



Minnesota Department of Public Safety

State Fire Marshal Division 2020 Annual Report



A Look Back on 2020

From State Fire Marshal Division Senior Staff



“Unprecedented.” “When will we return to normal?” “You’re on mute.”
Everyone across the country will remember these three phrases from 2020.

Along with the rest of Minnesota, the fire service endured a lot over the past year: an increase in fire and EMS calls, an increase in large-loss fires, and worst of all, an increase in the number of fire fatalities. However, we will also remember 2020 as the year of unwavering dedication, the ability to adapt to and overcome any challenge, and most assuredly, the responsiveness of the fire service to the citizens of Minnesota.

Like most of you, our staff at the State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD) faced those challenges of 2020 by stepping up and responding to the needs of the state. Our group of professionals at SFMD are a true reflection of the Minnesota fire service and its perseverance, resiliency, and tenacity.

In this report, you will see the results of countless hours of dedicated work by our team members. It illustrates how each team, with its own unique qualities, works toward the overall mission of making Minnesota the safest place to work and live.

Jim Smith

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Smith".

Minnesota

State Fire Marshal

Amanda Swenson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Swenson".

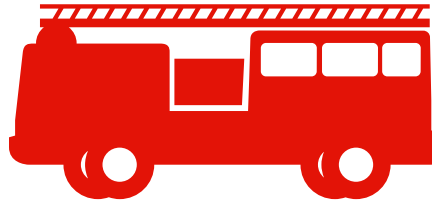
Chief Deputy

State Fire Marshal

2020 at a Glance



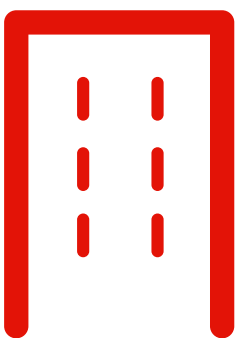
The Fire Investigations Team assisted local officials and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives National Response Team following civil unrest in May.



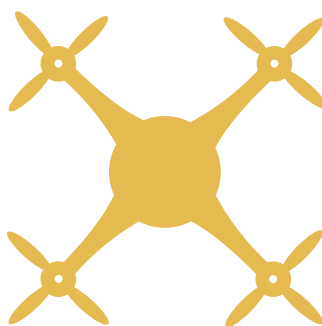
Our Fire Service Specialists and Hazardous Materials Team worked with local officials in Becker during the fire at Northern Metals Recycling in February.



Staff coordinated and participated in training for fire departments to prepare them for potential protests or arson incidents during the construction of Enbridge Line 3.



The Fire Code Team released a report on the deadly 2019 high-rise fire. The report cited several factors that played a role in the size and severity of the fire.

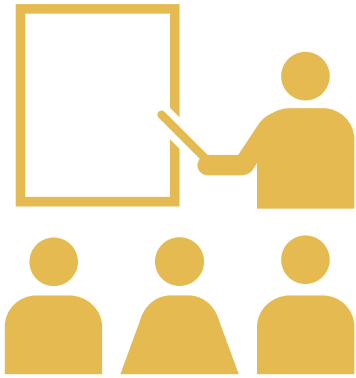


The SFMD continued to move forward with implementing a drone program. The drones will be available to assist with large-scale incidents across the state.

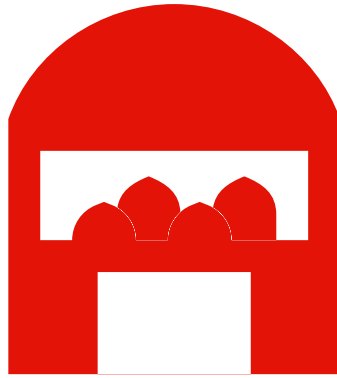


The 2020 Minnesota State Fire Code was adopted and became effective March 31. Staff have been updating information sheets related to the adoption.

2020 at a Glance



Staff delivered the second week-long fire code academy at Camp Ripley in August. Approximately 30 people attended the academy.



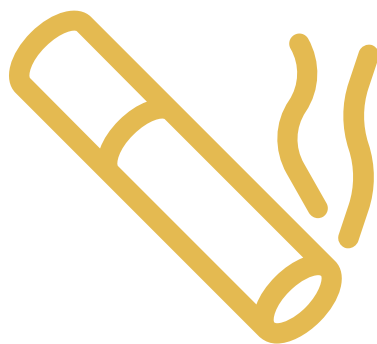
The SFMD inspected a sample number of wedding barns and developed a report for the Minnesota Legislature.



The Honor Guard worked closely with Minnesota Fallen Firefighters Memorial Association to support the fire service in honoring our own.



The MBFTE helped establish clarifications of Executive Orders that allowed for continued hands-on training and testing during the COVID-19 pandemic.



