



# Arson NEWS



VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.MICHIGANIAAI.ORG July 2009



## From the President .....

■ By Gary Leirstein, IAAI Michigan Chapter

Greetings to all! Summer is almost here and I hope everyone takes time to enjoy all that the season has

to offer. It was a hectic month of May for me, first with the Michigan Chapter IAAI Annual School in Mt. Pleasant and then off to Arlington, Texas for the International IAAI school. I am now back and ready to roll up my sleeves as I begin my year as the IAAI Michigan Chapter President.

I am honored to have been elected President for the 2009/2010 year. It will be exciting and challenging for me but I am ready for the opportunity to serve the chapter in this capacity. I would like to once again thank Rocky for his service this past year as president, Rocky, you did an excellent job at putting this year's school together. I hope to follow your lead and plan an equally rewarding school for 2010.

We will once again be going to the Comfort Inn in Mt. Pleasant. While being mindful of budget restrictions in many municipalities, we have secured the same rates for 2010. Plan ahead and get this into your budgets for next year.

I would like to touch a few things that I look forward to working on during my tenure as President. First I would like to see some more regional schools. Again, Rocky and the Regional Committee did a great job this past year and I would like to see more of the same. If you have any suggestions for training opportunities or would like to host a training seminar, please let us know. Tentative locations thus far are Irons, Three Rivers, Canton, Adrian and St. Ignace.

Secondly, I would like to look into video conference training. This may be a big project to get off the ground, but if it can be done, I think we can expand our training classes to a much larger audience. I would also like to

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## NOTICE

The Michigan Chapter of the IAAI at its 2009 annual meeting voted to go electronic with The Arson News.

### Starting in January 2010

The Arson News will be e-mailed to its members. Send your e-mail address to:

**Web Master  
Byron C. Turnquist**

***michiganiaai@yahoo.com***

You may print and share The Arson News. For those that do not have access to a computer or e-mail a request can be submitted and an Arson News will be printed and mailed.

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Working Together Successfully

MICHIGAN CHAPTER IAAI 2009-10

# Sustaining Members



Working Together Successfully

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Sheldon D. Yellen  
185 Oakland Ave., Suite 300  
Birmingham, MI 48009-3433
- **Donan Engineering Co., Inc.**  
Linda L. Smith  
49732 Martin Drive  
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- **Herndon & Associates**  
Walter O. Herndon, Jr.  
36135 Schoolcraft Road  
Livonia, MI 48150-1216
- **Hopkins, Yeager & Smith, P.C.**  
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4690 E. Fulton St., Suite 102  
Ada, MI 49301-8403
- **Jarvis Construction**  
William L. Jarvis  
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Detroit, MI 48207-4222
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- **Nederveld Associates, Inc.**  
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- **SEMCO Energy**  
Thomas M. Reilly  
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- **State-Wide Consulting & Investigating, LLC**  
Chad A. Coney  
Jack L. Hooker  
Lansing, Monroe &  
Three Rivers, MI
- **SunGlo Restoration Serv., Inc.**  
Harold Drews  
22960 Venture Dr.  
Novi, MI 48375-4188

## THE ARSON NEWS

THE ARSON NEWS is the official publication of the Michigan Chapter of International Association of Arson Investigators, and is published four times a year. The publication is solely an educational and advisory aid to Fire, Police, State Police, Sheriffs, Insurance Personnel and individuals working to suppress the crime of arson; and to assist them in making more thorough investigations. Opinions expressed in The Arson News are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official opinion of the IAAI or the Michigan Chapter.

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**I WANT YOU**  
to send me  
an article!

Your Editor, Rex P. Lewis

We are in need of some good articles for this newsletter. If you had an interesting fire that you would like to write about or if you find an article that would be beneficial to other investigators, please send the information to us.

