



Post Indicator

Quarterly Newsletter

December, 2006

President's Message – Phil Owens

Fellow FMAM Members,

We are now entering the heating and holiday seasons. Traditionally these are times of greater concern for fire safety professionals, as the number of heating caused fires and those associated with holiday decorations and activities increase. Please take the time to remind yourselves of some of the hazards of the season. Including, among others, carbon monoxide from improperly serviced heating units, ignition from improperly installed or serviced solid fuel heating devices, accumulation of combustibles from packing boxes and gift wrap, exits blocked with trees and decorations, open flames with candles, and of course, extension cords. I am sure that each of you could add to this short list.

The State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD) last reported that Minnesota had suffered 25 fire deaths thus far in 2006.

Considering we began 2006 with a staggering 11 fire deaths in January alone, this number is encouraging that we can again achieve a record low fire death total. You will recall that the state total in 2005 was 40 fire deaths, which reflected the lowest per capita totals ever. Keep up your good work saving lives!

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Legislation in 2007:

The State Legislature will soon be back in session and FMAM along with our fire service friends at MnFAC are again filling our legislative agendas.

Some of the potential points that we intend to push are:

State mandated credentialing of Fire Inspectors similar to the legislation passed last session for construction trades inspectors. This will be a great stride forward in establishing our professional position among safety inspectors.

Fire safe cigarette legislation is again on the agenda, as well as additional rules requiring SFMD inspection of private schools, assisted living facilities and resorts.

Changing SFMD fire investigation responsibility from "may" to "shall" investigate certain fires has been suggested along with lowering the standard in negligent fires from "gross negligence" to just "negligence". This simple change in definition would permit charging additional negligent fires.

Addressing the failure of County Attorneys to charge some arson cases, possibly through the Attorney General, has garnered some interest.

We would continue to strongly oppose the expansion of permissible MN fireworks. We would also like to push for an expanded role for FMAM and MnIAAI on the Fire Service Advisory Committee; we presently share one vote and we wish to each have our own vote.

This is only the beginning, some items will fall from the list and others will be added as the legislative session develops. If you have concerns or initiatives, please let us know ASAP as the legislative train is already moving.

Fire Service Advisory Committee:

Speaking of the Fire Service Advisory Committee, this committee was established by statute last session in our successful push to properly fund the SFMD. The committee will advise the

Commissioner of Public Safety on the expenditure of funds collected thru the service fee on fire insurance.

FMAM / MnIAAI funding priorities include:

- Funding additional SFMD positions to provide fire code and inspection training throughout the state.
- Expansion of SFMD fire investigation training through out the state, (remember it is not the "BCA Arson Class"; it is the SFMD fire / arson investigation training.)
- Funding additional SFMD inspectors and code specialists to serve areas of the state without local resources.
- Funding an Assistant Attorney General position within the SFMD to assist in arson prosecution.

FMAM and MnIAAI strongly oppose the use of these funds for the purchase of firefighting equipment and apparatus. There are a number of federal grant programs which can be a funding source for these types of purchases. Once again, this is only the beginning of FMAM's participation in these funding decisions.

Our thanks to FMAM / MnIAAI representative Steve Zaccard, Fire Marshal, St. Paul and alternate Robbie Bartholomew, Fire Marshal, Andover.

FMAM Committees:

FMAM Committee assignments are being reviewed by your Board of Directors for recommendation to the President for appointment. Many of you will be contacted in the near future to poll your interest in serving or continuing to serve on one of our several important committees. If you have particular interest in one of the committee positions, please make your interest known to me soon.

ICC Region III:

FMAM has long been an active chapter of the ICC. Your Board was recently contacted by ICC Upper Mid West, Region III (MI, WI, ND, SD, IA) representatives who presented an informative program to the Board and others to encourage FMAM participation with the ICC Regional group.

After long discussion, your Board will recommend to the General Membership at the December meeting, that FMAM join the ICC regional group and participate in the larger code development decisions of our area.

