
(H/O) 218-778-0016

JENSON, Thomas
Code Specialist | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7221

JURENS, Steve
Health Care Inspector | Kasson
(C) 651-470-4416

KAISER. Dan
Sprinkler Inspector | St. Paul
(0) 651-201-7215 (H/O) 507-455-5820

KASTELLA, Kurt W.
School Inspector | Underwood
(H/O) 218 826-6195

KINGSLEY, Roy
Health Care Inspector | Apple Valley
(C) 651-769-7772

KUNST, Ryan
Plan Reviewer | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7217

LINDQUIST, Jake
Code Training and Development | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7219 (C) 651-413-5973

LINHOFF, Thomas
Health Care Supervisor | Stillwater
(H/O) 651-430-3012

MAHLE, Kevin
Investigator/Training | Bemidji
(C) 612-718-8448

McGINTY, Kevin
School Inspector | Zimmerman
(C) 651-888-9119

McLAIN, Toby
Investigator | Laporte
(C) 612-270-6146

McLAUGHLIN, Bruce
Investigator | Inver Grove Heights
(C) 612-716-6886

MILLS, Tate
Fire Service Specialist | Albertville
(C) 320-333-2817

NISJA, Jon
Sprinkler and Training Supervisor | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7204

OSMONSON, Kathi
Fire and Life Safety/YFPI Specialist | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7220 (C) 763-280-4609

PETERSEN, Brian
Investigator | Waseca
(C) 651-263-0793

PETERSON, Ralph
Sprinkler Inspector | St. Paul
(H/O) 612-928-4505 (O) 651-201-7216

QUEEN, Kerry
Health Care/Corrections Inspector | St. Cloud
(H/O) 320-229-7675

RADKE, Scott
Data Administrator | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7222

RAHMAN, Ron
Investigator | Northfield
(H/O) 612-716-1654

REXEISEN, Bob
Residential Inspector | Circle Pines
(C) 612-386-4657

ROZEBOOM, Jared
Fire Service Specialist | Hills
(C) 507-456-0907

SEDIVY, Kevin
Residential Inspector | Cross Lake
(651) 201-7218 (C) 651-295-1639

SELLMAN, Richard
Investigator | Chisholm
(C) 218-966-4436

SHELLUM, George
Residential Inspector | Silver Lake
(H/O) 320-327-8465

SMITH, James
Chief Deputy | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7202 (C) 612-240-9170

STEINBACH, John
Investigator | New London
(H/O) 320-354-5137

STOTTS, Casey
Investigator | Hutchinson
(H/O) 320-234-0377

SWANSON, John
School Inspections/Plan Reviewer | Lakeville
(H/O) 651-334-3217

SWENSON, Amanda
State Services Supervisor | St. Paul
(O) 651-398-1091

SWENSON, Kimberly
Health Care Inspector | St. Francis
(C) 651-769-7333

WEST, Bruce
State Fire Marshal | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7201

WHITE, Steve
Fire Service Specialist | Walker
(C) 218-579-0128

WHITING, Ryan
Residential Inspector | Bemidji
(C) 612-219-7125

WILLIAMS, Forrest
School Supervisor | Duluth
(H/O) 218-724-5771

WOLF, Steven
Investigator | Stewartville
(H/O) 507-533-6609

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

DONOVAN, Kathleen
Health Care/Explosives/Investigations | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7208

GIEROK, Nora
Data/MFIRS | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7209

KOELE, Margaret
MBFTE Licensing Coordinator | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7259

LE, Nathan
Sprinkler | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7207

LUNDBERG, Barbara
Offices Services Supervisor | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7203

PASELL, Nolan
Fleet Manager | St. Paul
(O) 651-501-7218

PAYLOR, Joel
Data/MFIRS | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7210

SAMUELSON, Randi
Residential/Schools | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7212

SCHMIDT, Rebecca
Residential | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7211

WHITNEY, Marian
Health Care | St. Paul
(O) 651-201-7213

FIRE CODE TEAM

ABOUT

The Fire Code Team provides fire code information, guidance in the development of state fire code and training on fire code provisions.

MEET THE TEAM

Jon Nisja I Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7204 or jon.nisja@state.mn.us

Tom Jenson I Fire Code Specialist

Location: St. Paul

Duties: Conducts plan reviews for new and existing buildings, fire investigations and fire and life safety education

Contact: 651-201-7221 or thomas.jenson@state.mn.us

Jacob Lindquist I Fire Code Specialist

Location: St. Paul

Duties: Coordinates fire code training, processes fire code appeals, variance requests and formal interpretations.

Contact: 651-201-7219

WHAT THEY DO

The team's mission is to save lives and property, reduce business interruption and minimize the environmental impact from fire and hazardous materials. The Fire Code Team provides fire safety regulations that can be used throughout Minnesota to help reduce the number and severity of fires.

Since the 1975 adoption of a fire code in Minnesota, fire deaths have dropped dramatically. The fire code is a tool for state and local fire officials to improve fire and life safety in buildings and facilities. We hope to continue reducing fire deaths in Minnesota through refinement and enforcement of the fire code.

BEST OF 2018

SFMD code staff worked on the adoption of a newer edition of the Minnesota State Fire Code, which is tentatively scheduled for adoption in early 2020.

State Fire Marshal Conference

The SFMD hosted its seventh-annual conference April 3-4. More than 225 people attended this two-day training event that featured two survivors from the Seton Hall University dormitory fire in New Jersey in 2000. Training topics included:

- Community risk reduction strategies
- Introduction to fire investigations
- Gas and flame detection
- Managing a fire prevention bureau
- Fire protection for energy storage systems
- Commercial cooking fire prevention and suppression
- Smoke alarm and detector technology
- Historic Minnesota fires

FIRE CODE QUESTIONS — 2018

	Method received		
Month	**Phone**	**E-mail**	**Total**
January	63	118	181
February	66	108	174
March	85	101	186
April	74	112	186
May	65	128	193
June	53	111	164
July	64	97	161
August	60	112	172
September	63	94	157
October	60	107	167
November	49	115	164
December	63	74	137
Totals	**765**	**1,317**	**2,082**

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

The team prides itself on same-day responses for code questions or at least answering questions within 24 hours.

- Code questions answered:
  - — 2018: 2,082
  - — 2017: 2,290
  - — 2016: 2,282
  - — 2015: 2,435
  - — 2014: 1,900
- Most common methods for questions: Telephone (40 percent) or email (60 percent)
- Code questions are asked by:
  - — Code officials: 35%
  - — Building owners: 19%
  - — General public: 16%
  - — Contractors: 16%
  - — Others: 14%

In addition to the two full-time staff and part-time supervisor, six other members of the division monitor and respond to fire code emails.

Fire code and fire protection training

State fire code staff worked with the fire protection staff to provide training opportunities to fire departments, fire protection contractors, fire and building code officials and architects.

SFMD staff provided 95 hours of training to more than 334 attendees on fire prevention and fire safety in 2018 at locations across the state and at fire inspection conferences, including the annual State Fire Marshal Conference.

DID YOU KNOW?

The SFMD staff have over 750 years of combined fire prevention, fire inspection or fire investigation experience.

FIRE DATA TEAM

ABOUT

The Fire Data Team has three primary functions:

- Collection and analysis of statewide fire data.
- Publication of Fire in Minnesota.
- Fire loss data.

MEET THE TEAM

Jon Nisja I Supervisor

Contact: 651-201-7204 or jon.nisja@state.mn.us

Nora Gierok I Office and Admin Specialist

Duties: Manages the state fire reporting system, coordinates the Fire in Minnesota report, serves as point of contact for the federal fire reporting system.

Contact: 651-201-7209 or nora.gierok@state.mn.us

Joel Paylor I Office and Admin Specialist

Duties: Manages the SFMD training website and registrations, newsletters, handles data reporting and other administrative support.

Contact: 651-201-7210 or joel.d.paylor@state.mn.us

Scott Radke I State Fire Data Administrator

Duties: Serves as research analyst for fire data and business processes in the SFMD, trains and supports Minnesota fire departments, supports SFMD investigations and inspections teams.

Contact: 651-201-7222 or scott.radke@state.mn.us

WHAT THEY DO

The team's mission is to save lives and property by collecting and analyzing fire-loss data and publishing the *Fire in Minnesota report.* The Fire Data Team collects and disseminates fire-related data and information to help make Minnesota a safer place to live, work and play.

The team seeks to learn where fires are occurring and what causes them in an effort to provide prevention-related information.

BEST OF 2018

Fire in Minnesota

The *Fire in Minnesota* report provides a snapshot of Minnesota's fire problem for the prior year.

The 2017 report provided information on more than 300,000 incidents responded to by 772 fire departments. Included were 13,450 fires doing $223.9 million in damage.

Copies of *Fire in Minnesota* are available on the division's website — sfm.dps.mn.gov — for download. Printed copies are also available by contacting one of the staff on the Fire Data Team.

The report summarizes the activities of Minnesota's fire departments over the past year.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

Fire data analysis

The team collected fire incident reports from 772 of the state's 775 fire departments and compiled the fire loss data into its annual report: *Fire in Minnesota* — 2017. Fire departments responded to over 300,000 incidents. Due to the volume and complexity of the data, it takes several months to process and compile this into a usable report.

DID YOU KNOW?

Minnesota's fire rate (number of fires per 1,000 people) is about 35 percent lower than the rest of the United States.

FIRE DATA ANALYSIS

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total number FDs	789	785	785	785	782	779	779	775
Reporting FDs	767 (97.2%)	768 (97.8%)	776 (98.8%)	776 (98.8%)	772 (98.7%)	768 (98.6%)	774 (99.4%)	772 (99.6%)
Non-reporting	22 (2.7%)	17 (2.2%)	9 (1.1%)	9 (1.1%)	10 (1.2%)	11 (1.3%)	5 (0.6%)	3 (0.4%)
Software reporting	178 (22.5%)	164 (20.9%)	144 (18.3%)	152 (19.4%)	128 (16.4%)	126 (16.2%)	86 (11%)	101 (13%)
Online reporting	589 (74.6%)	604 (76.9%)	632 (80.5%)	624 (79.5%)	644 (82.3%)	642 (82.4%)	688 (88.3%)	671 (86.6%)

*Note: The 2018 fire data is not yet finalized.

FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM

ABOUT

The history of fire investigations in Minnesota goes back to the earliest days of the SFMD. When the office of the State Fire Marshal was established in 1905, one of its primary functions was investigating fire origins and causes. Although state statute assigns responsibility for determining origin and cause of fires to the local fire chief, that function remains a high priority for the SFMD to this day, and staff continues to provide investigative services whenever asked by a local FD.

The Fire Investigation Team consists of 11 investigators and one chief investigator. Each investigator works from a home office located in an assigned regional service area. Coverage areas are reviewed regularly to see if changes need to be made to maintain effective response times —typically two to three hours — but it can be longer when weather is a factor.