The Arson News is published quarterly with issues in JANUARY, APRIL, JULY and OCTOBER. The deadlines are as follows:

January Issue ..... December 5th  
April Issue ..... March 5th  
July Issue ..... June 5th  
October Issue ..... September 5th

PLEASE SEND ARTICLES TO:

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# 2009-10 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## 2009-2010 Committees

### Arson News

Lewis/LaBuhn/Weichert/Turnquist

### By-Laws/Ethics

Jenkinson/Hardy

### MAPC

LaBuhn/Thomas/Papalia/Terski

### Certified Fire Investigators

Walker/Terski/Maxwell

### Legislative Joint Council

Schrah/Hager

### Finance

Thomas/Teriaco

### General Store

Kraai/Hamilton/Schrah/Maxwell

### Membership

Teriaco/Robertson

### Photo Contest

Walker/Bush

### Poster Contest

Robertson/Maxwell/Bush

### NFIRS

Ripke

### Regional Seminars/Training

Tuller/Walker/Ripke/Terski/Hamilton

### Michigan Arson School

Leirstein/Thomas/LaBuhn/Weichert  
Robertson/Hardy/Lewis

### Elections

Papalia

### Awards

Robertson/Bush

## SPECIAL COMMITTEES

### NFPA 1033/921

Ripke/Shinsky

### Webmaster

Turnquist

### Scholarship

Jenkinson/Tuller

### Display

Thomas/LaBuhn

## COMING SOON!

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ARSON INVESTIGATORS

## Fire Investigation Technician Professional Designation

*"The path to professional recognition for the beginning Fire Investigator"*

The Fire Investigation Technician Program is designed to verify an applicant's fundamental knowledge as measured against core job performance requirements of established professional qualification standards for fire investigators defined in NFPA 1033, NFPA 1021 and NFPA 1037.

The applicant must provide documentation of meeting minimum requirements including experience, training and education. Upon approval they must successfully pass a comprehensive examination.

**Experience:** Approximately 18 months of general experience in a fire investigation related organization.

**Training and Education:** 46 hours of tested training. Must include the following classes from CFITrainer.net.

- Ethics Module (3 hours)
- Scientific Method Module (3 hours)
- Documenting the Event Module (4 hours)

- Fire and Explosives Investigation: Utilizing NFPA 1033 and 921 Module (3 hours).

**Comprehensive Examination:** An examination that is based upon core job performance requirements outlined above. Must achieve a score of 75% or above to successfully challenge the exam.

**Renewal:** All holders of this professional designation must renew their designation every three years. Must provide documentation of 18 months of general work experience and 16 additional hours of tested training. The renewal applicants will not be required to retake the exam.

This professional designation program is specifically designed to provide recognition for those who are at work in the field of fire investigation. A separate Fire Investigator Certification program (IAAI – CFI) is available through IAAI for those who are active as expert witnesses and have greater work experience.

## From the President ... (Continued from Page 1)

expand the electronic distribution of The Arson News. Starting in January, those members who have provided Byron with their email addresses will start getting The Arson News via mail. Those members who do not have email access will still be sent a paper copy of The Arson News. Byron has spent a considerable amount of time working on this project and also working on our website. There is still time to get your email addresses to him.

As I mentioned, I attended the International IAAI Annual School in Arlington, Texas May 17-22, 2009. Our chapter was well represented as Dale Hardy and Jim Maxwell also attended. We are in the process of securing two or three of the instructors for our next year's school. If you ever have the opportunity to attend one of the International Schools, I highly recommend it. Not only were the classes valuable, the networking opportunities with people from all over the country and many other parts of the world was incredible.

Again, please let us know if you have any ideas, suggestions or comments for any educational topics, speakers or things we just need to know, please contact me or anyone on the board. We are here to serve you, the members of the Michigan Chapter of the IAAI.

Thanks again for the opportunity to serve as your President this year and have a safe and enjoyable summer!

## 2010 Poster Contest

■ **By Craig Robertson, IAAI**  
*Michigan Chapter Secretary*  
*Poster Contest Committee*

Well another Poster Contest has passed us by and the committee has already begun work on the 2010 Poster Contest. The fliers have already been mailed out to the art instructor's at the Junior High and High School level with the flyers going to all public schools in the State of Michigan.

The committee found it necessary to get the flyers out before a school year ends as teachers can place this into their lesson plans for their up and coming school year. This allows them to budget their class funds better and they can potentially make the poster contest a class assignment.

As a committee member and a member of our association, I would like to ask all members of the association to help with our cause. The cause would be to contact your art instructor's in your school district and explain to them what the poster contest is all about.

Additionally, explain to them that if a student wins, a matching prize is given to the art department for that school. These posters seem to be dwindling in numbers every year and shouldn't be. The posters are put on display at various events and they are also used to educate people about Arson awareness.