Sprinkler Training:

FMAM is again partnering with National Fire Sprinkler Association MN Chapter, MN State Fire Chiefs Association, and the MN State Fire Marshal Division to provide four days of excellent fire sprinkler training on December 12, 13, 14, and 15 at the Firefighter Hall & Museum in Minneapolis. Scheduled classes include: Pumps for Fire Protection, Sprinkler Protection for General Storage and a two day Overview of NFPA 13 and Intro to Sprinkler Plan Review & Inspection. We have worked with our fire safety partners to provide this national level training at a very inexpensive cost. We hope that you can join us for this training opportunity.

Remember; there is no more fundamental aspect of building fire safety, than the simple ability to get people out of harm's way.

Yours in the Fire Service;

Phillip Owens, CFPS
President

Financial Report - 2006 Budget

Item:	Budget 2006	Actual (11/6/06)
Income:		
Membership	\$7,500	7,270.00
Interest	100	281.13
Merchandise	200	168.00
Seminar/Education	5,500	13,910.00
Social Event	500	800.00
Total Income.....	\$13,800	22,429.13
Expenses:		
Merchandise	\$ 400	
Postage	300	48.06
Professional Services	900	25.00
Web	1,000	870.00
Publications	300	
Public Educ.	1,000	
Code Development	3,000	1,000.00
Awards/Gifts	200	163.52
Meeting Expense	500	80.28
Advertising	1,000	3,451.95
Office	100	1,226.78
Legislation	2,000	2,000.00
Seminars	2,500	10,761.49
Social Events	500	1,197.50
Misc.	100	
Total Expenses.....	\$13,800	20,824.58

Checking Balance:	\$ 11,403.75
Savings Balance:	\$ 20,692.42
Total	\$ 32,096.17

**Fire Marshal's Association of Minnesota
MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Meeting Minutes – September 13, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER:

President Phil Owens called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm at the New Brighton Fire Station.

Marilyn Arnlund addressed the membership with the adoption of a Resolution to send to Florida regarding trade offs for R-2 occupancies in area and height. We previously had made the agreement and want to keep things as they are currently. The Resolution will be read at the hearings since we will not have a representative there on that day. Motion to adopt the resolution and have it read in Florida by Marilyn Arnlund and 2nd by Jon Nisja, motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the June meeting minutes will be postponed until December.

REPORTS:**Treasurer's Report:**

As of the August Board Meeting we have \$39,001.79 in Checking and Savings. Treasurer John Powers was unable to attend today.

We currently have 226 paid members for 2006.

Public Education Committee:

Connie Forster was unable to attend. Chris Hearden reported that the State Fair was a success. We used a computer video game this year along with a fire prevention test given to kids. Next year we will stick with the hand on approach, the video game was okay but interaction one-on-one is better. Good turnout, next year they are trying to get into the Guinness World Record Book for the largest Public Education event.

Home Safety Council Conference will be held January 10-12, 2007 in Washington DC. Minnesota will have 2 representatives attending.

Training:

We are continuing to look for quarterly education, if anyone has any suggestions please contact Kip LaMotte at kip.lamotte@newbrightonmn.gov. If anyone is interested in helping to coordinate and schedule the quarterly training, contact Kip.

World Trade Center Class held in New Brighton on 9/11/06 approximately 30 people attended.

IFMA Principles of Fire Inspections Basic Class had 64 people attend. We had a good turnout with a lot of comments good and bad. We didn't lose any money even though we subsidized a large portion of the fees. We still intend on trying to schedule the Advanced Course for Management.

Upcoming Training Classes:

- AFAA – Automatic Fire Alarm Association Training – November 15-17, 2006
- NFSA Minnesota Chapter - Fire Sprinkler Training. – December 12-15, 2006
- Building Officials Conference in January.3-12, 2007
- AMBO Conference in February 5-9, 2007.

Governor's Council On Fire Prevention And Control: No Report.**Governor's Fire Service Advisory Committee:**

Meetings have begun. FMAM and IAAI share a seat on the board. That Board has determined they will rule as a consensus not use a majority vote. Steve Zaccard is our Representative and Robbie Bartholomew is the alternate. It will take some time before any money is actually seen.

Certification Report:

Phil Owens reported that it is again time for recertification our tests through IFSAC. He will be forming a group to verify the tests.