MEET THE TEAM

Jim Iammatteo I Chief Investigator/Supervisor

Location: Keewatin

Contact: 218-778-0016 or james.iammatteo@state.mn.us

Kathleen Donovan I Investigative Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7208 or kathleen.donovan@state.mn.us

Andrea Bexell I Investigator

Location: Thief River Falls

Coverage area: Northwestern Minnesota

Contact: 218-684-1007 or andrea.wenzlaff@state.mn.us

Kevin Mahle I Investigator/Trainer

Location: Bemidji

Coverage area: North Central Minnesota

Contact: 612-718-8448 or kevin.mahle@state.mn.us

Toby McLain I Investigator

Location: Alexandria

Coverage area: West Central Minnesota

Contact: 612-270-6146 or toby.mclain@state.mn.us

Bruce McLaughlin I Investigator

Location: Inver Grove Heights

Coverage area: East Central Minnesota

Contact: 612-716-6886 or bruce.mclaughlin@state.mn.us

Brian Petersen I Investigator

Location: Waseca

Coverage area: Southwest Minnesota

Contact: 651-263-0793 or brian.petersen@state.mn.us

Ron Rahman I Investigator

Location: Northfield

Coverage area: South Central Minnesota

Contact: 612-716-1654 or ronald.rahman@state.mn.us

Richard Sellman I Investigator

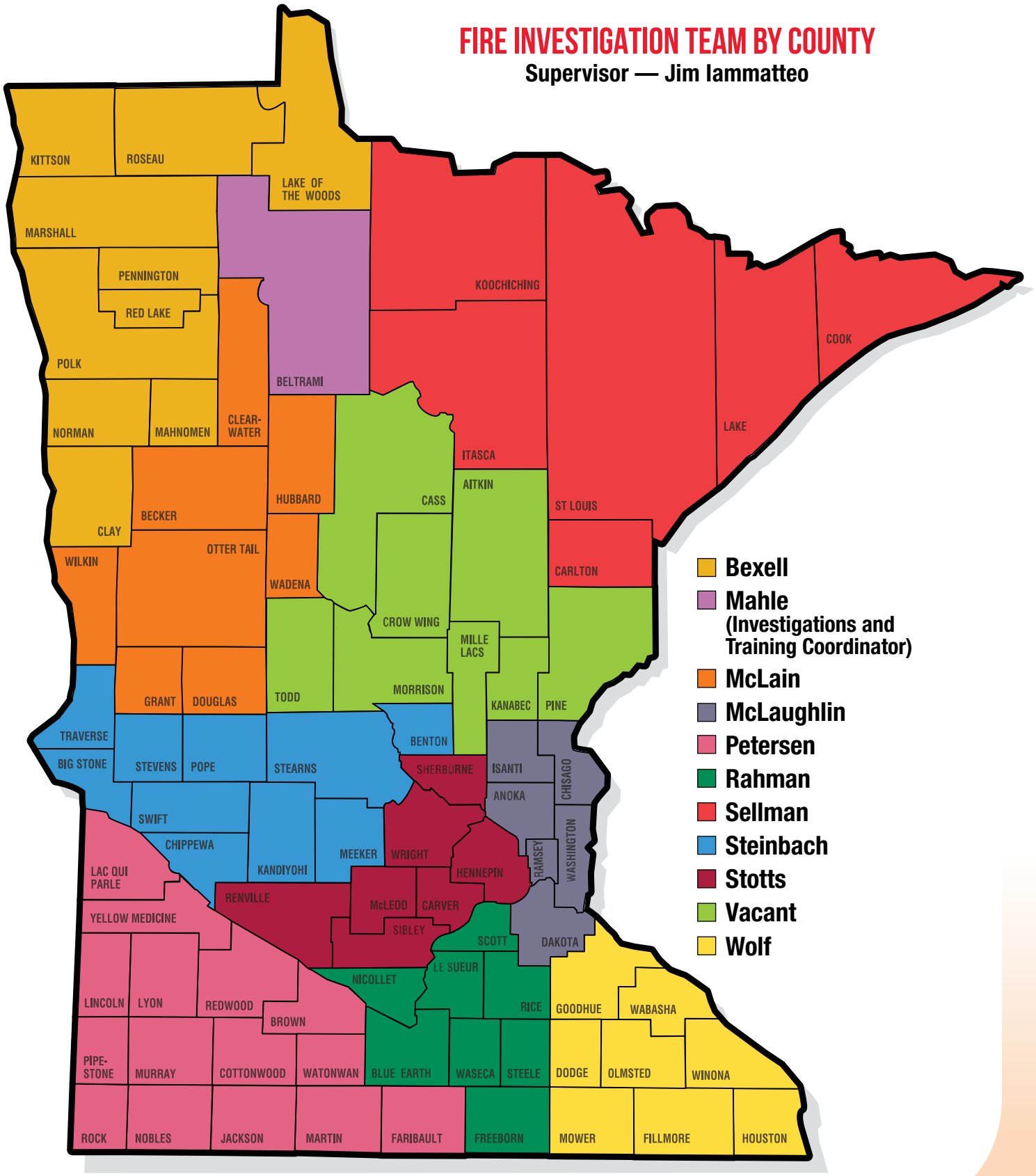
Location: Chisholm

Coverage area: Northeast Minnesota

Contact: 218-966-4436 or richard.sellman@state.mn.us

FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM BY COUNTY

Supervisor — Jim Iammatteo



FIRE INVESTIGATION TEAM

John Steinbach I Investigator

Location: New London

Coverage area: Central Minnesota

Contact: 612-710-6825 or john.steinbach@state.mn.us

Casey Stotts I Investigator

Location: Hutchinson

Coverage area: South Central Minnesota

Contact: 651-263-0973 or casey.stotts@state.mn.us

Steve Wolf I Investigator

Location: Stewartville

Coverage area: Southeast Minnesota

Contact: 763-458-7348 or steven.wolf@state.mn.us

WHAT THEY DO

The team helps local fire departments determine fire origin and cause and also helps county, state and federal agencies bring arson cases to justice. Investigators help with interviews and interrogation, subpoena documents, and provide other assistance to agencies involved in case resolution. Fire investigation is a complex science, difficult to master but essential to justice. The SFMD's goal has always been to have all investigators trained to the certified fire investigator level, the gold standard in crime investigation, in law enforcement and in the courtroom.

BEST OF 2018

The team has been working on developing training programs for our customers, including firefighters, law enforcement and prosecuting attorneys, as well as updating our own training. We began a new series of training for our investigators twice a year to be held at Camp Ripley. These training sessions are critical to keep us performing better than we have and to provide the citizens of the state with the best fire investigators possible.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

Investigations

The team assists with hundreds of fire investigations each year across Minnesota. Investigation assistance may be requested by local fire service or law enforcement personnel. Investigators will not be dispatched when requests are received from private citizens or insurance companies.

The team has investigated more than 2,400 fires since 2011:

- 2018: 557 (plus 120 consultations)
- 2017: 506
- 2016: 475
- 2015: 465
- 2014: 413
- 2013: 396
- 2012: 428
- 2011: 398

Training

Basic and advanced training courses continue to draw interest from Minnesota firefighters and law enforcement officers. Training is mandated by state statute and conducted by Investigator Kevin Mahle.

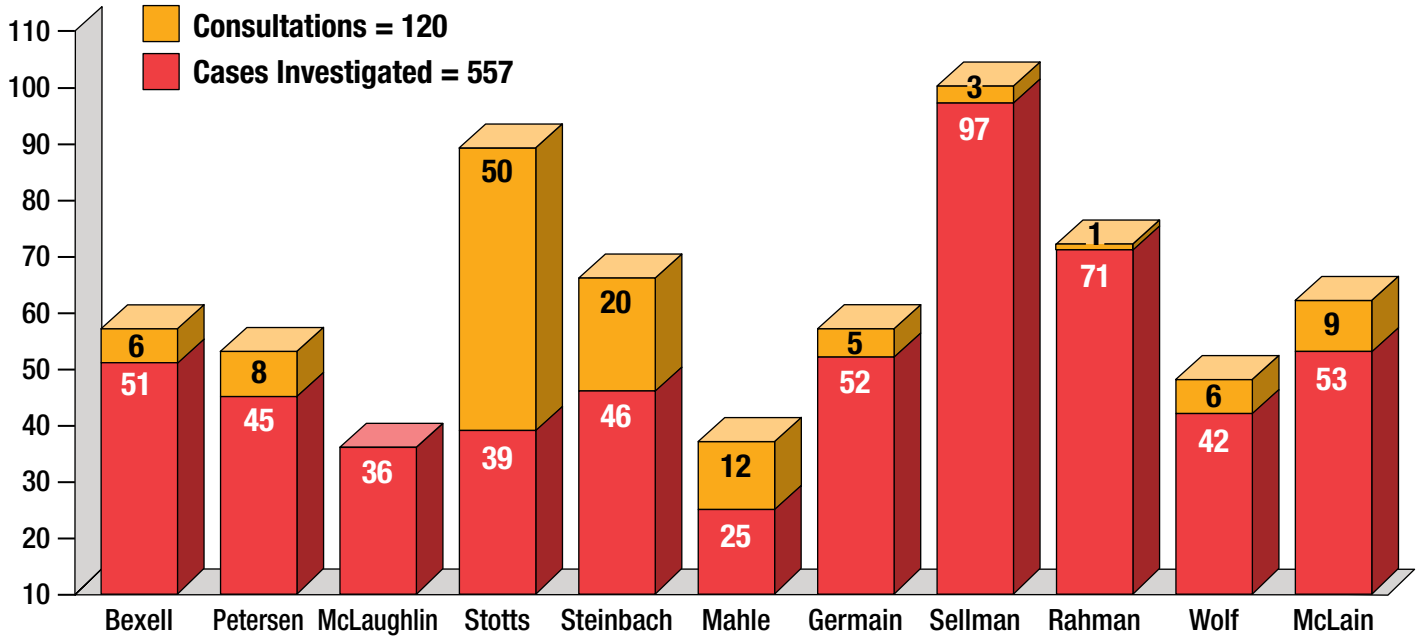
- Class topics:
  - Organizing the fire scene
  - Basic fire investigation
  - State fire school
  - Basic fire and arson investigation
  - Basic fire safety
  - A line firefighter's role in fire investigations
  - Advanced fire investigation
  - Fire death investigation
  - Interview and interrogations in fire investigations
- Training classes in 2018: 21
- Number of students: 638

DID YOU KNOW?

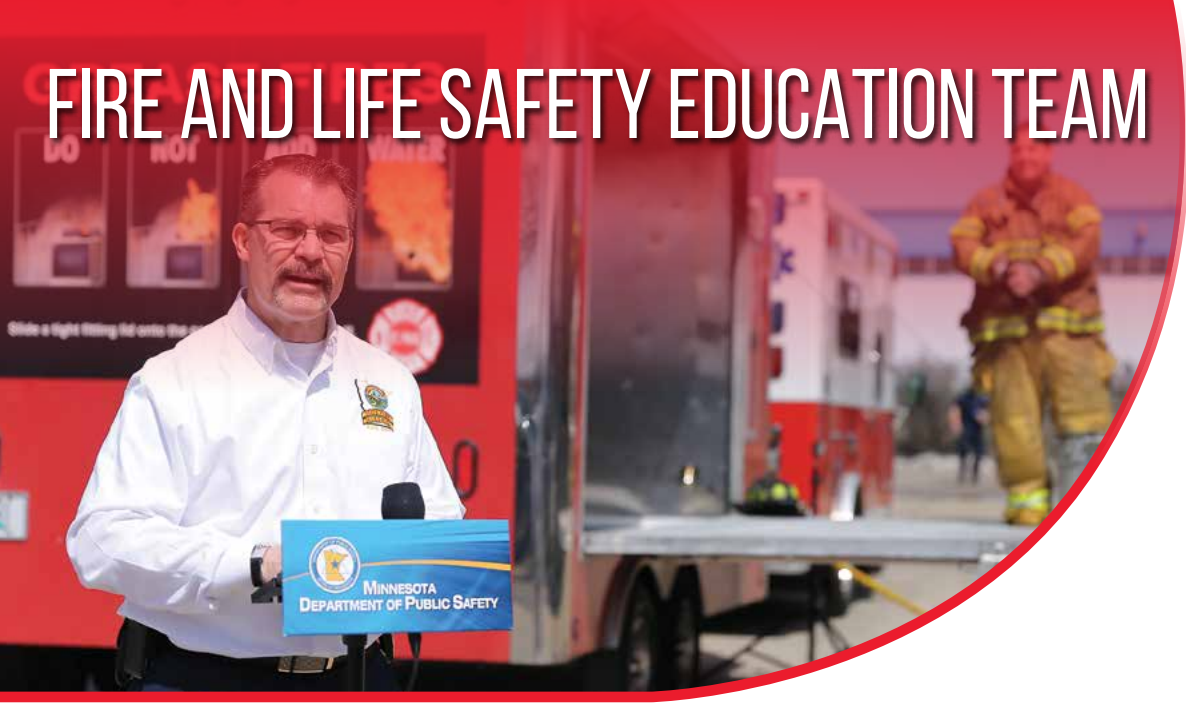
Our investigators work or are available anytime to investigate fires across the state of Minnesota. These investigators work from their homes and are prepositioned across the state so that travel time is kept to a minimum in time of need. Much like the local fire department, investigators are available whenever needed and requested.

INVESTIGATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS – 2018

Preliminary



FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION TEAM



ABOUT

The Fire and Life Safety Education Team focuses on fire and life safety education across Minnesota.

MEET THE TEAM

Amanda Swenson | Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7214 or amanda.swenson@state.mn.us

Kathi Osmonson | Fire and Life Safety/ YFPI Specialist

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7220 or kathi.osmonson@state.mn.us

WHAT THEY DO

The Fire and Life Safety Education Team works to educate citizens on the dangers of fire, promote fire-safe behavior, coordinate the youth fire prevention and intervention (YFPI) team, and provide resources and education to fire departments to improve and expand fire and life safety programs. The team works with other SFMD staff to learn more about where and why fires are happening in the state in order to provide insight to departments and partners.

The team also works closely with the Department of Public Safety's Office of Communications to develop prevention materials for the public, fire service and media.

BEST OF 2018

The Fire and Life Safety Education Team coordinated the first Safety Summit with NFPA, which brought together educators for a fast-paced event covering 12 different safety topics in a one-day training.

The team provided training and resources to fire departments and residents across Minnesota. The team continues to work with the SFMD Data Team analyze why and where fires and fire deaths are occurring across the state.

The educators worked with the American Red Cross on the Home Fire Campaign Sound the Alarm smoke alarm installation program. Staff helped fire officials and Red Cross volunteers with education and smoke alarm installations in Silver Lake and St. Paul. The team also co-presented at the American Red Cross Trends in Transfusion Practices Conference to talk about fire safety and the importance of working smoke alarms.

The educators provided fire and life safety presentations at various venues and visited a number of regional meetings providing updates and support for community risk reduction planning. Departments also arranged individual training and meetings to advance their risk reduction and prevention programs.

During the year, educators served on a number of different committees to assist with fire prevention messages and support including. Staff also participated in committees with a vested interest in safety such as the Minnesota State Fall Coalition and Injury and Violence Prevention Coalition.

Three new Sparky the Fire Dog costumes were added to the SFMD Lending Library, which also includes fire safety books and videos. Additionally, a spinning wheel and photo backdrop can be checked out for events.

A new partnership with the Minnesota Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators resulted in the first advanced YFPI training session as part of the IAAI Conference. Staff also provided YFPI training through two specialist classes, training to Minnesota State Social Services Association Conference attendees and Hennepin Technical College Community Corrections and Juvenile Law Enforcement.

Last year marked the 20th anniversary of Governor's Fire Prevention Day at the Minnesota State Fair. Staff work with a committee of dedicated volunteers throughout the year to coordinate the event. While the day was wet with storms passing through, staff enjoyed educate fairgoers on fire prevention and safety. The much sought-out yard sticks were a hit with visitors who played a dice game to test their knowledge.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

With both educators working on YFPI, the statewide team expanded to 11 regions, each with a dedicated program manager. Fifty-five cases came through the division and there are 66 cases entered in YFIRES for 2018, which is more than twice as many as were entered in 2017. NFIRS indicated 147 cases of youth-set fires.

National YFIRES data shows:

- 81 percent of fire setters are male, though there is a higher propensity for females ages 6–11 to start fires than any other age range.
- More fires are started by children living with their biological parents than any other family situation.
- 30 percent of cases entered into YFIRES had not been reported to NFIRS and another 32 percent stated that it was unknown if the fire was entered into NFIRS.

DID YOU KNOW

The Public Educator Newsletter is a monthly resource for fire prevention and life safety information. The newsletter now reaches over 700 safety professionals. Registration for email updates is on the SFMD website at sfm.dps.mn.gov.

FIRE PROTECTION TEAM

ABOUT

The Fire Protection Team performs the following functions:

- Licenses fire protection contractors.
- Certifies installing personnel.
- Issues permits for fire protection systems.
- Reviews plans for these systems.
- Inspects fire protection systems.
- Provides training on fire protection systems.
- Provides technical assistance.

MEET THE TEAM

Jon Nisja I Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7204 or jon.nisja@state.mn.us

Nathan Le I Protection Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7207 or nathan.le@state.mn.us

Dan Kaiser I Sprinkler Plan Reviewer

Duties: Performs plan reviews, conducts inspections and provides fire protection information to clients

Contact: 651-201-201-7215 or dan.kaiser@state.mn.us

Ryan Kunst I Sprinkler Plan Reviewer

Duties: Performs plan reviews, conducts inspections and provides fire protection information to clients

Contact: 651-201-7217 or ryan.kunst@state.mn.us

Ralph Peterson I Sprinkler Plan Reviewer

Duties: Performs plan reviews, conducts inspections and provides fire protection information to clients

Contact: 651-201-7216 or ralph.peterson@state.mn.us

WHAT THEY DO

The team's mission is to save lives and property through effective licensing, plan review and inspecting fire protection systems. Their efforts ensure that fire protection systems work effectively, reducing the harm caused to people and property by fire.

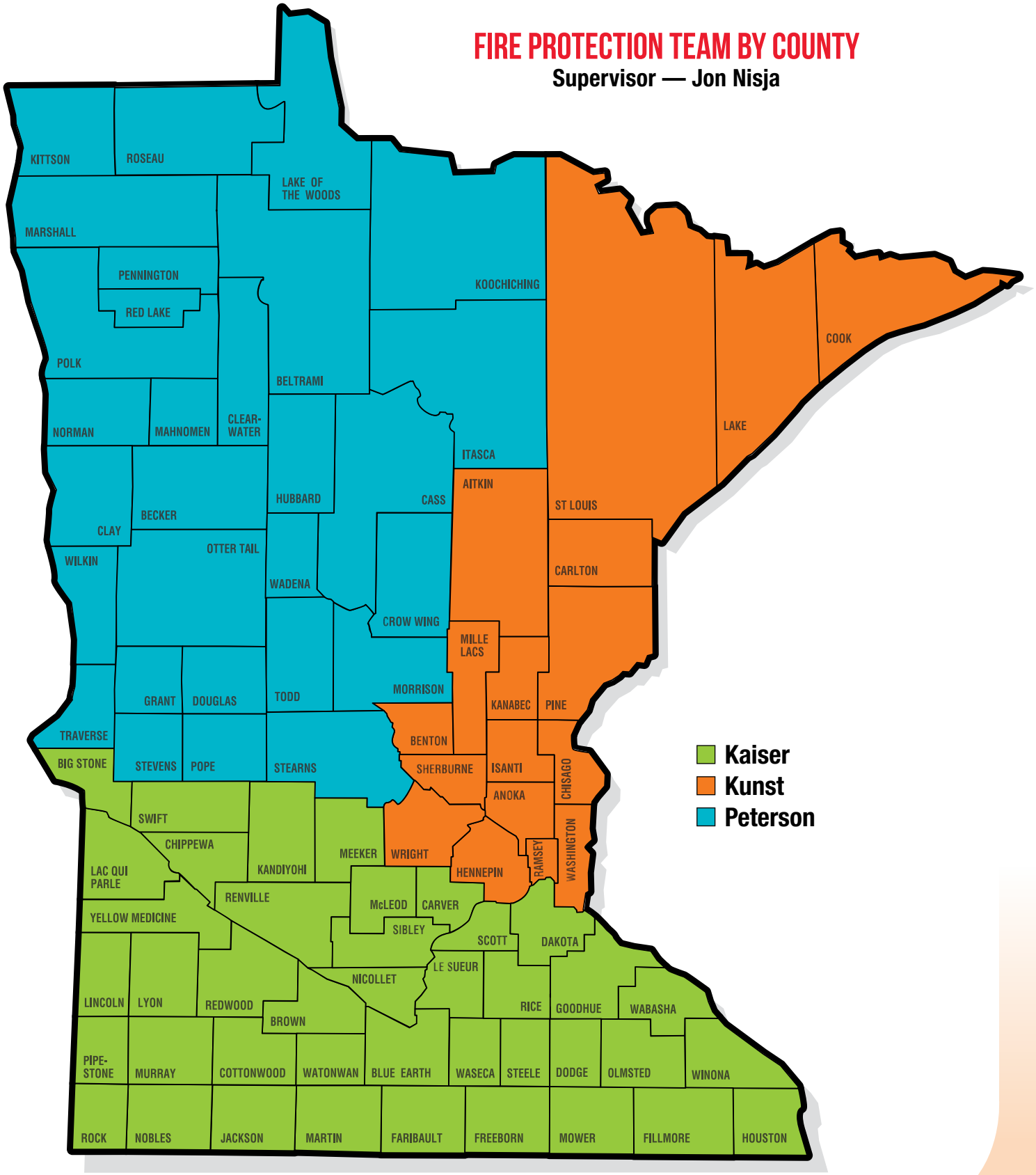
The use of fire protection systems is on the rise. The SFMD Fire Protection Team is able to track sprinkler effectiveness and show that these systems are working.

BEST OF 2018

The Fire Protection Team provided training to 470 of the state's 700 sprinkler fitters.

FIRE PROTECTION TEAM BY COUNTY

Supervisor — Jon Nisja



Training on proper fire protection system installation and operation is an important function of the Fire Protection Team. The SFMD had a trailer constructed in 2012 to demonstrate fire protection systems. The trailer has seven sprinkler and standpipe systems plus a functional fire alarm and detection system. This trailer is transported around Minnesota and used to train fire service personnel, code officials, and facility representatives.