## 2009 Poster Contest Winners

■ **By Craig Robertson**  
*IAAI Michigan Chapter Secretary*  
*Poster Contest Committee*

Well another Poster Contest has passed us by and by the time we realize it, another contest deadline will be upon us. Judging for the 2009 contest took place in April of 2009 in Lansing, Michigan. Additionally, the winning posters can be seen in full color on our website, [www.michigan-aaai.org](http://www.michigan-aaai.org).

At this time, I would like to commend all of the entrants for their diligent works and congratulate the 2009 Poster Contest winners and their respective schools. Again, to all contestant, A JOB WELL DONE!

### HIGH SCHOOL:

**1st Place** - Dara Beach  
Imlay City High School

**2nd Place** - Erica Nerowski  
Southgate Anderson High School

**3rd Place** - Denise Soulliere  
Imlay City High School

### MIDDLE SCHOOL:

**1st Place** - Lance Gurka  
Frost Middle School

**2nd Place** - Michelle McClosky  
Hart Middle School

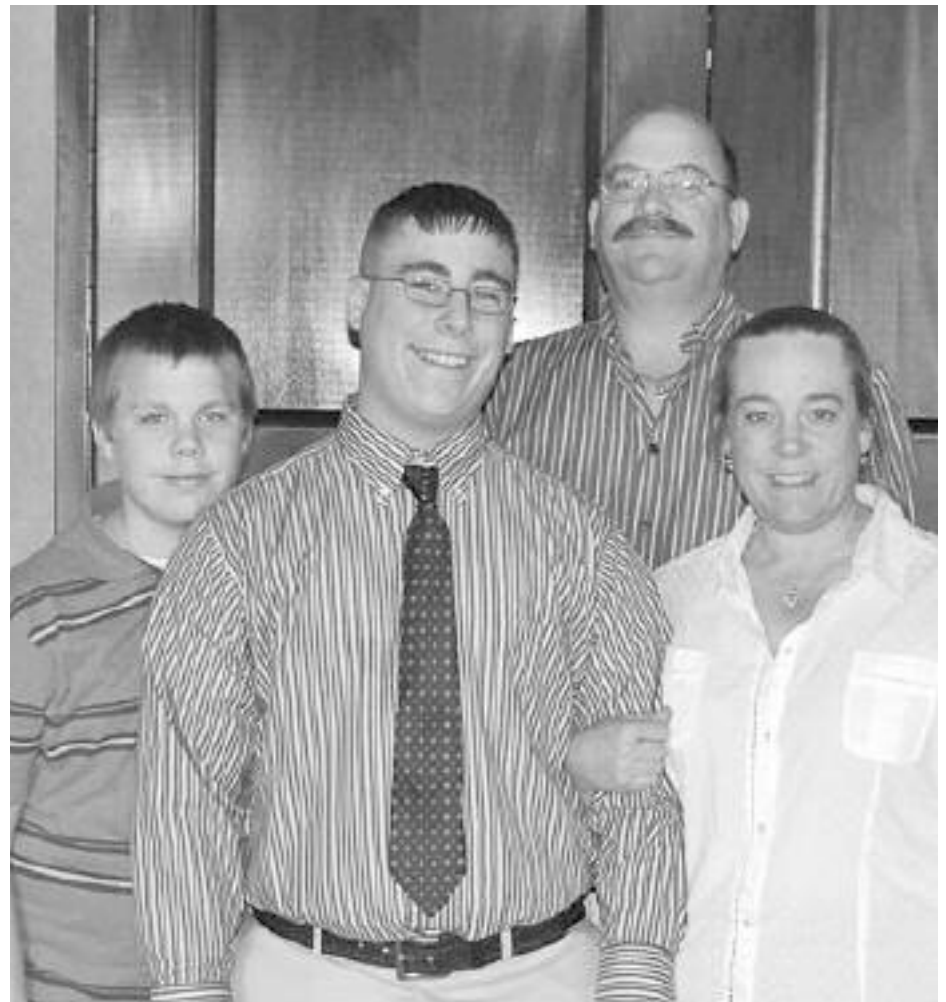
**3rd Place** - Enkeleda Mira  
Abbott Middle School

### COMPUTER GENERATED ARTWORK:

**1st Place** - Jacob Campbell  
William D. Ford Career Tech Center

**2nd Place** - Kaitlyn Beels  
Lakeview High School

**3rd Place** - Chris Button  
William D. Ford Career Tech Center



Scholarship recipient winner and family.

# REWARD

PUT THE ARSONISTS WHERE THEY BELONG  
The fires they set affect all of us!!