Legislation:

The Chief's Legislative Committee is working on initiative for this coming year. They will pursue 3 to 5 objectives this year. A few of the discussed as initiatives:

- Fire Safe Cigarettes
- Expansion of the Sales tax exemption
- State Fire Marshal Division to inspect Assisted Living Facilities and Private Schools
- IAAI would like to see an opportunity to get releases from the City Attorney's to go to the Attorney General's Office for charging some

- Arson cases
- Pensions
- Licensing of contractors such as Alarms, Extinguishers, Kitchen Hood Systems, and specialty systems.
- Mandatory Certification of Fire Marshal's/Inspectors

State Fire Marshal's Report:

State Fire Marshal Jerry Rosendahl commended his staff for their excellent work and dedication. John Swanson has taken a new position with Woodbury as Fire Marshal, and will be missed by the SFMD. The Governor and Commissioner of Public Safety were impressed at the turnout for the 9/11 Ceremony at the State Capitol. State Fire Marshal Rosendahl reported that the Recruitment and Retention Study has begun and urges everyone to either make one of the scheduled meetings or to email their comments to the group. Fire in Minnesota is completed and will be released at the Chief's Conference in Duluth.

Legislative changes for Fire Drills in schools has now changed from 9 to 5, but now includes 5 lockdown drills and 1 tornado drill per school year.

CO Alarms has passed and phasing in becomes effective January 1, 2007 with new construction.

Fire Prevention Day at the Fair was another success; this year was the first time the Governor has attended.

Fire Prevention Week is coming up, this year's theme is prevent cooking fires "Watch what you heat".

To date there have been 25 fire deaths in Minnesota, 11 of them occurred in January of 2006. This could be our 3rd year low if continuing at the paces.

The IAAI is working on a National Campaign for Arson Awareness; Jerry Streich of Ramsey will be heavily involved in that project.

The Fire Code is scheduled for adoption and could be effective as early as April 1, 2007.

Additional information can be accessed through the State Fire Marshal's Web site at <http://www.dps.state.mn.us/fmarshal/fmarshal.html>. Information is also disseminated through the list

server for more information about the list server contact Bob Dahm at <http://www.dps.state.mn.us/fmarshal/ListServer.html>.

The State Fire Marshal Division has hired Kevin Mahle as Fire Investigator for Northwestern Minnesota. Additional hiring of a Residential Inspector will be forthcoming and Deputy State Fire Marshal Jerry Plague has moved from Health Care Inspections to Residential.

Merchandise:

Sales are still on for merchandise that we have on hand; contact Butch or Kip for orders. We are getting down on the merchandise we have on hand. All other clothing can be ordered online, various colors and styles. Videos and CDs are being ordered through Kip.

NEW BUSINESS: None

FOR THE GOOD OF THE MEMBERSHIP:

The FMAM outing was a success; several people went to Canterbury Downs and also sponsored a race "Check Smoke Detectors Derby Race.

The FMAM web site is up and running with a new domain. We were able to convert some of the information from the old site but have added new information also. Jon Nisja has done a lot of work on the web site some of the work has been slow and asks that everyone be patient. He is looking for artwork and inspection forms, etc that we can upload to the site and have them available for downloading to our members.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn at 3:20pm by Vance Swisher and 2nd by Robbie Bartholomew, motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Robbie Bartholomew, Secretary

**Fire Marshals Association of Minnesota
BOARD MEETING
August 9, 2006**

Members Present: President Phil Owens, Secretary Robbie Bartholomew, Board Members Kip LaMotte, Butch Gervais, Vance Swisher and Chris Hearden,

Treasurer John Powers, and Past President Jon Nisja.

President Phil Owens called the meeting to order at 9:28.

Motion to approve the May 10, 2006 Board Meeting Minutes by Vance Swisher and 2nd by Jon Nisja, motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report:

John Powers presented the board with the current balance \$39,001.79. Motion to accept the treasurer's report by Robbie Bartholomew and 2nd by Vance Swisher, motion passed unanimously.

Membership Report: Current paid membership is at 226.

The Board was asked to advance Marilyn Arnlund air, hotel, and meal expenses to attend the Code Hearings as FMAM's representative. Motion to advance \$1000.00 for code hearings by Jon Nisja and 2nd by Vance Swisher, motion passed unanimously. Marilyn will provide the receipt and any unused balance to John Powers when she returns.