FIRE PROTECTION DEMONSTRATION TRAILER ACTIVITY

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of Demonstrations	12	47	45	17	23	43	44
Number of Participants	263	908	934	223	434	772	786

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

Contractor licensing

In 2018 there were 73 licensed fire-protection contractors in Minnesota. A breakdown of the licenses is as follows:

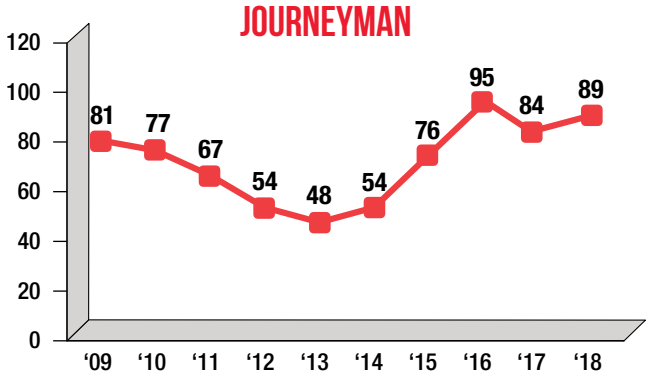
- Total licensed contractors: 73
  - Limited contractors: 3
  - Design contractors: 9
  - Fire protection contractors: 61
- Breakdown of fire protection contractors
  - Out-of-state based: 23
  - Minnesota-based: 38
    - Metro area: 27
    - Greater Minnesota: 11

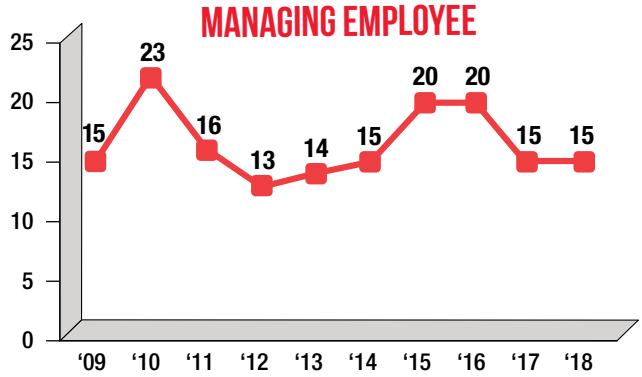
Installer certification

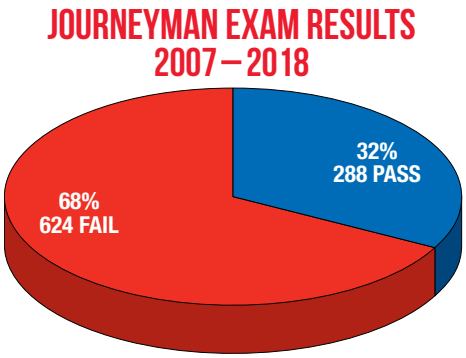
In 2018 there were 700 certificates were issued to journeyman sprinkler fitters and managing employees; the following is a breakdown of certificates issued:

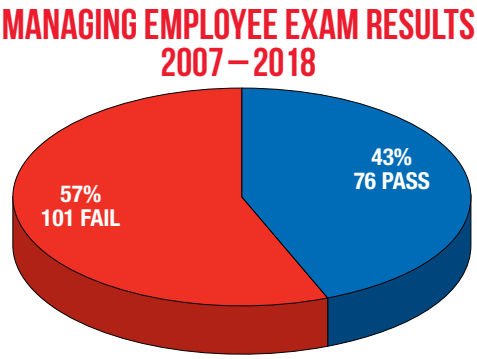
- Number of journeyman sprinkler fitters: 608
- Number of limited journeyman sprinkler fitters: 15
- Number of managing employees: 77

Exams for journeyman sprinkler fitters and managing employees are given every two months. The following shows the exam activity for the past 10 years:



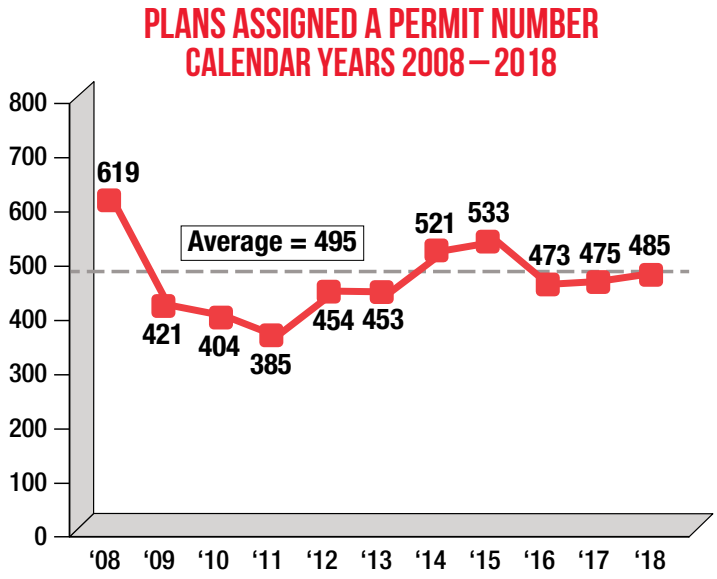






Permit issuing

There are about 190 communities and townships that issue fire protection installation permits. In all other areas of Minnesota, the SFMD is the issuing authority for fire protection permits. The following table shows permit activity since 2008.



Plan reviews and inspections

The team has three full-time employees who perform hundreds of fire protection plan reviews and inspections each year. There was a slight decrease in total plan reviews in 2016, while the number of inspections increased substantially. A breakdown of the plan review and inspection activity for the past six years is shown below:

PLANS AND INSPECTION ACTIVITY

Year	Initial Reviews	Re-Submittal Reviews	Total Reviews	Inspections
2013	400	59	459	274
2014	424	80	504	312
2015	524	53	577	308
2016	491	48	539	423
2017	524	59	583	297
2018	355	25	360	391

Fire protection systems training

Training on proper fire protection system installation and operation is an important function of the Fire Protection Team. The SFMD had a trailer constructed IN 2012 to demonstrate fire protection systems. The trailer has seven sprinkler and standpipe systems, plus a functional fire alarm and detection system. The fire protection system demonstration trailer is transported around Minnesota and used to train fire service personnel, code officials and facility representatives.

Here is the data on the Fire Protection System Demonstration Trailer activity:

- Number of demonstrations in 2018: 44
- Number of participants: 786

DID YOU KNOW?

In fires controlled by fire sprinkler systems, only 1.3 percent of the value of the building and contents is damaged. In buildings without sprinkler protection, that loss is significantly higher.

FIRE SERVICE SPECIALISTS

ABOUT

The fire service specialists are a liaison between the SFMD and Minnesota fire departments. The fire service specialists also provide assistance as requested by fire department officials across Minnesota.

MEET THE TEAM

Amanda Swenson | Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: amanda.swenson@state.mn.us or 651-201-7214

John Ehret | Fire Service Specialist Northeast

Location: Lake Elmo

Contact: john.ehret@state.mn.us or 651-323-7134

Tate Mills | Fire Service Specialist Central

Location: Albertville

Contact: tate.mills@state.mn.us or 320-333-2817

Jared Rozeboom | Fire Service Specialist South

Location: Hills

Contact: jared.rozeboom@state.mn.us or 507-456-0907

Steve White | Fire Service Specialist Northwest

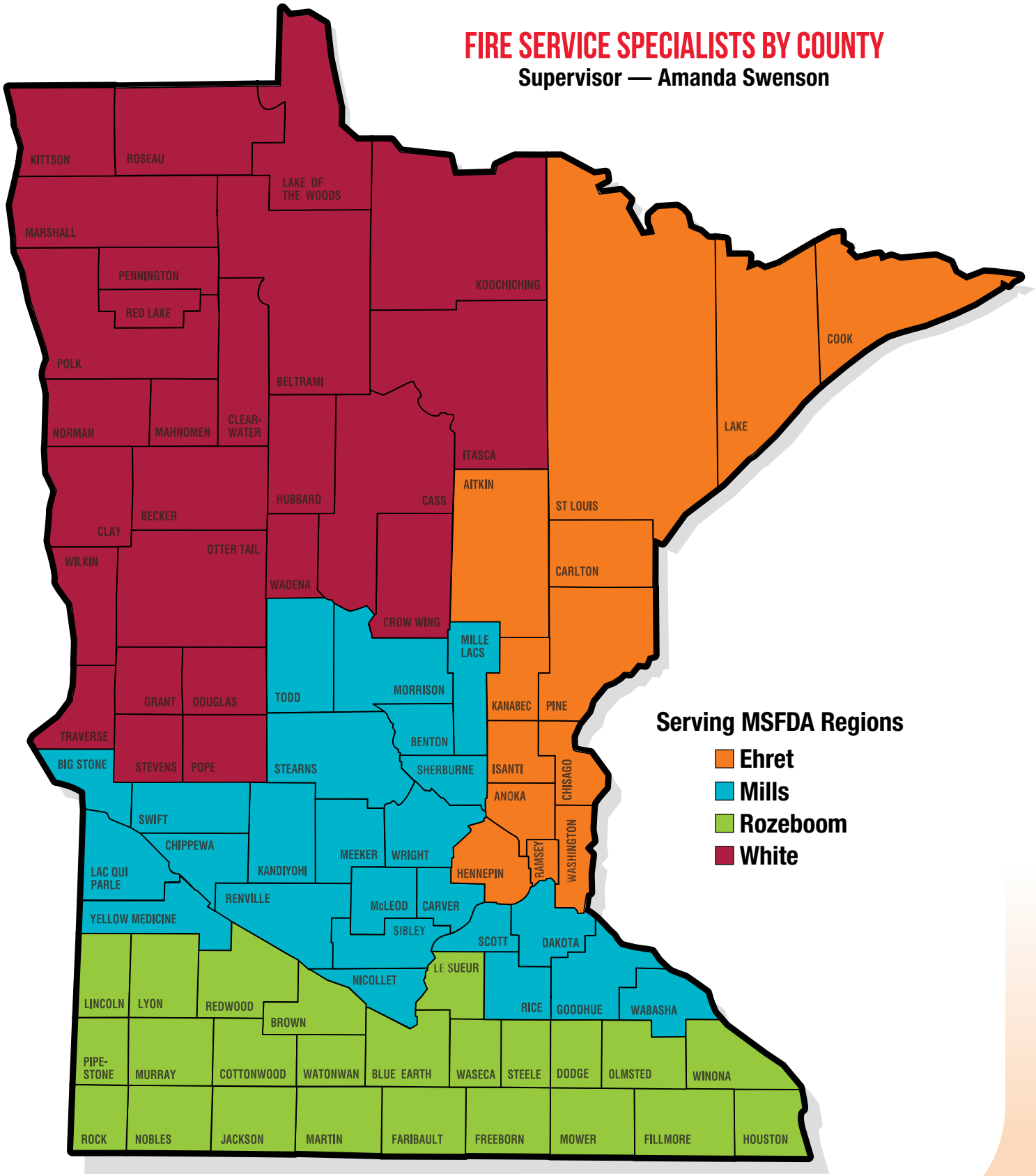
Location: Walker

Contact: steven.l.white@state.mn.us or 218-579-0128

WHAT THEY DO

The fire service specialists assist fire departments upon request with the following:

- Large incident response and staging (per governor executive order)
- Deaths of retired or active duty firefighters
- Fire department management
- Disciplinary issues
- Grants
- Contracts/disputes/arbitration
- Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education (MBFTE) funding
- Development of standard operating guidelines and procedures
- Service Planning Grant Program
- Minimum credentials/requirements
- Mutual-aid agreements/joint-powers agreements
- National Fire Academy training (point of contact)


FIRE SERVICE SPECIALISTS BY COUNTY
Supervisor — Amanda Swenson
KITTSON
ROSEAU
LAKE OF THE WOODS
MARSHALL
PENNINGTON
RED LAKE
KOOCHICHING
COOK
POLK
BELTRAMI
NORMAN
MAHNOMEN
CLEAR-WATER
LAKE
ITASCA
AITKIN
HUBBARD
CASS
ST LOUIS
BECKER
CLAY
OTTER TAIL
WILKIN
CARLTON
WADENA
CROW WING
MILLE LACS
GRANT
DOUGLAS
TODD
MORRISON
KANABEC
PINE
TRAVERSE
BENTON
BIG STONE
STEVENS
POPE
STEARNS
SHERBURNE
ISANTI
CHISAGO
ANOKA
SWIFT
CHIPPEWA
MEEKER
WRIGHT
RAMSEY
WASHINGTON
LAC QUI PARLE
KANDIYOHI
HENNEPIN
RENVILLE
McLEOD
CARVER
YELLOW MEDICINE
SIBLEY
SCOTT
DAKOTA
LE SUEUR
NICOLLET
LINCOLN
LYON
REDWOOD
RICE
GOODHUE
WABASHA
BROWN
PIPE-STONE
MURRAY
COTTONWOOD
WATONWAN
BLUE EARTH
WASECA
STEELE
DODGE
OLMSTED
WINONA
ROCK
NOBLES
JACKSON
MARTIN
FARIBAULT
FREEBORN
MOWER
FILLMORE
HOUSTON
Serving MSFDA Regions
Ehret
Mills
Rozeboom
White

BEST OF 2018

The fire service specialists discussed training funds from Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education with over 700 different departments. They helped department staff fully understand the reimbursement process and how to utilize the training dollars. This was a 56 percent increase in contacts from the prior year on MBFTE training funds. Along with discussions on training funds, the fire service specialists met with nearly 200 departments to discuss training props and trailers available. The team has worked to develop plans and partnerships to ensure training resources are available across the state.