**UP TO \$5,000**

FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST AND/OR CONVICTION OF ANYONE ON ARSON CHARGES

**CALL "ARSON CONTROL"**  
**1-800-44-ARSON**  
**TOLL FREE**

Funding provided by the Tobacco Institute. (AC-4S)



■ **Terri A. Miller, CPCU**  
*General Manager, MAIPF*  
*Director, H.E.A.T. Program*

With the current economic conditions, many vehicle owners are in a state of panic over high car payments, expensive repairs and mileage overruns on leases. People often purchase a vehicle that they can't afford and then feel desperate during financial hardship, leading to poor decisions to alleviate financial burdens. Many see "owner give-ups" as a way to get out of these situations.

This type of fraud occurs when an owner willingly gives a vehicle to someone who will, for a price, "take care of it" for them. They might torch the vehicle, dismantle it in a chop shop or dump it into a nearby body of water. Owners then contact their insurance companies to report the vehicle as stolen or report an accidental vehicle fire. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, nearly 20 percent of all arsons occur in vehicles and arson is the second-highest cause of vehicle fires.

People who commit these crimes are often not your typical criminal, but someone who may be struggling through a rough financial period, trying for a quick fix and making a bad decision. Unfortunately for them, most insurance and law enforcement investigators are well-versed in the red flags of fraudulent claims; at best, the outcome is a claim denial and worst case may involve a felony charge for insurance fraud or arson.

H.E.A.T. is a confidential tip line funded by Michigan auto insurers. Many law enforcement and insurance company investigators use this tool to obtain information from neighbors or other interested parties in an investigation when a vehicle has been reported stolen. Tipsters can speak to a live H.E.A.T. tip line operator 24/7 at 1-800-242-HEAT or log on to [www.1800242HEAT.com](http://www.1800242HEAT.com).

Rewards can go up to \$10,000. Free information and materials to distribute to potential tipsters can be obtained by emailing us at [info@miheat.org](mailto:info@miheat.org).

## Check Your Curriculum Vitae for Accuracy

■ By Dale L. Hardy

I have received several calls from attorneys asking about the CFI, Certified Fire Investigator, status that they are seeing on several CV's they review in fire cases. They are asking when the MSP started or are giving out the CFI designation. I have told them that the MSP does not certify anyone and that the students that have attended and passed our two-week FI 1 school receive a certificate from NBFSPQ, (Pro Board), stating that they have passed an exam in Fire Investigation in compliance with NFPA 1033.

I talked to Pro Board and they again said that they do not certify anyone, they only accredit the agency giving the exam. You are not a CFI by passing the exam at the MSP FI 1 school. The work "certified" on their certificate is in small case and not attached to the words "Fire Investigator". Please check your CV's for accuracy of your credentials as they will follow you throughout your career when testifying in fire cases.

The only current CFI is from the IAAI. You can obtain a CFEI, Certified Fire & Explosion Investigator, or CFVI, Certified Vehicle Fire Investigator, from National Association of Fire Investigators, NAFI.

*Save the Date!*



International Association of  
 Special Investigation Units  
 MICHIGAN CHAPTER

IASIU will again host its annual training seminar, titled *Today's Economy: Stimulus for Fraud?* on **Wednesday, October 14, 2009** at Schoolcraft College in Livonia. Keynote speaker will be Dennis Jay, Executive Director of the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud, based in Washington, D.C. Topics include legal updates, mortgage fraud and foreclosures, using the internet in investigations and much more.

Additional details and registration information will be available later this summer on their website: <http://www.miiasiu.org>

### 2009-2010 Board Meeting Schedule

Date	City	Location
Friday, July 17, 2009	Traverse City	TBD
Friday, October 16, 2009	Canton	TBD
Wednesday, December 2, 2009	Westland	Bailey Center
Friday, January 22, 2009	Port Huron	TBD
Friday, April 16, 2009	TBD (Tustin)	TBD
Monday, May 10, 2009	<b>Mt. Pleasant</b> <b>After the Golf Outing</b>	TBD

### 2009-2010 Regional Schedule

July, 2009	Three Rivers	TBD
July, 2009	Hamburg Twp.	TBD
September, 2009	Canton	TBD
October, 2009	Mackinaw	TBD
January, 2010	Port Huron	TBD
March, 2010	Adrian	TBD

**NOTE: Check website for updates and changes at: [www.michiganiaai.org](http://www.michiganiaai.org)**

# Fire Legislation

Current status of 2009 proposed fire legislation.