Merchandise:

Butch reported that we have a new contact person for the web site sales. The Board will be looking at new items for gifts for speakers and handouts at seminars

State Fire Marshal's Report:

Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal Bob Dahm informed the Board that State Fire Marshal Jerry Rosendahl was unable to attend.

Public Education Report:

Connie Forster was unable to attend.

Chris Hearden reported that the August 25th Fire Prevention Day at the Minnesota State Fair is all set up, we still have bracelets from last year and will be handing them out to kids that take the fire prevention test. The video game is scheduled to be on site. All shifts have been filled for our booth. Motion to reimburse parking for members to staff our booth by Robbie Bartholomew and 2nd by Phil Owens, motion passed unanimously.

Training/Education:

Jon Nisja reported that we had 56 attend the IFMA class; the membership did make a small-unexpected profit from the class. The board had supplemented the cost of the seminar to provide our members with a substantial savings. The normal cost of the class is approximately \$600 to \$700, a good deal for those that attended.

Upcoming classes:

- September 11, 2006 – World Trade Center Seminar
- 51st Annual Institute for Building Officials – January 3-12, 2007.
- AMBO/ICC Conference in February.
- NFSA – Sprinkler Classes December 12-15, 2006
- AFAA – Fire Alarm Classes November 15-17, 2006.

Legislation:

Fire Safety Bill has passed and the Board will be determined. FMAM and IAAI share a position on the board. Jeff Schadegg will be sending Robbie a list of their members. The two boards then will look at a list of members that represent both memberships to determine a representative that will benefit both organizations.

Certification:

We will need to review the skills portion of Inspector 1 Exam. Looking at scheduling that in September or October.

Fire Code:

The 2006 IFC and Minnesota State Amendment should become effective sometime in March. FMAM will have ICC print a Minnesota State Fire Code Book that will include all the Minnesota State Amendments, no inserts needed.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Board is looking at setting up a committee to work on the issue of State Certification for Fire Marshals/Inspectors in the State through the State Fire Marshal Division. This will take legislation, etc. Many other states currently require the certification and have offered advice and samples of criteria.

The Web Site is up and running, it's taking time to get all the information into the site. Jon has done a wonderful job on getting the site up and running and working with the programmers. Thanks Jon.

NEW BUSINESS:

Social Event has been scheduled; we still need about 17 people to go. Robbie will email the members again to remind them.

The Board will be looking at all Committees and our representatives. We have several committees that are no longer meeting and others that need new appointed representatives.

Jon Nisja brought forth the option of FMAM printing and distributing a "Fire Protection Buyers Guide" and selling advertisement space in the book. This may be a very good fundraiser and a benefit to our communities looking for contractors.

Motion to adjourn at 12:10pm by Kip LaMotte and 2nd by Vance Swisher, motion passed

Respectfully Submitted:
Robbie Bartholomew, Secretary

**Fire Marshal's Association of Minnesota
BOARD MEETING
November 8, 2006**

Members Present: President Phil Owens, Vice-President Kip LaMotte, Secretary Robbie Bartholomew, Board Members Butch Gervais and Chris Hearnden, Public Education Chair Connie Forster, Bob Dahm representing the State Fire Marshal Division. Guests Marilyn Arnlund and Pat Parsley.

Pat Parsley gave a presentation to the FMAM Board regarding joining ICC Region III and the benefits and advantages to our organization as a member. The Board asked Marilyn Arnlund to the meeting to hear the proposal from Region III. The presentation was very informative.

President Phil Owens called the meeting to order at 10:00.

The Board had a long discussion after the Region III presentation and this may be a good step for FMAM to take. The IFC is our code and we may have a better involvement in the code process by being in the Region.

The FMAM Board is recommending to the General Membership to become a participating member and

to ratify the constitution of ICC Region III, motion by Phil Owens and 2nd by Butch Gervais, motion passed unanimously.

The Board will bring the proposal and it's support to the General Membership Meeting in December. The Board feels that this may be a great opportunity. If decided at a later time this does not benefit FMAM we can always drop the membership.