The list of topics that the team covers with fire departments is extensive. The other top topics during 2018 included:

- Completion of FA-1
- Minnesota Fire Incident Reporting System
- Mutual aid/auto aid
- Fire code
- Policies
- Federal Assistance to Firefighter Grants
- Service Planning Grants

The fire service specialists helped 12 departments host National Fire Academy (NFA) two-day and six-day classes.

The team has worked with MnFIRE to assist in the awareness and introduce the program to departments across the state.

The fire service specialists helped coordinate the hosting of the 2018 North American Fire Training Directors Conference (NAFTD). John Ehret worked closely with NAFTD and SFMD to ensure that attendees had a great training and experience in Minnesota.

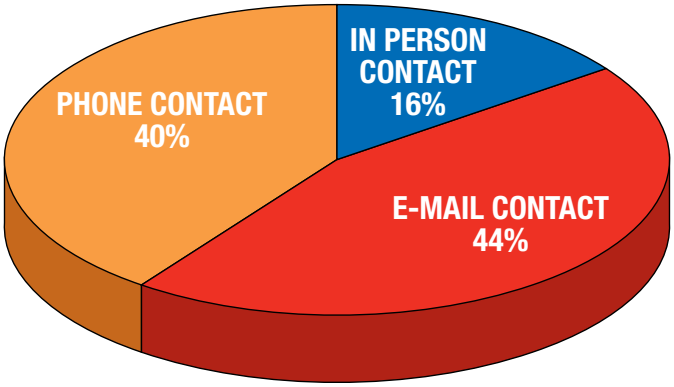
2018 BY THE NUMBERS

The Fire Service Specialists worked directly with departments to assist on a number of different topics. The team of four was able to reach 754 of the 779 fire departments across the state.

Here is a breakdown of what the specialists achieved in 2018:

- 754 fire departments contacted
- 28 county government contacts
- 77 city government contacts
- 27 regional meetings attended
- 44 county chiefs meetings attended
- 8 private companies contacted
- 1,454 phone requests answered
- 1,627 email requests
- 583 in-person meetings

TYPES OF CONTACTS



DID YOU KNOW?

The fire service specialists are on-call to help with major incidents across the state. They assist the incident command and local fire department, helping coordinate their needs and support.

HEALTH CARE TEAM

ABOUT

The Health Care Team is responsible for the inspection of all health care facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health and also those federally certified by the Federal Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services for federal reimbursement. Inspections are also conducted as required by the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC).

Health care facilities in these categories include:

- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Boarding care homes
- Supervised licensed facilities
- Outpatient surgical centers
- Hospice facilities
- Prisons/jails

In addition to the above facilities, the team inspects adult foster care facilities upon their initial license application to the State DHS.

The team is made up of 11 personnel: A fire safety supervisor, two support staff and eight inspectors.

MEET THE TEAM

Tom Linhoff I Supervisor

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7205 or tom.linhoff@state.mn.us

Kathleen Donovan I Health Care Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7208 or kathleen.donovan@state.mn.us

Marian Whitney I Health Care Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7213 or marian.whitney@state.mn.us

William Abderhalden I Inspector

Location: Otsego

Coverage: West Metro

Contact: 507-361-6204 or william.abderhalden@state.mn.us

James Anderson I Inspector

Location: Little Falls

Coverage area: Northeastern Minnesota

Contact: james.a.anderson@state.mn.us or 651-249-6880

Robert Baumann I Inspector

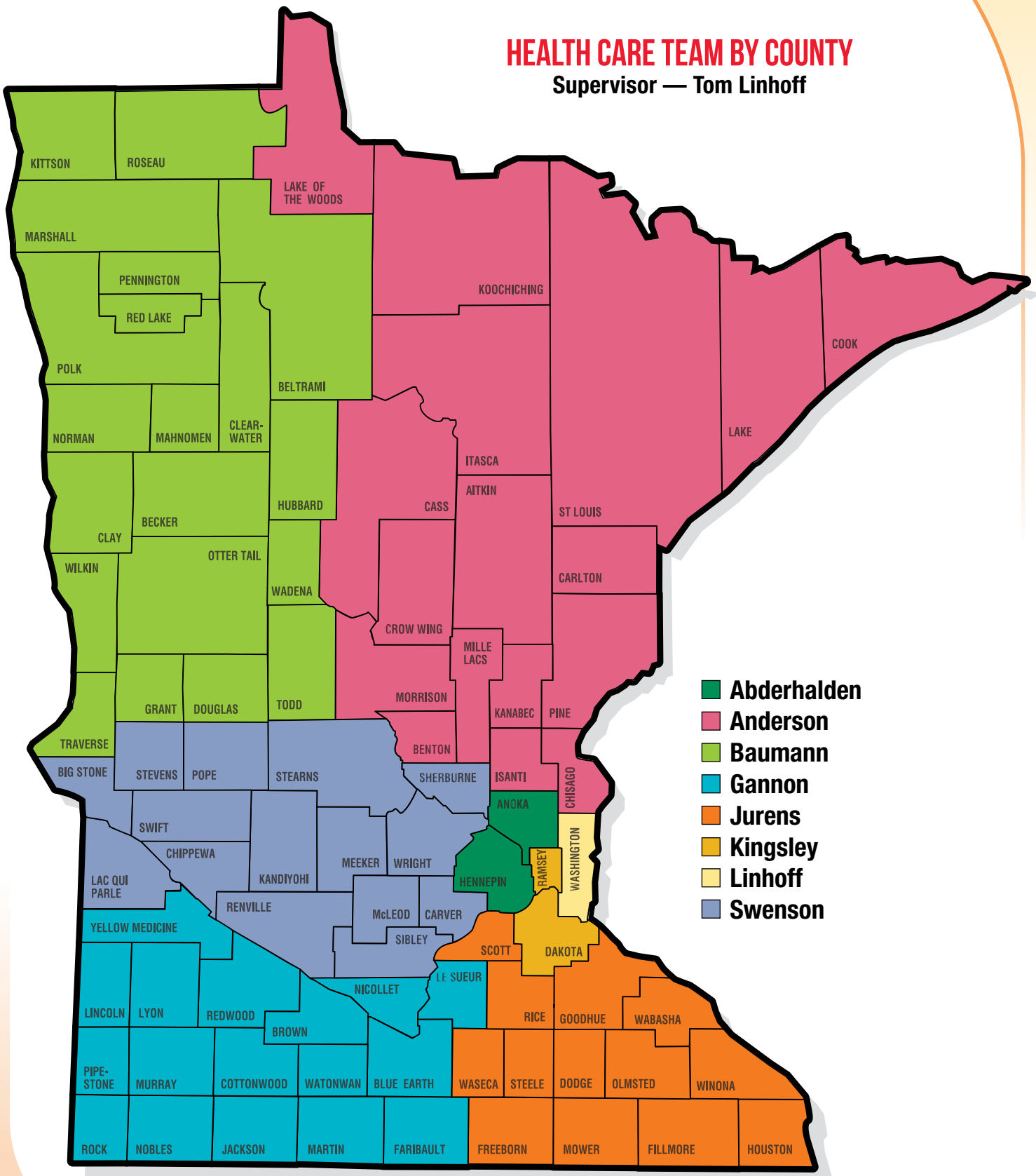
Location: Alexandria

Coverage: Northwestern Minnesota

Contact: 612-430-1276 or Robert.baumann@state.mn.us

HEALTH CARE TEAM BY COUNTY

Supervisor — Tom Linhoff



Larry Gannon I Inspector

Location: Janesville

Coverage area: Southwestern Minnesota

Contact: larry.gannon@state.mn.us or 651-769-7779

Steven Jurens I Inspector

Location: Kasson

Coverage area: Southeastern Minnesota

Contact: steven.jurens@state.mn.us or 651-470-4416

Roy Kingsley I Inspector

Location: Mendota Heights

Coverage: East

Contact: 651-769-7772 or roy.kingsley@state.mn.us

Kerry Queen I Inspector

Location: St. Cloud

Coverage: Statewide

Contact: 651-769-7780 or kerry.queen@state.mn.us

Kim Swenson I Inspector

Location: Milaca

Coverage area: West Central Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7773 or kimberly.swenson@state.mn.us

WHAT THEY DO

Annual fire inspections help assure that every resident and/or patient of a Minnesota health care facility has a living environment reasonably safe from the dangers of fire and related emergencies.

SFMD fire inspectors are certified through the Minnesota Fire Service Certification Board as a fire inspector I or II and have extensive fire inspection experience. Because this team is responsible for enforcing the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) fire safety program, each inspector is required to attend a week-long CMS training class on the Life Safety Code, which is the basis of the CMS fire safety program. They must also attend a 24-hour class from CMS including Health Care Facilities (NFPA Standard 99) and Fire Safety Evaluation System (NFPA Standard 101A) for both health care facilities and board-and-care facilities.

BEST OF 2018

We had a full team of inspectors to start the year. All inspectors are certified by the CMS and trained to the 2012 Life Safety Code, which enables them to inspect all federally regulated healthcare facilities to the latest code requirements.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

Inspections

The Health Care Team conducted 1,475 inspections in hospitals, nursing homes, boarding caring homes, supervised lining facilities, outpatient surgical centers, hospice facilities and prisons/jails.

Hospitals and nursing homes present some of the most complicated fire inspections. Large complexes often feature many types of occupancies, including institutional, assembly, storage, maintenance, helicopter landing pads, clinics, and doctors' offices.

Here is a breakdown of our 2018 inspections:

- Special hospital validation inspections: 6
- Hospital inspections: 31
- Nursing home inspections: 301
- Supervised living inspections: 146
- Surgery center/clinic inspections: 53
- Prison/jail inspections: 108
- Foster care inspections: 202

Fires

- Prison: 5
  - — Electrical system: 2
  - — Electrical equipment: 3
- Health care facility: 14
  - — Storm related: 3 (affected 206 clients)
  - — Electrical equipment: 5 (affected 318 clients)
  - — Electrical system: 3 (affected 310 clients)
  - — Arson: 2 (affected 87 clients)
  - — Chemical spills: 1 (affected 65 clients)

DID YOU KNOW?

All inspectors are certified in emergency management and preparedness standards for hospitals and nursing homes. Emergency preparedness is a new federal standard for hospitals and nursing homes.

The top five most frequently cited fire safety deficiencies by our health care inspectors are:

1. Failure to conduct or document required sprinkler systems testing.
2. Failure to conduct electrical systems maintenance or testing.
3. Failure to conduct required fire drills.
4. Failure to separate hazardous areas.
5. Failure to maintain electrical systems.

RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM

ABOUT

The Residential Care and Lodging Team (RCLT) was created following several tragic losses of life in Minnesota lodging buildings. Comprehensive fire safety inspections now help make Minnesota a safer travel, vacation and conference destination.