## 2009 Proposed Legislation

Bill No.	Subject	Date Introduced	Sponsor	Status
<b>HB 4026</b>	Creates the ability for the Bureau of Fire Services to set fees for services required under PA 207.	1/22/2009	Rep. Rick Hammel	Referred to the Committee on Appropriations
<b>HB 4029</b>	Provides for per capita distribution of revenue sharing for cities, villages and townships.	1/22/2009	Rep. Tim Moore (R)	Referred to the Committee on Appropriations
<b>HB 4062</b>	Repeals public service employment residency requirement.	1/22/2009	Rep. Lamar Lemmons (D)	Committee on Urban Policy
<b>HB 4081</b>	Permits Right-to-Work Zones.	1/23/2009	Rep. Marty Knollenbery (R)	Referred to the Committee on Labor
<b>HB 4320</b>	Permits millage levy assessed for police and fire districts on a per parcel or ad valorem basis.	2/17/2009	Rep. Geoff Hansen (R)	Referred to the Committee on Intergovernmental & Regional Affairs
<b>HB 4473</b>	Provides for presumption for certain firefighters regarding occupational cancer.	2/27/2009	Rep. Jennifer Haase	Referred to the Committee on Commerce & Tourism
<b>SB 20</b>	Requirement for bars and installed on windows to have an escape latch attached.	1/27/2009	Sen. John Gleason	Referred to Committee on Economic Development & Regulatory Reform
<b>SB 85</b>	Regulates sale of novelty lighters. Fire Services to set fees for services required under PA 207.	1/27/2009		Referred to the Committee on Commerce & Tourism
<b>SB 109</b>	Provides a cancer presumption for certain forms of cancer for firefighters. required under PA 207.	1/28/2009	Sen. Valde Garcia (R)	Referred to the Committee on Commerce & Tourism
<b>SB 205</b>	Clarifies standards for university fire safety inspections.	2/10/2009	Sen. Deb Cherry (D)	Referred to the Committee on Education
<b>SB 264</b>	Requires fire safe cigarettes.	2/19/2009	Sen. Tupac Hunter (D)	Passed and sent to governor for signing
<b>SB 265</b>	Empowers Dept. of Treasury to investigate and enforce fire safe cigarette statute.	2/19/2009	Sen. Tupac Hunter (D)	Referred to the Committee on Commerce & Tourism



MICHIGAN CHAPTER - IAAI

2009

# Annual Arson School



MAY 12-15, 2009 ♦ COMFORT INN ♦ MT. PLEASANT, MICHIGAN



*David Robertson (left) pictured with his brother Craig Robertson, Board Member*



*Seventh grader sang the national anthem.*



*Past Presidents "Grandpa" aka John Wiechert and Walter Holtz*





MICHIGAN CHAPTER - IAAI

2009

# Annual Arson School



MAY 12-15, 2009 ♦ COMFORT INN ♦ MT. PLEASANT, MICHIGAN



*Past Presidents Vern Erickson and Walter Holtz*



*Jim LaBuhn received the President's Award*



*Electrical Engineer Norm Reese taught "Electrical Fire Investigations"*

# Courtroom Testimony Class

**TROY POLICE/FIRE TRAINING CENTER**  
4850 John R Road, Troy, MI 48085



## Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday October 1, 2, 3 & 4, 2009

**TO:** Fire Investigators working towards IAAI-CFI (Certified Fire Investigator) or just improving their skills. **Registrations must be received in advance and include full payment before shipping of student materials.** Cancellations, changes and no-shows will be charged an administrative fee. Due to pre-class assignments **registrations must be received no later than Friday, July 31, 2009.**

This program is a 3-1/2 day intense training program that requires both pre-class and night assignments during the program. The course goal is to expose and test the students on the actual skills and knowledge required in preparing for actual courtroom testimony as an expert. This program is approved for IAAI-CFI Court Testimony requirements under, "Experience Other" of the application process.