Motion to approve the August 9, 2006 Board Meeting Minutes with corrections by Kip LaMotte and 2nd by Chris Hearnden, motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS:**Treasurer's Report:**

John Powers was unable to attend but emailed the treasurer's report to the board. The current balances of Checking \$11,403.73 and Savings \$20,692.42 for a total of \$32,096.17. Motion to accept the treasurer's report as submitted by Phil Owens and 2nd by Butch Gervais, motion passed unanimously.

Membership Report:

Current paid membership is at 226.

Merchandise:

We have a few folders left from the seminar. Videos and CD's are kept by Kip LaMotte for sales. We are getting down on the inventory but still have some T-Shirts, etc still on hand. Everything else is purchased on line. The folders that we purchased for the 9/11 Class ending up a bit more expense than first anticipated due to shipping costs.

State Fire Marshal's Report:

Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal Bob Dahm informed the Board that State Fire Marshal Jerry Rosendahl was unable to attend. The State Fire Marshal Division is hiring two positions at this time, a part-time / limited term Code Specialist, and a fulltime Schools/Plan Reviewer. Check the State Fire Marshal's Web Site for further information.

Public Education Report:

Connie Forster informed the Board of the Fire Safety Education Seminar January 19-21 in Alexandria. The seminar will include information for both Public Education and Juvenile Fire Setter personnel.

Connie has been asked to attend the Home Safety Council Conference in Washington, January 10-13. Each state is allowed two representatives to attend. This will be a great experience and benefit Minnesota.

Information on the Home Safety Council can be obtained from their web site:

www.homesafetycouncil.org.

This is a great resource for information and free public education materials, handouts, etc.

Public Education Brainstorming will be meeting on December 4, 2006 at SBM.

Training/Education:

The board had a brief discussion on the adoption of the new fire code and training on the code. At this time we have no idea if the state fire marshal division will be doing training. We will look into that and provide further information in the future.

Upcoming classes:

- AFAA – Automatic Fire Alarm Association Training – November 15-17, 2006
- NFSA Minnesota Chapter - Fire Sprinkler Training. – December 12-15, 2006
- Building Officials Conference in January 3-12, 2007
- AMBO Conference in February 5-9, 2007.

Legislation:

The Chief's Legislative Committee and MnFAC have been compiling a list of initiatives for this coming session.

FMAM is pursuing the need for Certification of Fire Marshal's and Fire Inspectors; we will be compiling information and forming a committee. This proposal will require legislation; states that we will look to for guidance are Georgia, Florida, etc. Many states already require State Certification we will look to see what benefits Minnesota.

Certification:

We will need to review the skills portion of Inspector 1 Exam. Looking at scheduling that in September or October.

Fire Code:

The 2006 IFC and Minnesota State Amendment should become effective sometime in March or April. FMAM will have ICC print a Minnesota State Fire Code Book that will include all the Minnesota

State Amendments, no inserts needed. Training on the code to be determined.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Web Site is up and running, Jon Nisja has done an excellent job. We were able to convert some information from the old site but a lot had to be recreated. This is taking time and we should be patient. Jon is doing this on his time for the benefit of FMAM. He is still looking for information to put on the site and have downloads available for members such as forms, etc.

NEW BUSINESS:

Social Event at Canterbury Downs was fun. We didn't have as many attend as we would have liked. A race was sponsored by FMAM. If any members have any suggestions on what to do next year they should contact John Powers.

The Board started looking at Committees and their members. Phil will be calling representatives to find out if they are still interested and will be calling other members to fill vacancies

Motion to adjourn at 1:10pm by Kip LaMotte and 2nd by Chris Hearden, motion passed

Respectfully Submitted:

Robbie Bartholomew, Secretary

Certification & Professional Qualifications Committee

Who wants to help draft an examination (written and practical) for Fire Inspector III? The exam would need to evaluate candidates based on the criteria for Fire Inspector III in NFPA 1031. The exam would be used to certify applicants for the Minnesota Fire Service Certification Board. Interested persons should contact Phil Owens.

FMAM Website

The FMAM Website is undergoing an overhaul. Look for an improved website with more features and a different look in the near future.

No Hearing on State Fire Code

The Minnesota State Fire Code had a 30-day period where persons could request a hearing prior to the code's adoption. The request period closed on Wednesday, December 6, 2006. No hearing requests were received so a hearing will not be held.