The RCLT:

- Conducts fire safety inspections in hotels throughout Minnesota. Each hotel is inspected at least once every three years with follow-up fire safety inspections as needed.
- Conducts initial fire safety inspections of all Department of Human Services-licensed facilities, including licensed day care centers, certified day care centers, family child care homes, adult day care centers, adult day services, day training and habilitation, child foster care, chemical dependency treatment and mental health treatment facilities.
- Conducts fire safety inspections on request from local fire departments in response to complaints of fire safety violations.
- Provides training on fire code requirements to child care and foster care licensors, providers and local fire marshals.

National and state statistics show people are most vulnerable to fire when they are sleeping. Most fires happen in residential properties; in Minnesota, 77 percent of fires and 74 percent of fire fatalities for 2015 were in residential properties. Having working smoke detectors and suppression systems are critical to waking people who are sleeping for providing adequate time for escape.

MEET THE TEAM

Ryan Whiting I Supervisor

Location: Bemidji

Contact: 612-219-7125 or ryan.whiting@state.mn.us

Randi Samuelson I Residential Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7212 or randi.j.samuelson@state.mn.us

Becky Schmidt I Residential Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7211 or rebecca.j.schmidt@state.mn.us

Travis Ahrens I Inspector

Location: Owatonna

Coverage area: Southeast Minnesota

Contact: 507-3084189 or travis.ahrens@state.mn.us

Dan Beeson I Inspector

Location: Brainerd

Coverage area: West Central Minnesota

Contact: 612-270-9402 or dan.beeson@state.mn.us

Travis Cole I Inspector

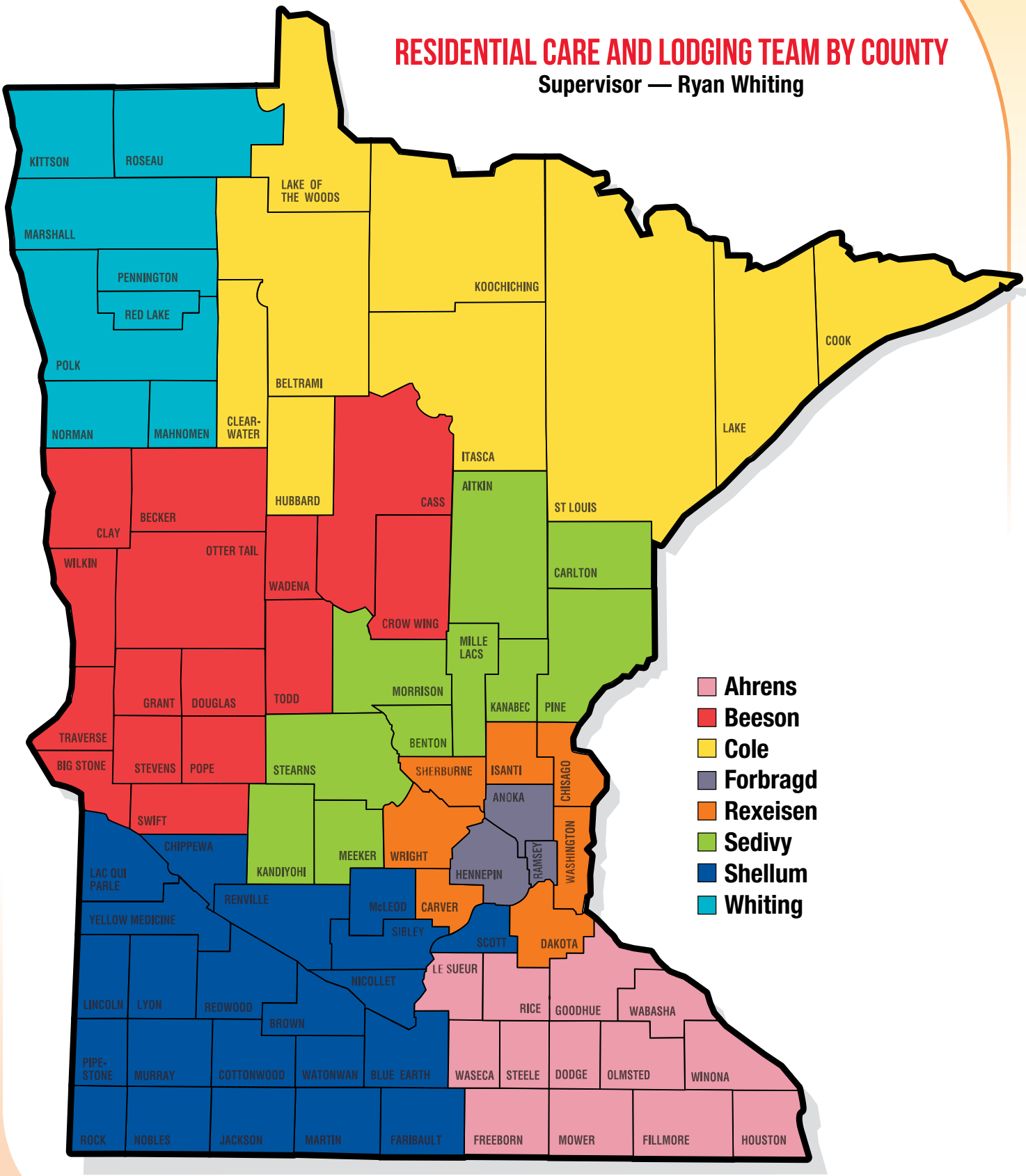
Location: Grand Rapids

Coverage area: Northeast Minnesota

Contact: 612-769-7785 or travis.cole@state.mn.us

RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM BY COUNTY

Supervisor — Ryan Whiting



Marvin Forbragd I Inspector

Location: Oak Grove

Coverage area: Metro Area

Contact: 651-769-7783 or marvin.forbragd@state.mn.us

Bob Rexeisen I Inspector

Location: Circle Pines

Coverage area: Metro Area

Contact: 612-386-4657 or robert.rexeisen@state.mn.us

Kevin Sedivy I Inspector

Location: Cross Lake

Coverage area: North Central Minnesota

Contact: 651-295-1639 or kevin.sedivy@state.mn.us

George Shellum I Inspector

Location: Silver Lake

Coverage area: Southwest Minnesota

Contact: 320-327-8465 or george.shellum@state.mn.us

WHAT THEY DO

The mission of the RCLT is to prevent fire deaths and property loss in hotels and residential care homes. People are most vulnerable when they are sleeping in unfamiliar buildings with no one awake to notice a developing fire. As the number of people and the size of a building increase, the potential for loss of life increases, too. The RCLT mitigates this hazard through fire safety inspections of all hotels in Minnesota every three years, as required by law, with follow-up inspections as needed to gain compliance with the Minnesota State Fire Code. Training and consultation on fire safety requirements and fire prevention is provided to municipalities who conduct fire safety inspections of hotels and residential care homes, and to building owners, licensors and managers. Residential care homes (day care, foster care, rehab) are inspected for fire safety when first licensed by the DHS.

Fire code safety requirements depend on the use of the building, age of construction, size of the building and other occupancies within the building (such as places of assembly, retail, garages and hazardous areas). Fire safety may include fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire-protected exit corridors and stairways, employee safety training, exit route identification, emergency lighting, fire resistive construction and other requirements, depending on the size and use of the building.

THE BEST OF 2018

The team completed all mandatory hotel inspections for fiscal year 2018 on time and kept the DHS inspection wait time reasonable even though the team was short-staffed most of the year. Due to staffing changes, the team regions were changed to reduce travel distances and even out the workload for some inspectors.

The team also provided training to 169 DHS licensors at six locations and to 26 local fire inspectors at a one and one-half day class conducted at Camp Ripley. The inspector class included a half day of hands on inspection experience utilizing the staged village at Camp Ripley.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

Inspections

The RCLT is spread out across the state and assists with hundreds of inspections each year. The following is a break-down of inspections in 2018. These stay fairly consistent from year to year with all hotels in the state being inspected once every three years.

Hotels:

- 355 fire safety inspections
- 328 follow-up inspections
- 1,484 fire safety violations cited

DHS-licensed facilities:

- 891 fire safety inspections
- 122 follow-up inspections
- 2,535 recommended corrections for licensing

Inspections in response to fire department requests:

- 7 apartment buildings
- 5 assembly occupancies
- 1 single family home

Facilities

Here is the breakdown of child care centers, family child care settings, child foster care homes, adult foster care homes and community residential settings in Minnesota at the end of 2018. As you can see, there are a lot of people located throughout Minnesota helping others by providing daily care for children and vulnerable adults. Having childcare available has become a major issue for many growing communities.

- 1,773 licensed child care centers
- 616 certified child care centers
- 7,931 family child care settings
- 5,038 child foster care homes
- 1,006 adult foster care homes
- 3,681 community residential settings

DID YOU KNOW?

The RCLT handles all fire code complaints in the state that do not relate to facilities already inspected by the SFMD. These complaints are always referred to the local fire department if there is one and the RCLT provides any requested assistance to help the local jurisdiction resolve the complaint. If a local fire department feels they have a conflict of interest they can defer jurisdiction to the SFMD by written request.

SCHOOL INSPECTION TEAM

ABOUT

The public school inspection program was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 1990 following several destructive school fires in the late 1980s. The legislation requires the State Fire Marshal Division to inspect each of Minnesota's roughly 1,750 public and charter school buildings once every three years, including primary, middle, secondary and alternative schools.

The School Inspection Team consists of four inspectors, one supervisor and a support specialist. Each member is assigned to a geographical inspection region. All school inspectors hold, at a minimum, a Fire Inspector II certification from the Minnesota Fire Service Certification Board and participate in continuing education each year.

MEET THE TEAM

Forrest Williams I Supervisor

Location: Duluth

Coverage area: Northeastern Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7784 or forrest.williams@state.mn.us

Randi Samuelson I School Team Support

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7212 or randi.j.samuelson@state.mn.us