- DATE:** October 1, 2, 3 & 4, 2009
- TIME:** 12:00 noon Thursday, October 1, 2009
- LOCATION:** Troy Police/Fire Training Center  
4850 John R Road, Troy, MI 48085
- COURT SESSION:** City of Troy Court Building
- COST:** \$450.00 Pre-Class materials and confirmation will be sent when payment is received. Class is limited to 8 students. Lodging and meals are on your own.
- LODGING:** Drury Inn, 575 W. Big Beaver Road, Troy, MI 48084 (248) 528-3330. (Lodging on your own)
- COORDINATOR:** James A. Shinsky - Kerby, Bailey & Associates  
P.O. Box 69, Niles, MI 49120  
Phone (269) 684-4628 / Fax (269) 684-4638  
e-mail: Shinskyj@aol.com

### REGISTRATION

#### Courtroom Testimony Class – October 1, 2, 3 & 4, 2009

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency or Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Full or Part-time Fire Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: Michigan Chapter I.A.A.I.**  
MAIL TO: Kerby, Bailey & Associates, P.O. Box 69, Niles, MI 49120

## RETIRED: Chief Ken Eagle (Two Feathers)

■ By Vern Erickson

**C**hief Ken Eagle, Sault Saint Marie Fire Department retired April 30, 2009, after 33 years with the fire service. Twenty two years with the Sault St. Marie fire department, 20 years as their chief.

Ken will be missed as he was very supportive of the fire service – the Upper Peninsula Chiefs and State of Michigan Fire Marshal Division.

It was my pleasure to represent M.A.P.C. and the I.A.A.I. Michigan Chapter, presenting Chief Eagle with a plaque of appreciation for the support he has given to both organizations during his years in the fire service.

The celebration of his years of service was well attended by all his friends, family, the fire service and law enforcement, at the surprise gathering at the Elks Lodge on April 28, 2009. The gathering was organized by his family (Sister, Brothers and Father). The meal was provided by the Eagle Family.

We will miss his support.



**Thanks  
Ken  
and  
Good  
Luck!**

## IAAI Regional Training

**TOPIC:** Point of Origin  
Accidental and Intentional Fires  
Awareness class only

**WHERE:** Irons, Michigan  
Irons Union Church Meeting Room  
5713 W. Jefferson  
(AKA Jeffers St.) 49644

**WHEN:**  
September 26th – 8:30 am

**CONTACT:**  
Chief Elenbass (231) 729-0288

# Display Fireworks: Keeping them off the streets

■ **By Greg Olrich, CFI Fire Marshal**  
*Independence Township*

Over the last 10 or 15 years I've had the responsibility of overseeing the fireworks displays that take place in our community. My routine has been to review the proposed shows then conduct on site inspections to assure the display is safe and follows the guidelines as spelled out by NFPA. Once all the requirements have been met, a team of willing participants stand by during the shows in case things go awry.

Generally the displays are entertaining and usually uneventful, short of an unexpected change of wind direction or the occasional dud that tends to make us a bit nervous.

But recently a conversation with an associate of mine from ATF prompted the basis for this article. We were brainstorming in regards to how display fireworks (Class B aerial shells) were reaching the streets and getting into the hands of the general public. While reviewing my system, we found what we think might just be the weak link. We contacted others with similar responsibility in our area, and found a common link. Here's what we discovered.

During the review of the displays, one of the items we receive from the manufacturer is a list of aerial shells for the proposed display. I personally review about 3-4 shows that are relatively small, but still amount to 1,200-1,500 shells of varying sizes per show.

Here lies my shortcoming, when I inspect the site I'm careful to check for clearances and safe zones, the stability of racks and the ready box. Then the focus turns to the shooters and their fitness. Are they providing proper security, limiting access to the area, are there family members in the safe zone (they all want to bring their own spectators). But I had never taken the time to actually count the shells.

Just a warning, dependent on the manufacturer they will substitute alternate shells to improve the artistic value of the display. But, there should be a bill of lading or delivery slip indicating exactly what was delivered.

Another tip is before you begin your count, ask the crew chief if all their shells are on the ground and if they are hauling additional shows on the truck, as this can make the count much more difficult. Also, if they indicate they do have additional shows on board, inquire if they are licensed to transport. It's definitely going to take more time and personnel to complete a thorough count, but what I found was astounding.

Without exception, each of our shows had discrepancies. I'm not implying all shooters are trying to rip off shells, there are a lot of reputable companies out there, but here are the details surrounding our shows. We had two separate shows to inspect on Fourth of July. One was being sponsored by a local lake association and the other was a community event taking place on township property. Both shows had contracted their respective fireworks companies for many years.

