



## Annual Workplace Safety and Health Conference

# HOT TOPICS



## SFMO

**STATE FIRE MARSHAL – Chris Connealy**

**ASST. FIRE MARSHAL – Ernest McCloud – Over All Sections**

**CAPTAIN - INSPECTIONS – Clinton Williams**

**CAPTAIN - LICENSING – Mike Borden**

**CAPTAIN - FIRE INVESTIGATIONS (West) – Christopher Janssen**

**CAPTAIN - FIRE INVESTIGATIONS (East) – Kyle Morris**

**CAPTAIN - CANINE – Tommy Pleasant**



# History

- **The Texas State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO), a program of the Texas Department of Insurance, came into existence in December 1910. Our primary mission, from the beginning, has been to reduce the incidence and severity of fires, thereby reducing fire deaths, injuries, and property losses.**
- **The creation of the position of Texas State Fire Marshal and SFMO by the 31st Legislature in 1910, reflected the larger, national "progressive" or "populist" movement and was meant to reduce fire losses and to better control and regulate fire insurance companies.**



# History

- **In 1917 the Texas Legislature gave the SFMO fire/arson investigation authority. This amendment to the fire insurance law enlarged the power and authority of the State Fire Marshal and permitted him to assist actively with the district attorneys in the prosecution of persons charged with arson.**
- **The SFMO has been working with state primary schools, universities and colleges practically since the day it was founded on fire safety issues, including campus fire safety and fire safety education from Pre-K through colleges and universities.**



# Topics



## Smoke Alarms

- **Smoke alarms provide an early warning of a fire, giving people additional escape time. In 2009-2013, smoke alarms sounded in more than half (53%) of the home<sup>1</sup> fires reported to U.S. fire departments.**
- **Three of every five home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms (38%) or no working smoke alarms (21%).**
- **The death rate per 100 reported home fires was more than twice as high in homes that did not have any working smoke alarms compared to the rate in homes with working smoke alarms (1.18 deaths vs. 0.53 deaths per 100 fires).**
- **In fires in which the smoke alarms were present but did not operate, almost half (46%) of the smoke alarms had missing or disconnected batteries.**
- **Dead batteries caused one-quarter (24%) of the smoke alarm failures.**



# Generators

- Generators produce carbon monoxide when they are running
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.



# Space Heaters

**Home heating fires are the second leading cause of fire deaths in American homes and the leading cause of home fires in December and January.**

**In Texas, heating equipment is the fifth leading cause of one- and two-family dwelling fires.**

**Keep portable heaters at least three feet away from anything that might burn, including furniture, bedding, clothing, pets, and people.**

**Turn these heaters off when you aren't in the room or when you go to sleep. Don't leave children and pets alone or unsupervised in rooms where space heaters are in use.**

**Make sure that everyone knows how dangerous it is to dry clothing over these heaters or place combustible materials near them.**



# Space Heaters

**Before using electric space heaters for the first time each season, check for fraying or splitting wires and overheating. If there are problems, have them fixed by a professional, or buy a new heater.**

**Plug space heaters directly into wall outlets; don't use extension cords or multi-plug adapters.**

**Don't overload electrical outlets.**



# Kitchen Fires

- **Unattended cooking was the leading factor in home cooking fires.**
- **Two-thirds (66%) of home cooking fires started with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.**
- **Clothing was the item first ignited in less than 1% of these fires, but these incidents accounted for 18% of the cooking fire deaths.**
- **Ranges or cooktops accounted for the majority (61%) of home cooking fire incidents. Ovens accounted for 13%.**
- **More than half (54%) of reported non-fatal home cooking fire injuries occurred when the victims tried to fight the fire themselves.**
- **Frying poses the greatest risk of fire.**
- **Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires.**



# Stove Fires



# Christmas Tree Fires



# Bedroom Fire



# SFMO Programs



**Fire Safety For Texans - School Fire Safety Curriculum Guides**



# Grilling Safety

**Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.**

**The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings, and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.**

**Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.**

**Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.**

**If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.**

**There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.**