The Public Education Team played a major role in the SFMD's five-year mission to reduce the number of smoking-related fire fatalities in Minnesota.



The Public Education Team worked on two major projects, including a tool to evaluate local risks and a media campaign to reduce smoking-related deaths.

2020 at a Glance

SFMD adapts to doing business in a COVID-19 world



The Health Care Team worked with the Army Corps of Engineers, National Guard and Department of Health to ID, establish, and inspect alternate care sites for COVID-19 treatment.



SFMD staff worked closely with other agencies to provide consultation on their strategies for continuation of services during the COVID-19 pandemic.



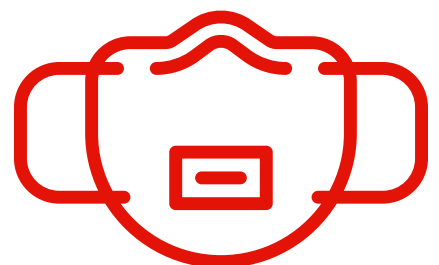
School, health care, hotel/motel, foster care and child care facility inspections continued despite the pandemic. Staff quickly responded to increased precautions and safety protocols.



SFMD staff created a mapping tool to track the need for mutual aid in case departments were unable to respond for service due to a COVID-19 outbreak.



SFMD staff worked with the Governor's Office and fire departments across the state to collect more than 137,000 cloth masks to donate to community organizations.



Fire Service Specialists worked with Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association to distribute personal protective equipment to Minnesota fire departments.

2020 by the Numbers

Fire deaths

53

66 percent of fire deaths happened in residential/multi-family structures.
10 smoking-related fire deaths.



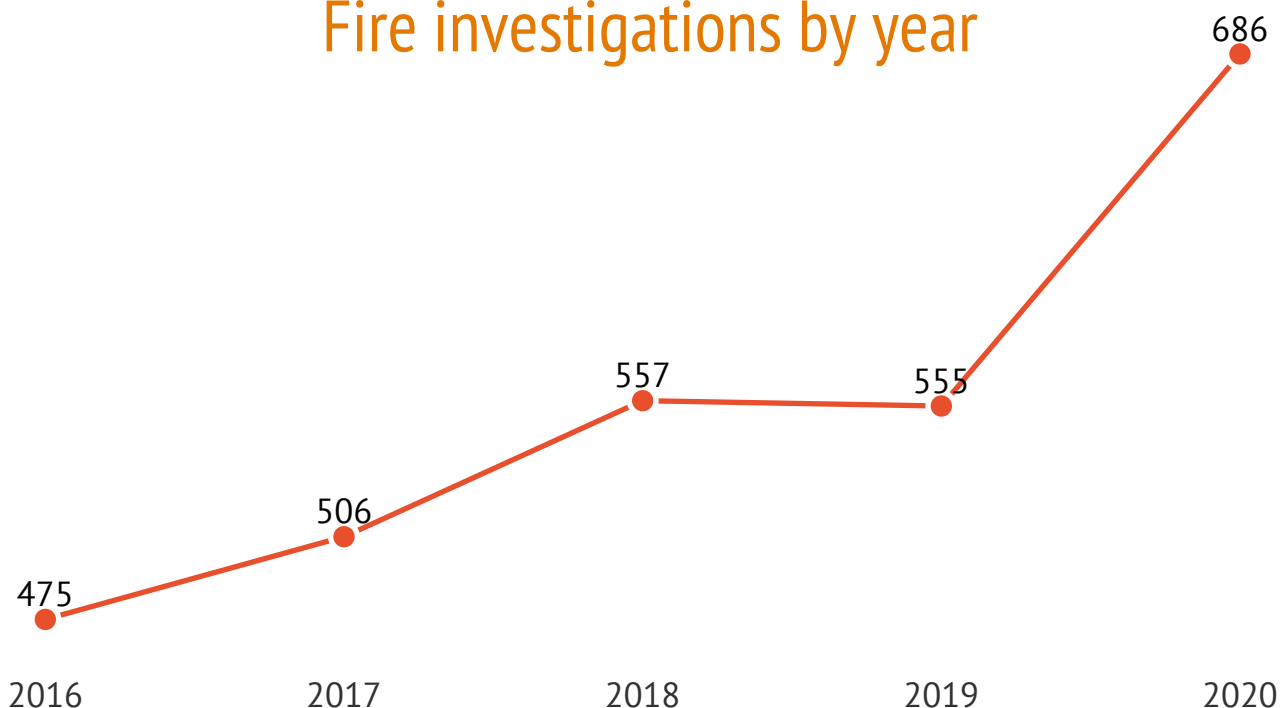
Fire investigations

686

277 consultations

137 of these fire investigations were in coordination with ATF National Response Team following the civil unrest over the spring/summer.