In the first case, (the municipal show) the manufacturer had shorted the display 130 shells, which amounts to a dollar value of about \$650.00. This issue was resolved with a credit for the next years show or reimbursement, as it was too late to do anything about taking care of it for this event. But following the display which lasted about 35-40 minutes, I waited what I felt was a safe period, approximately 30 minutes, after which I went to see if the shooter was set, I found about 50 - 3" shells on the ground with their fuses still chained together near their car. The racks were already in there truck and they were preparing to leave.

I questioned them and the explanation was that during the grand fi-

nale, these shells which were chained together with fuse had not fired. I then asked why he had not shot them off once found, while the racks were still in place; he stated he was waiting for me to decide what I wanted him to do. Maybe this was just an innocent misunderstanding, you be the judge. He had to set up his racks and shoot off the remaining shells, as he was not licensed to transport, and the manufacturer was not interested in sending a truck to haul them. Unfortunately the only spectators to this finale, was the fire department, as the spectators were long gone.

At the second show the shooter was angry that I questioned his integrity, but soon became very cordial when we found that a number of 50 and 100 shell cakes had "inadvertently" been left on the truck, even though he had assured us that all shells were on the ground.

During this process he attempted to correct us with our count, stating that multi-break shells should be counted by number and size shells incorporated in each effect. Although once the missing shells were located in the truck, the count was right on the money.

I should mention these were large, well known companies. But unfortunately with the great number of displays on the holiday, they must subcontract out the displays

In conclusion, if you're already taking the time to be more diligent than I was, kudos. But if like me you find you were missing this critical step, please take the time and effort to make sure what is being delivered to the site is actually making it into the air. Just maybe you'll prevent a horrendous injury and make your communities safer in the process.

If I can assist you in any way please don't hesitate to contact me at [golrich@independencefire.us](mailto:golrich@independencefire.us) or consider contacting your local ATF office for guidance. Be safe.

# Fireworks

National Fire Analysis & Research Division  
National Fire Protection Association  
Special Report by John R. Hall, Jr.  
Reproduced from NFPA's Web site,  
© NFPA (2009)



## Size of the Fireworks Problem

On Independence Day in a typical year, more U.S. fires are reported than on any other day, and fireworks account for half of those fires, more than any other cause of fires.

- In 2006, fireworks caused an estimated **32,600** reported fires, including **1,700** total structure fires, 600 vehicle fires, and **30,300** outside and other fires.
- These fires resulted in an estimated 6 civilian deaths, 70 civilian injuries and \$34 million in direct property damage.

**FACT:** 900 home structure fires were caused by fireworks in 2006.

## Characteristics of Fireworks Injuries

In 2007, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated **9,800** people for fireworks-related injuries.

- 56% of 2007 emergency room fireworks-related injuries were to the extremities and 36% were to the head.
- 49% of the 2007 fireworks injuries were burns, while 29% were contusions and lacerations.

**FACT:** 92% of the fireworks injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms involved fireworks that federal regulations permit consumers to use.

- **Two of five (42%)** people injured by fireworks were under the age of 15.
- The risk of fireworks injury was **two-and-a-half** times as high for children ages 5-9 or 10-14 as for the general population.
- Sparklers, fountains, and novelties alone accounted for 36% of the emergency room fireworks injuries in 2007.

The risk of fire death relative to time used shows fireworks as the riskiest consumer product.

**FACT:** The following five states have banned access by the public to all fireworks: Delaware, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island.

**FACT:** Males accounted for 70% of fireworks injuries in 2007.

- The risk that someone will die from fire when fireworks are being used is higher relative to exposure time than the risk of fire death when a cigarette is being smoked.
- The risks **with** fireworks are not limited to displays, public or private. Risks also exist wherever fireworks are **manufactured, transported or stored.**
- **“Safe and sane”** fireworks are neither. Fireworks and sparklers are designed to explode or throw off showers of hot sparks. Temperatures may exceed 1200°F.

*NFPA encourages people to enjoy public displays of fireworks that comply with NFPA 1123. NFPA is strongly opposed to any consumer use of fireworks.*

## Fatal Fire Reporting

In addition to the basic NFIRS report, the Bureau of Fire Services tracks all fire-related deaths. These statistics are used for program development, legislation, and prevention programs. Fire departments responding to a fatal fire are required to submit the “Michigan Fatal Fire Report” within 24 hours of the death. The report form is available at:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dleg\\_bccfs\\_fatalrep\\_94417\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dleg_bccfs_fatalrep_94417_7.pdf).