The projected effective date of the state fire code is May 31, 2007. This delay or offset is intended to give time for all of the companion code documents (building, residential, energy, building conservation, etc.) to have the same effective date. This also allows time for the purchase of code books and the delivery of training.

Christmas Tree Fires & Holiday Light Fires

We received the following information from Russ Sanders, our Regional Representative for the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The entire report (34 pages) is available from: <http://www.nfpa.org/itemDetail.asp?categoryID=423&itemID=18255&URL=Research%20%20Reports/Fire%20reports/Major%20causes>. The following information was extracted from the copyrighted NFPA report and edited for the Post Indicator.

On average, 300 home structure fires begin with Christmas trees each year.

During the five-year period of 2000-2004, Christmas trees were the items first ignited in an estimated average of 300 reported non-confined home structure fires per year. (Homes include one- and two-family dwellings, apartments, and manufactured housing.)

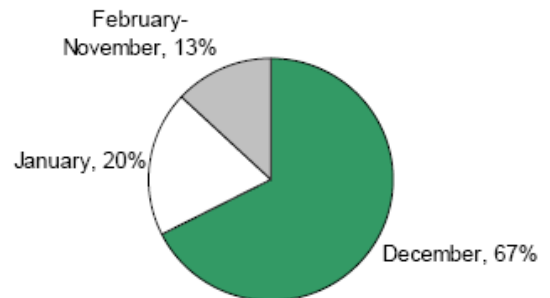
Home structure fires that began with Christmas trees caused an estimated average of 14 civilian deaths, 21 civilian injuries, and \$16.8 million in direct property damage per year.

In NFIRS, Christmas trees are identified by item first ignited code 41. This code makes no distinction between real and artificial trees. The code has remained consistent in the different versions of NFIRS. No statistics are available on fires that started with other items but were fueled by Christmas trees.

Christmas tree fires have declined steadily over the past 25 years.

The number of Christmas tree fires has declined fairly steadily since 1980, falling a total of 76% from a high of 850 in 1980 to 200 in 2004, its lowest point in the past 25 years. Associated deaths, injuries and property damage have shown no consistent trend, although civilian injuries were notably higher in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Figure 1. Home Structure Fires in Which Christmas Trees Were First Ignited, by Month, 2000-2004 Annual Averages



If a Christmas tree fire occurs, the risk of death is unusually high.

Although the number of home structure fires beginning with Christmas trees is relatively small, it is important to remember that these items are generally in use a short time each year. Figure 1 shows that two-thirds of the Christmas tree fires occurred in December, and one-fifth occurred in January. When they do occur, Christmas tree fires are also unusually dangerous. In 2000-2004, on average, one of every 22 home structure Christmas tree fires (excluding confined fires) resulted in a death, compared to an average of one death per 94 non-confined home structure fires overall.

Electrical problems and heat sources that were too close were leading causes of these fires.

Only 4% of home Christmas tree structure fires were intentionally set. Some type of electrical failure or malfunction was a factor in 44% of the home structure fires that originated with Christmas trees. One-quarter (24%) were caused by some type of heat source too close to the tree, and 6% resulted from someone, typically a child, playing with fire or other heat source.

Decorative lights were involved in 16% of the incidents.

47% of Christmas tree fires in homes were coded as no equipment involved. Decorative lights with line voltage (including holiday lights) were involved in 16%, and fixed or portable space heaters were involved in 6% of these incidents.

Candles started 12% of home Christmas tree structure fires.

Arcing was the heat source in 19% of the home Christmas tree structure fires, unclassified heat from powered equipment in 16%, radiated or conducted heat from operating equipment in 14%, and candles were the source of heat in 12% of home structure Christmas tree fires.

One-half (52%) of the home structure Christmas tree fires started in the living room, family room, den, or common room.

Decoration Fires

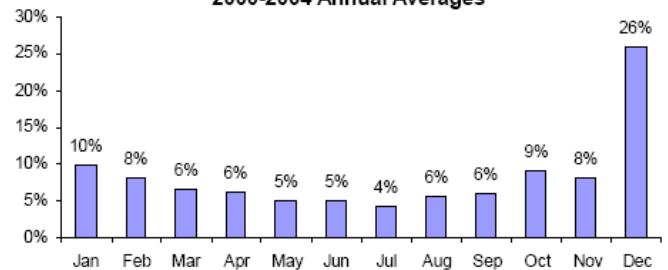
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On average, 1,610 home structure fires begin with decorations each year.