Fire investigations by year



2020 by the Numbers

Code interpretations

2,607

Gear washer/dryer grants

\$400,000 to
56 fire departments

Fire inspections

Schools

- 548 (follow-ups: 525)

Residential Care and Lodging

- 405 (follow-ups: 393)

Health Care and Department of Corrections

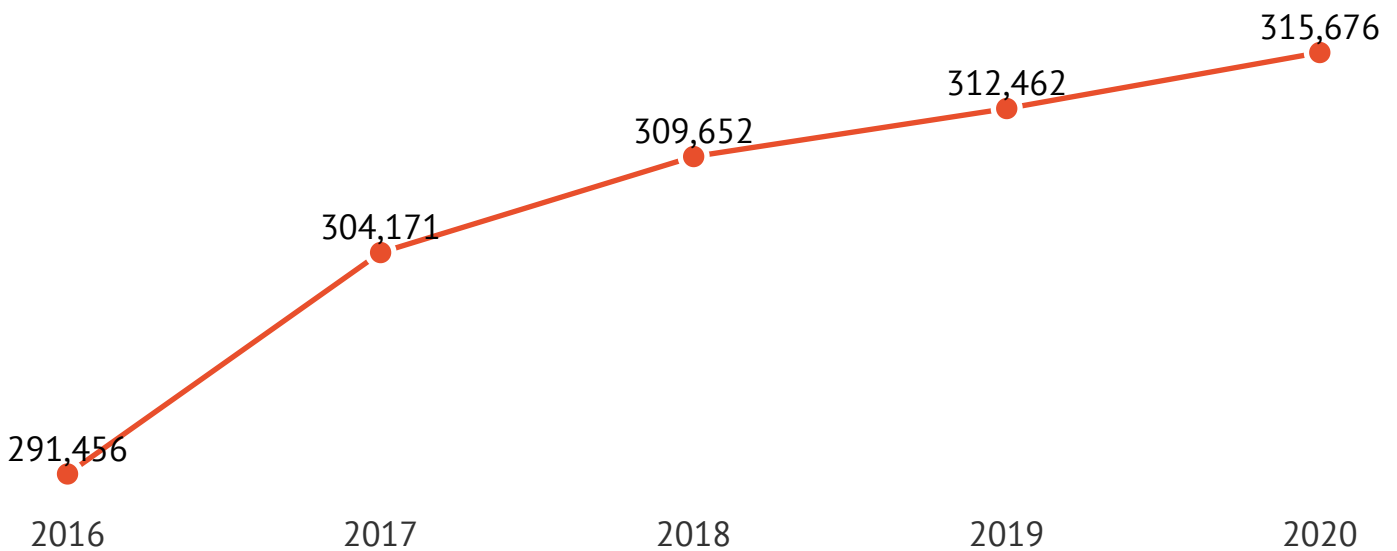
- 437 (follow-ups: 89)
- 272 health care facilities
- 165 adult foster care facilities
- 86 DOC inspections

2020 by the Numbers

Sprinkler plan reviews & permits issued
375

Fire incident reporting

Incidents processed through the
Minnesota Fire Incident Reporting System



Contact us

You can find contact information for SFMD staff at sfm.dps.mn.gov.
Don't forget to follow us on social media:



StateFireMarshal



MnDPS_SFMD



minnesota_dps



MNDPS

SFMD Staff

Jim Smith, State Fire Marshal

Amanda Swenson, Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal

Steven Flaherty – Executive Director (Board of Firefighter Training & Education)

Supervisors

Jim Iammatteo – Investigations

Jon Nisja – Codes, Fire Protection & Training

Bill Abderhalden – Health Care
& Correctional Inspections

John Ehret – State Services & Response

Ryan Whiting – Residential Inspections

Barb Lundberg – Support Staff

Forrest Williams – School Inspections

Fire Investigators

Andrea Bexell

Kevin Mahle

Toby McLain

Bruce McLaughlin

Brian Petersen

Ron Rahman

Jon Ray

Rich Sellman

John Steinbach

Casey Stotts

Steve Wolf

Fire and Life Safety

Education

Kathi Osmonson

Bob Reif

School Inspectors

Kurt Kastella

Kevin McGinty

Tom Roessler

John Swanson

Fire Protection and Codes

Tom Jenson

Dan Kaiser

Ryan Kunst

Jacob Lindquist

Ralph Peterson

Data Team

Nora Gierok

Joel Paylor

Scott Radke

Residential Inspectors

Travis Ahrens

Dan Beeson

Tony Clifton

Marvin Forbragd

Bob Rexeisen

Kevin Sedivy

George Shellum

Fire Service Specialists

Tate Mills

Jared Rozeboom

Steve White

Response Team

Bob Berg

John Kreuser

Tom McDonough

Health Care and Corrections

James Anderson

Bob Baumann

Larry Gannon

Steve Jurrens

Roy Kingsley

Kerry Queen

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