Questions regarding your department, reporting functions or fatal fire reporting, please contact Rhonda Howard at (517) 241-0691 or [howardr2@michigan.gov](mailto:howardr2@michigan.gov).

### Civilian Fatal Fire Statistics 2008 reported as of January 31, 2009

January	12
February	31
March	22
April	10
May	13
June	7
July	2
August	1
September	7
October	13
November	3
December	8

### Civilian Fatal Fire Statistics 2009 reported as of February 28, 2009

January	6
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# Michigan State Police Laboratory Aids

■ **By Kevin D. Streeter**  
*Forensic Scientist*  
*Micro-Chemical Unit*  
 MSP Grand Rapids Forensic Laboratory

*Submitted by Walter L. Holz,*  
*Forensic Scientist, retired*  
*1977-1978 Past President,*  
*Michigan Chapter IAAI*

The following laboratory aids are available to Inspectors in the conduct of case investigations:

1. Gas Chromatographic Mass Spectrometric (GCMS) Analyses
  - A. Fire debris for presence of Liquid Petroleum Products (LPP) residues.
  - B. Identification of LPP's.
  - C. Comparisons of known and unknown LPP residues.
2. Examinations of fire debris for trace evidence.
3. Explosive residues (submit microscopic particles or larger amounts). Call ahead and discuss with a member of the Bomb Squad before submitting.
4. Fireworks analyses (submit at least one intact device of each kind in question). The MSP Bomb Squad must be contacted to render the item(s) safe prior to submission to the laboratory.
5. Identification of fibers in fabrics, carpeting and other relevant materials.
6. Photomicrography (photography of small objects or details using the microscope).
7. Hazardous Materials Data Search (HSDS search)
8. Expert Court Testimony

It is important that to achieve the best laboratory results possible, the evidence must be packaged and submitted properly.

It is always helpful if a FSD-07 form is filled out prior to arriving at the lab. The FSD-07 should contain the permanent information as well as the analysis being requested. ANY special attention, unique circumstances etc., should

also be written on the form. The FSD-07 is available on the MSP Forensic Science Division website. There is a PDF of the form which can be downloaded by submitted agencies.

Nylon bags are the preferred packaging medium for fire debris evidence as they retain LPP residues satisfactorily. Debris should be placed in these bags, occupying not more than 2/3 of the bag volume. Care should be made when placing sharp objects in the bag. Things like nails can easily puncture the bag. The tops should be folded over to make either a double heat seal or taped closed with paper masking tape.

The individual sealed bags can be placed into a larger brown paper bag which in turn, must be sealed with tamper with evidence tape to insure against tampering. As a final measure, the submitting investigator's initials must be placed on the tamper evidence tape for positive identification.

Suppliers for both 'tamper evidence tape' and 'nylon arson evidence bags' can be located by doing a web search on the internet. I have done this to

confirm results for both.

Another acceptable container includes NEW unlined metal paint cans. The tops must be hammered on and sealed with tamper evidence tape to insure against tampering and properly identified with investigator's initials for identification.

New glass canning jars, containing not more than 2/3 of the contents full of debris, sealed with the top upside down and further sealed with tamper evidence tape are acceptable when properly identified with investigators initials for identification.

Please call the Michigan State Police Laboratory in your area for details regarding the use of the above containers, or for details concerning proper labeling, sealing, and evidence handing. You may contact me at (616) 242-6655 or at streetek@michigan.gov.



## *Mark These Dates in Your Calendar*

### **NFPA 921 - 2011 edition REVISION CYCLE**

<b>ROP</b> ("Report on Proposals") Published and Posted	12/28/09
<b>Comment Closing Date</b> (which is the deadline for members of the public to submit public comments respecting the proposals that are published in the ROP)	03/05/10
<b>ROC</b> ("Report on Comment") Published and Posted	08/27/10
<b>Notice of Intent to Make a Motion</b> (NITMAM) Closing Date	10/22/10
<b>NFPA Standards Council Issuance</b> for NFPA 921 if no NITMAM	01/28/11
<b>NFPA Technical Session</b> <i>NFPA Meeting for Documents with NITMAM</i>	05/04/2009-11
<b>Appeal Closing Date</b>	06/09/11
<b>NFPA Standards Council Issuance</b> for NFPA 921 with NITMAM	07/29/11



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In What Capacity? \_\_\_\_\_

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Dimondale, Michigan 48821-0187

Enclose check payable to:  
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