Joe Faust I Inspector

Location: Lonsdale

Coverage area: Southern Minnesota

Contact: 507-602-0651 or joseph.faust@state.mn.us

Kurt Kastella I Inspector

Location: Underwood

Coverage area: Northwestern Minnesota

Contact: 651-769-7775 or kurt.kastella@state.mn.us

Kevin McGinty I Inspector

Location: Zimmerman

Coverage area: Northern Metro and Surrounding Counties

Contact: 651-888-9119 or kevin.mcginty@state.mn.us

John Swanson I Inspector and Plans Examiner

Location: Lakeville

Coverage area: South Central Minnesota

Contact 651-334-3217 or john.swanson@state.mn.us

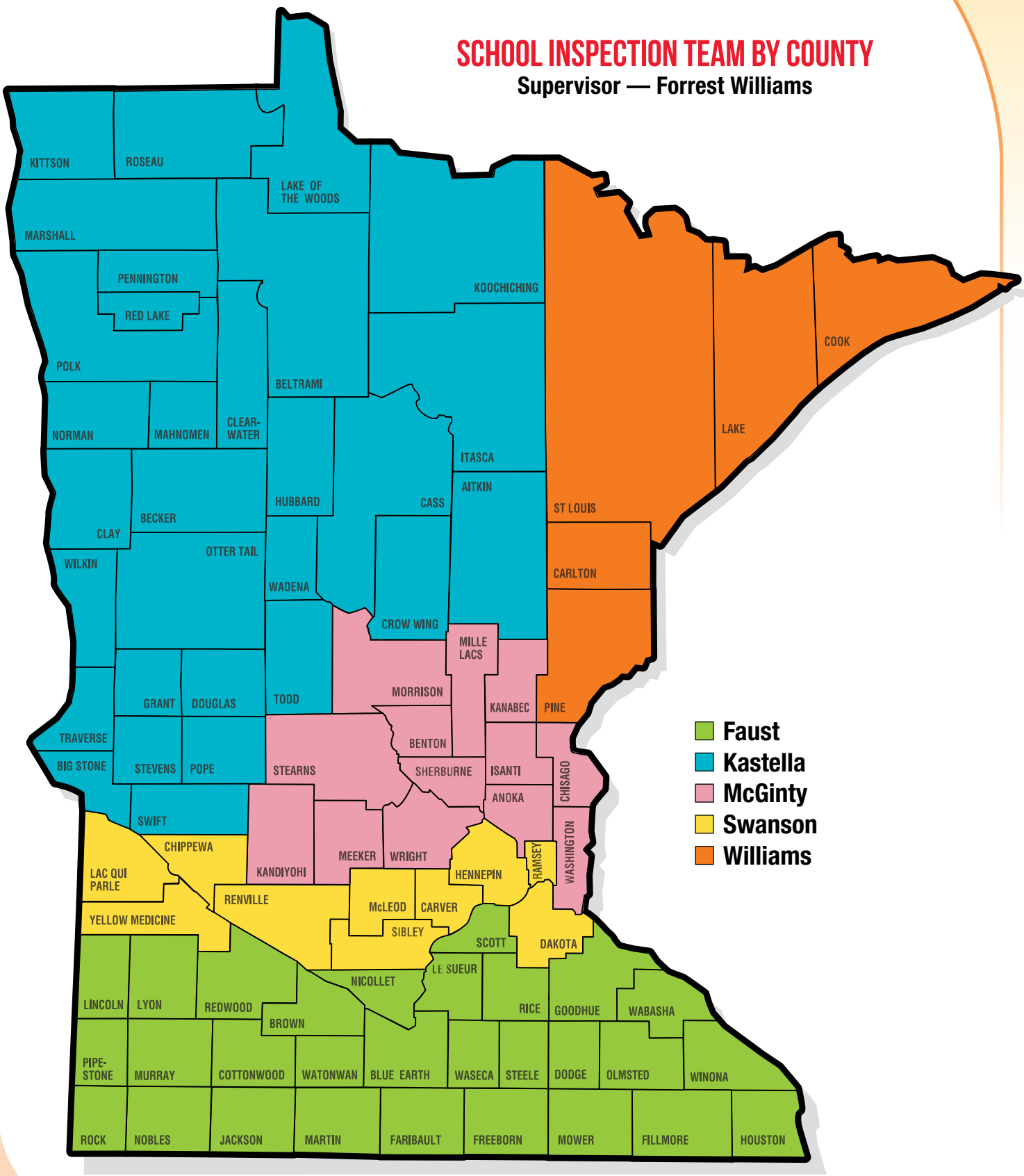
WHAT THEY DO

The primary goal of the program is to identify and correct fire and life safety violations that have historically contributed to disastrous events in schools. To this end, school inspectors focus their attention on the following:

- Adequate means of egress.
- Required fire alarm and fire suppression systems.
- Required fire resistance rated construction features.
- Identification and abatement of fire hazards.
- Educating school administration and staff on fire prevention practices and code compliance.
- Emergency evacuation plans and procedures.

SCHOOL INSPECTION TEAM BY COUNTY

Supervisor — Forrest Williams



Because many Minnesota school buildings were constructed prior to the adoption of statewide building and fire codes, SFMD officials developed policies to allow installation of automatic sprinkler and fire alarm systems to compensate for the fire safety deficiencies found in these older buildings. Many of these policies were later incorporated into the state fire code. Dozens of school fires have been detected early, controlled or extinguished by fire protection systems installed under these policies.

When school inspectors identify fire code deficiencies, the schools must provide a plan to correct them. Inspectors review these plans to assure that alarm installations and other construction projects meet minimum code requirements.

Evaluating program effectiveness

Based on Minnesota Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) data comparing the average number of school fires during the first five years of the inspection program (1990-1994) with the most recent data available (2013-2017), fire occurrences have dropped 54 percent. The number of fires was trending up from 1990-94. The current trend is in decline. Minnesota has approximately 30 percent fewer fires in educational occupancies compared to the national rate.

The preliminary number of school fires for 2018 is 32 — a slight 6 percent drop from 34 fires in 2017.

Two fires in 2018 that exemplified the effectiveness of fire code provisions and enforcement. The first fire was in a school woodshop spray finishing booth and exhaust system, the second in a woodshop dust collection system. Both systems contained internal fire sprinkler protection as required by the Minnesota State Fire Code, and verified through periodic inspection. In each case the fire was extinguished by sprinkler activation.

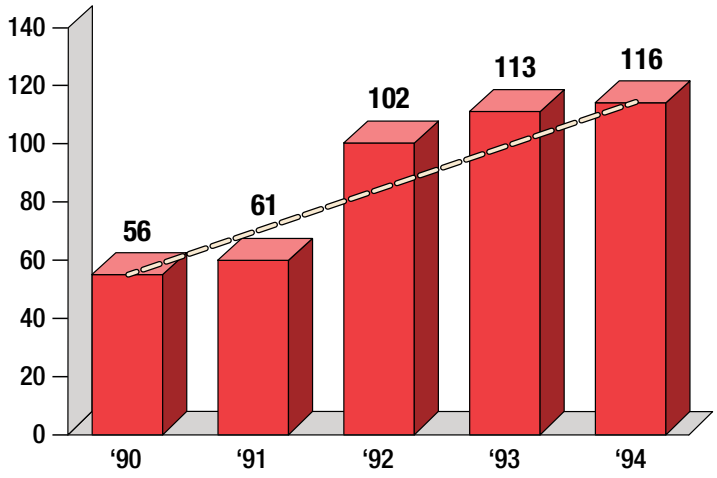
THE BEST OF 2018

Our inspectors addressed many questions and complaints regarding school safety and security in 2018. The two primary issues were: 1) the use of security/barricade devices on classroom doors, and 2) employing non-evacuation strategies when responding to fire alarm system activation.

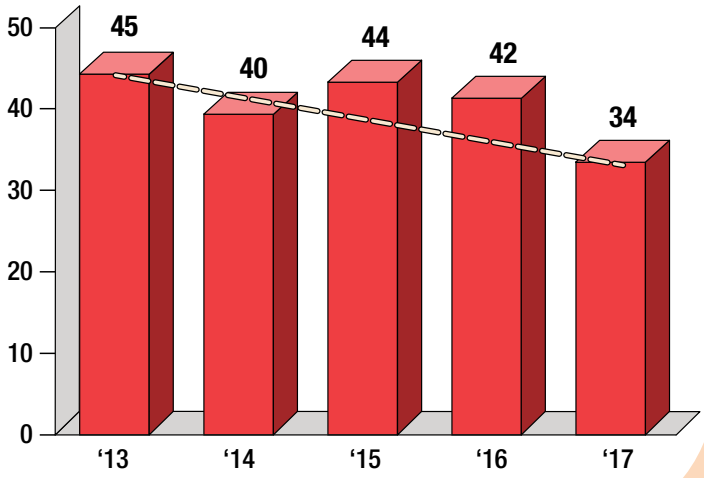
It's understandable that with today's security concerns schools are looking for quick and inexpensive solutions to classroom door security. However, many of these solutions conflict with fire and building code provisions and may introduce additional hazards to students and staff. SFMD inspectors continue to advise schools on code-compliant security solutions that do not inhibit free egress and allow access for emergency responders.

School Team members once again staffed an information booth during the 2018 Minnesota Educational Facilities Management Professionals Fall Conference in St. Cloud, answering questions and providing handout information to school maintenance professionals throughout the state. A training presentation was also offered to conference attendees regarding evacuation strategies for mobility impaired students.

SCHOOL FIRES IN MINNESOTA 1990 – 1994



SCHOOL FIRES IN MINNESOTA 2013 – 2017



2018 BY THE NUMBERS

Inspections

In 2018 the School Inspection Team conducted 618 inspections and 682 follow-up inspections, resulting in the discovery of 3,474 violations. The 10 most common violations cited by school inspectors are:

1. **General means of egress**
   - Examples include damaged or inoperable exit doors, improper door hardware, missing exit identification, main-training minimum aisle widths, and egress obstructions.
2. **Maintenance of fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems**
   - Examples include failure to provide annual inspection, testing and maintenance, damaged or missing components, and improper or incomplete coverage.
3. **Improper use of extension cords and power-taps**
   - Examples include extension cords used as permanent wiring, daisy-chaining of power-taps, flexible cords running through construction, damaged cords, and the use of non-approved multi-plug adapters.
4. **Electrical wiring and hazards**
   - Examples include exposed wiring, open junction boxes, damaged wiring or power cords, and insufficient clearances around electrical panels.
5. **Improper storage arrangements**
   - Examples include storage in main electrical rooms, storage obstructing access to building control and life-safety equipment, storage in corridors and exit stairs, and obstructed sprinkler heads.
6. **Interior finish materials**
   - Examples include foam or thermal plastics attached to wall and ceiling surfaces, and suspended fabrics that do not meet minimum requirements for flame-resistance.
7. **Maintenance of emergency power systems**
   - Examples include damaged or inoperable emergency lighting units or exit signs, and failure to periodically inspect, test, and maintain emergency power systems.
8. **Fire extinguisher maintenance**
   - Examples include the failure to provide periodic inspection, testing and maintenance of fire extinguishers, damaged or depressurized extinguishers, and obstructed or improperly mounted extinguishers.
9. **Improper installation or use of electrical appliances**
   - Examples include the unsafe use of portable heaters or the use of heat-producing appliances contrary to their intended function.
10. **Maintenance of fire-resistance rated construction**
    - Examples include damaged, altered or non-functioning fire doors, and unprotected openings or penetrations through fire-resistance rated construction.

Training

School Inspection Team members provide fire code and inspection training for code officials and local school inspectors, including those units of government authorized to inspect public schools within their jurisdiction. Other training is available for school maintenance staff and administrators, school safety consultants, fire protection system contractors, design professionals and general stakeholders.

Our school inspectors provide quick answers and onsite consultations on code requirements, fire safety practices and emergency planning.

- Training sessions in 2018: 8
- Number of attendees: 267
- Training topics:
  - — Fire alarm and emergency notification
  - — Common fire code violations
  - — Fire alarm systems
  - — Evacuation of mobility impaired students
  - — Balancing school security with fire safety

DID YOU KNOW?

The next edition of the Minnesota State Fire Code will require newly installed fire alarm systems in schools having more than 100 occupants to be provided with an emergency voice/alarm communication system. These systems are capable of communicating specific instructions to building occupants depending on the nature of the emergency, and thus can be used for numerous life-safety events beyond fire.

SPECIAL TEAMS AND PROJECTS

SFMD HONOR GUARD

ABOUT

The Honor Guard was created after a retired staff member died in 2013 and his family requested the SFMD staff participate in the visitation and funeral service.

MEET THE TEAM

Amanda Swenson I Commander

Contact: amanda.swenson@state.mn.us or 651-201-7214

Travis Ahern

Joe Faust

James Iammatteo

Thomas Linhoff

Kevin McGinty

Kathi Osmonson

Brian Petersen

Ralph Peterson

Kerry Queen

Bob Rexeisen

Jared Rozeboom

Kevin Sedivy

Casey Stotts

WHAT THEY DO

The 14-member group provides honor guard and color presentation detail for special occasions including:

- Retirements
- Funerals
- Conferences

HOW TO REQUEST THE HONOR GUARD

All requests for the Honor Guard will be forwarded to the State Fire Marshal for consideration. Once a request has been approved, team leaders will contact members for availability to respond and provide all information on the event, its location and times. Go to our website at sfm.dps.mn.gov under the "services" tab to find the Honor Guard webpage to make a request.