During the five-year period of 2000-2004, decorations were the items first ignited in an estimated average of 1,610 reported non-confined home structure fires per year. (Homes include one- and two-family dwellings, apartments, and manufactured housing.) The 1,610 decoration fires caused an average of seven civilian deaths, 60 civilian injuries, and \$24.9 million in direct property damage per year. In NFIRS 5.0, decorations are identified by item first ignited code 42. In older versions of NFIRS, this code captured decorations for special events. Because the newer definition is stated more simply and may be interpreted more broadly, long-term trend analyses of these items cannot be done.

Table 1 shows the number of fires by year for 2001 to 2004 based on data collected in NFIRS 5.0 only. Although NFIRS 5.0 was in use in 1999 and 2000, the percentage of data collected in this version was small, making estimates less reliable. From 2001 to 2004, the number of decoration fires has been steadily decreasing.

Figure 1. Home Structure Fires in which Decorations Were First Ignited, by Month 2000-2004 Annual Averages



December has three times as many home decoration structure fires as an average month.

The graph below shows that 26% of home structure decoration fires occurred in December, 10% occurred in January and 9% were in October. Home decoration structure fires are higher during the period running from the lead-up to Halloween through to Christmas and its aftermath.

Half of these fires were caused by decorations too close to heat sources

Only 8% of the home structure decoration fires were intentionally set. A heat source too close to the decoration was a factor in 50% of these incidents; abandoned or discarded material was a factor in 10%; and unattended equipment was a factor in 9% of these fires.

Eighty percent of home structure decoration fires were coded as no equipment involved. Ranges or cooktops were involved in 5%; lamps or lighting, including decorative lighting, in 4%; and fixed or portable space heaters were involved in 4% of these incidents.

The leading area of origin for these fires is the living room, family room or den.

One-quarter (26%) of these fires started in the living room, family room, common room, or den. Sixteen percent started in the kitchen, 14% in an unclassified function area, 10% began in bedrooms, and 9% started in bathrooms.

Candles started three of every five home decoration structure fires.

Candles were the heat source in 59% of these fires. In December, the candle share of decoration fires jumped to 71%, compared to 53% in the remainder of the year.

One-third of the decorations ignited were plastic.

In 35% of these incidents, the decoration was made of plastic. In 11%, some type of fabric or fiber made of cotton, blends, rayon or wool was first ignited.

Public Fire Safety Education Conference

Please plan on attending the Annual Minnesota Fire Education Conference to be held at Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center on Lake Darling in Alexandria, Minnesota January 20-21, 2007. The conference is offering a strong educational program with lot's of opportunity to share ideas and get hands on experience. The program includes 6 different educator tracks, an educator networking reception, and certification testing.

The \$200 conference package includes a Saturday breakfast buffet, morning break, lunch, afternoon break, the educator networking reception, Sunday breakfast buffet, morning break, and all educational tracks. Certification testing is an additional \$50 and needs to be addressed on the attendee registration form if it applies to your track.

The Educator Networking Reception will allow fellow educators to gather information from the exhibitors and share local community programs. This promises to be a huge learning opportunity while meeting other fellow educators and enjoying a super snack buffet. There will be door prizes as well, so think of what you are going to showcase from your community programs. Please contact Peg Bohn at 651-452-8506 to reserve a table at the reception to showcase your community programs!

The entire brochure and registration information can be downloaded from www.fmam.org .

FMAM Meeting Notice & Calendar

Wednesday, December 13, 2006

New Brighton Public Safety Center - 785 Old Highway 8

12:30 p.m. – Education Program

1:30 p.m. – Business Meeting

Other Important Dates (2007):

January 8-12, 2007 – Annual U of MN Building Official Conference

January 20-21, 2007 – Public Fire Safety Educators Conference

February 5-9, 2007 – AMBO Conference

Wednesday, March 14, 2007 – FMAM Annual Meeting & Elections

Wednesday, June 13, 2007 – Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, September 12, 2007 – Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, December 12, 2007 – Quarterly Meeting

Fire Marshals Association of Minnesota
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