2018 EVENTS

The SFMD Honor Guard attended two funerals for fighters who died in the line of duty: One in Mapleton, the other in Mayer, Minnesota. The Honor Guard attended four funerals for retired firefighters and three funerals for past SFMD staff: Rich Sorenson, Richard Gilbertson, and Jamie Novak.

Other notable events were:

- The posting of colors for the NCAA Hockey "Frozen Four" at the St. Paul River Centre.
- The posting of colors for the North American Fire Training Directors Conference, Minnesota Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators Conference, Fire Marshal/ Fire Marshals Association of Minnesota Conference, and the State Fire Chief's Conference.

BEST OF 2018

The SFMD Honor Guard provided key support to the 2018 Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service with bell ringing, escort of the four new inductee families to the "unveiling of the post," and escort service for Gov. Dayton to present the memorial wreath.

DID YOU KNOW?

Six members of the SFMD Honor Guard attended the Milwaukee Honor Guard training at Camp Ripley.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

MEET THE SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR AND FLEET MANAGER

Nolan Pasell | Fleet manager/special projects coordinator

Location: St. Paul

Contact: 651-201-7218 or nolan.pasell@state.mn.us

WHAT HE DOES

Nolan Pasell coordinated the Minnesota Fire Department Turnout Gear Washer/Extractor/Dryer program. The program received more than 166 applications for over $1.7 million. Approximately $600,000 in grants went to 30 departments to purchase gear washers, 27 departments for gear dryers and 16 departments to purchase both a washer and dryer.

The fleet includes 75 vehicles. Nolan has refined and expanded plans for vehicle safety, replacement and procurement.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

SFMD vehicles traveled 929,541 miles. If SFMD staff were traveling around the earth they would have made it just over 37 times around or to the moon and back twice.

DID YOU KNOW?

Through funds from the Fire Service Advisory Committee, the SFMD has awarded over $1.1 million to more than 120 Minnesota fire departments since 2015 for purchase of turnout gear washer/extractors/dryers.

SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM

ABOUT

The SFMD home office in St. Paul has a team of six talented individuals that make sure the division is in great shape to run at optimal levels. Formerly called the clerical staff, these nine professionals are now known as the Support Services Team, a name which better reflects the range of responsibilities carried out by its members.

MEET THE TEAM

Barbara Lundberg I Supervisor
Contact: Barbara.lundberg@state.mn.us or 651-201-7203

Kathleen Donovan I Investigations, Health Care, Adult Foster Care and Explosives Support
Contact: kathleen.donovan@state.mn.us or 651-201-7208

Nathan Le I Fire Protection and State Fire Marshal Conference Support
Contact: nathan.le@state.mn.us or 651-201-7207

Nolan Pasel I Fleet Manager
Contact: nolan.pasel@state.mn.us or 651-501-7218

Randi Samuelson I Schools and Residential Care and Lodging Team Support
Contact: randi.j.samuelson@state.mn.us or 651-201-7212

Becky Schmidt I Residential Care and Lodging Team Support
Contact: rebecca.j.schmidt@state.mn.us or 651-201-7211

Marian Whitney I Health Care Team Support
Contact: marian.whitney@state.mn.us or 651-201-7213

WHAT THEY DO

The complexities of electronic technology have vastly changed the skills required and the level of performance necessary to keep up with the fast pace of the inspectors, investigators, and citizens who depend on the SFMD. No longer the clerical typist of yesteryear, each Support Team member is proficient in the operation of several computer software programs, some of which are job specific, some which occasionally change and require retraining and some of which are completely new. Each team member has individualized, detailed responsibilities for maintaining the schedules and submitted reports of the field staff. Support Services Team members relieve the field staff of some of the details that must be met to successfully conduct our classes around the state. Calls from the public are responded to in a timely and professional manner so issues can be resolved. We respect that we hold a position which is critical to the smooth operation of our complicated organization.

MEET THE TWO NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Becky Schmidt

Becky joined the SFMD staff at the end of 2018. She brings an up-beat, can-do attitude and strong technical skills to the Support Team. Her primary responsibilities are to provide support to the Residential Care and Lodging Team and to the Health Care Team when they conduct DHS inspections.

Becky enjoys spending time with her family four daughters, their rescue cat, Cleo, and their Chihuahua, Cali. She likes to travel, attend movies/concerts, shop and try new restaurants with her family. Becky lived in St. Paul for about 13 years before moving to Blaine, where she has lived for eight years. She previously worked for the Health Department for five years, and is delighted to be back and working with the State of Minnesota and the Department of Public Safety.

Kathleen Donovan

Kathleen joined the SFMD support staff in January 2019. Her professionalism and sunny disposition are just two of the qualities that she brings to the SFMD. Three teams rely on Kathleen for support: investigations, explosives, and health care.

Kathleen has a passion for assisting others, and comes from a background in health care. She enjoys watercolor painting, cooking (food art), and reading. Kathleen has an affinity for the outdoors and loves learning about a wide variety of things.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

The Support Services Team reviewed and analyzed 5,438 reports in 2018. The reports contained findings following the investigations of fires and the inspections of nursing homes, hospitals, out-patient clinics, daycares, schools, adult and child foster care homes, hotels and motels. Sprinkler plans are reviewed and installations are inspected in construction and remodeling projects. Sites are inspected for explosive permits. Each of these actions requires the careful and thorough documentation by the Support Services Team.

Staff entered applications and fees into databases, addressed customer phone calls and emails, fulfilled investigation reports requests, sent out invoices and made deposits. The team is continually busy doing the work needed to promote and encourage fire safety and awareness in the state.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

ABOUT

The Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education's (MBFTE) mission is to standardize training by providing funding to pay for it and by licensing Minnesota firefighters. The MBFTE's vision is to reduce fire-related deaths and injuries through excellence in fire service training and education.

MEET THE TEAM

Steve Flaherty I Executive Director

Location: St. Paul

Duties: Supports and provides information to the Minnesota fire service on various MBFTE programs, including firefighter training reimbursements, fire instructor qualifications, firefighter licensing, firefighter continuing education, and other support services for fire departments.

Contact: 651-201-7258 or steve.flaherty@state.mn.us

Margaret Koele I Licensing Coordinator

Location: St. Paul

Duties: Manages and administers the MBFTE's legislative mandate to license firefighters; oversees laws, rules and regulations for firefighter licensure; works with the Attorney General's Office regarding the licensing process

Contact: 651-201-7259 or margaret.koele@state.mn.us

WHAT THEY DO

The MBFTE was established by the Minnesota Legislature to:

- Review fire service training needs and make training recommendations to Minnesota fire service organizations
- Establish standards for educational programs for the fire service and develop procedures for continuing oversight of those programs
- Establish qualifications for fire service training instructors
- Establish standards under which reimbursement will be provided to departments for training and education

The MBFTE has several funding and training reimbursement programs for the fire service to make use of, including: Fire Department Training Reimbursement Award; Live Burn; NFPA 1001 with certification; Conferences and Seminars Award; Incident Safety Officer; Mass and Gross Decon; Railway and Pipeline Awareness; and Fire Service Leadership Development Visit www.mbfte.org for more information about the MBFTE.

THE BEST OF 2018

More than $4.2 million was available for Minnesota fire departments in fiscal year 2018. Awards to Minnesota fire departments were based on a per-firefighter rate of $105.50. The MBFTE chose to award departments based on the number of firefighters on their current roster. No formal applications were required by the MBFTE for a fire department to receive a training reimbursement award.

MINNESOTA BOARD OF FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A record 90 percent of Minnesota's 777 fire departments submitted training reimbursement documentation to the MBFTE in fiscal year 2018 — an increase of 3 percent from fiscal year 2017.

There were five first-time applicants to the training reimbursement program and all but 15 fire departments have now submitted for training reimbursements in at least one of the first 10 rounds since this program began. The average department reimbursement in fiscal year 2018 was $2,550 based on 702 fire departments seeking training reimbursement. Fire departments requested more than $3.975 million in training reimbursements in fiscal year 2018.

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

- The MBFTE provided reimbursement directly to training providers for National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001, Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2, and Hazardous Materials Operations training in fiscal year 2018. There was $1.6 million available to Minnesota fire departments to pay for this training — enough to fund more than 1,000 firefighters.
- The MBFTE provided more than $69,000 in reimbursement grants to local, regional and statewide fire service organizations for unique training events. These conference,seminar and symposium awards made 21 different training opportunities available to 20,000 Minnesota firefighters at a significantly reduced rate.
- There was $174,000 available for live-burn training throughout Minnesota. The money funded 116 separate live-burn trainings in acquired structures across the state in accordance with NFPA 1403 standards. NFPA 1403 live-burn training ensures that all live burns in acquired structures are conducted in a safe manner, meeting a nationally recognized standard.
- The MBFTE, in partnership with Sourcewell (formally National Joint Powers Alliance) in Staples, was able to provide the fire departments in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena counties with an additional $175,000 in training reimbursements in fiscal year 2018. These funds were distributed to the 49 fire departments at a per-firefighter rate ($155) in addition to the MBFTE's per-firefighter rate ($105.50).
- The MBFTE provided more than $44,000 to fund two Fire Service Leadership Development courses held at Camp Ripley throughout the fiscal year. Each 32-hour course consists of four modules, helping a cross-section of fire service leaders from across the state — at no cost to them or their department — develop skills and address key leadership issues specific to the Minnesota fire service. Nearly 150 fire service leaders have now participated in this unique training opportunity over the last four years.
- In partnership with Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the MBFTE reimbursed more than $140,000 to over 450 firefighters to attend various training courses dealing with hazardous materials. The grant funding for this is provided by the federal government known as the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant.

DID YOU KNOW?

Funding for the MBFTE is provided by a .05 percent surcharge on insurance premiums collected in the Fire Safety Account, which is appropriated annually by the Minnesota Legislature. Since the training reimbursement program began in 2009, more than $23 million has been paid directly to Minnesota fire departments. The MBFTE has funded more than $8 million for basic firefighter training with certification to nearly 7,500 firefighters since fiscal year 2013.

RETIREMENTS AND DEATHS

RETIREMENT

MARK GERMAIN, FIRE INVESTIGATOR

Congratulations to Mark Germain, who retired in 2018 after working as a SFMD fire investigator for 30 years. Mark lives in rural Nisswa and covered eight counties. Mark responded to hundreds of calls during his career and will be remembered for his passion, dedication, and commitment to working with local law enforcement and fire officials in central Minnesota.

STEVE KELLEN, FIRE INVESTIGATOR

Congratulations to Steve Kellen, who retired in early 2018 after working as a SFMD fire investigator for 22 years. He covered southwestern Minnesota. Steve will be remembered for his fun personality and his sense of humor. He was a tenacious investigator and a hard worker who was known for his no-nonsense approach to tackling arson cases.

DECEASED

RICH SORENSON, RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM INSPECTOR

Rich Sorenson fought a long battle with cancer and died in February 2018. Rich came back to the SFMD after a short retirement and served as a Residential Care and Lodging Team member, inspecting hotels and DHS facilities. Rich had a lifelong passion for educating the public on fire safety. Rich dedicated his life to the fire service right to his very last day. Rich is dearly missed by the SFMD and the Minnesota fire service.

CHRIS WATSON, RESIDENTIAL CARE AND LODGING TEAM INSPECTOR

Chris Watson passed away unexpectedly in December 2018. Chris was a long-time member of the Residential Care and Lodging Team working the Metro region. Chris was devoted to educating her customers about the importance of fire safety. She is dearly missed by the SFMD as well as the customers she served for so many years.

Minnesota Department of Public Safety
State Fire Marshal Division
sfm.dps.mn.gov

facebook.com/StateFireMarshal | twitter.com/MnDPS_SFM