



COLORADO

Division of Fire Prevention & Control

Department of Public Safety

FIRE & LIFE SAFETY

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Message from Section Chief, Chris Brunette

Thoughts on the Inaugural Colorado Fire Marshals Symposium

By: Chris Brunette, FLS Section Chief

Leaving my hotel room and entering nearly whiteout conditions outside on the morning of Tuesday, October 19th, I thought to myself, “This can’t bode well for the kick-off of the first ever Colorado Fire Marshal’s Symposium.” Planned to launch later that morning with the annual meeting of the Fire Marshal’s Association of Colorado, the Colorado Fire Marshals Symposium (CFMS) was to be the first ever conference track of its kind in Colorado and, quite possibly, the nation. Designed specifically for fire prevention and risk reduction professionals, the symposium would run concurrently with the COLS, CHEIFS, and ECO tracks during the Fire Leadership Challenge, which is sponsored every year by the Colorado State Fire Chiefs, the Colorado Professional Firefighters, and the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention & Control.

Well, the heavy snow ended just as quickly as it started (much like it often does here in Colorado) and the day, as well as the remainder of the week, ended up providing us with excellent weather for mid-October in Keystone. It was a perfect backdrop for what would become a successful and very worthwhile inaugural offering of the CFMS. Over 60 fire prevention and risk reduction professionals from throughout Colorado and beyond completed the first year of this two-year program, which is based on the qualifications outlined in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1037: Standard on Fire Marshal Professional Qualifications, 2016 Edition and NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2020 Edition (Fire Officer III and IV). Sessions covered everything from administrative functions to budgeting, and community risk assessments to protecting our investigators from hazardous environments. By the end of the week, attendees were provided the opportunity to attend over 13-hours of training and Keynote sessions; much of which qualified for ICC CEU’s. The opportunities to network and create lasting professional and personal relationships were plentiful and each of the Keynote sessions held during the three-day conference were exciting and insightful.

DFPC is honored to have had a hand in the creation, development, and delivery of this valuable new educational track that we hope is offered far into the future; but, it couldn’t have happened without the support and dedication of a couple of key individuals. The first is Kara Gerczynski, Fire Marshal with Elizabeth Fire, who was one of the main creators and developers involved in the project. Other key contributors included Steven Parker, Fire Marshal with Arvada Fire and President of FMAC, Rebecca Clark, Life Safety Educator with Windsor Severance Fire and President of the Colorado Risk Reduction Network, and JT McCloud, Fire Marshal with Cimarron Hills Fire. This group spent countless hours creating this program from a simple idea that has been on the minds of many for several years.

Thank you to everyone who attended this inaugural offering of the Colorado Fire Marshals Symposium and all of whom helped to make it such a success! We’re looking forward to seeing many of you again next year and we hope that many more will join us!

Best Regards,

Chris Brunette
Section Chief, Fire and Life Safety



Scholarships Awarded to the 2021 Fire Leadership Challenge

By: Sherry Snyder, FLS Program Assistant

The Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) awarded 10 scholarships to fire personnel located throughout the State of Colorado at the 2021 Fire Leadership Challenge Conference, held in Keystone, CO from October 19th - 22nd.

These scholarships were designed to aid in the professional development of fire and life safety professionals doing work on DFPC's behalf. As such, all scholarship recipients hold a Fire Inspector Certification with our Section.

Each recipient was awarded registration at the conference with focus on the inaugural Colorado Fire Marshals Symposium, a room at the Keystone Resort for the duration of the conference, a commemorative t-shirt, and most importantly, knowledge regarding Community Risk Reduction, Fire Prevention, and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion not only for themselves and their fire department, but also the community which they serve.

The Division hopes to continue to extend this unique opportunity in years to come!



Why should your small Emergency Response Agency use CRR?

By Chuck Altvater, Professional Development Unit Chief

Community Risk Reduction (CRR) is- in its simplest terms- a decision-making process to assist you in strategically applying the resources you have to the risks in your service area that are considered the highest priority risks. By using this process, you can save wear and tear on your apparatus and equipment, save fuel costs, make the community a safer place to live and work and reduce exposure by your volunteers and employees to job-related hazards such as vehicle collisions, on the job injuries and cancer-causing substances. All of that to say, CRR will help your agency make its budget go further while keeping your people safer. The first step in using CRR to improve your agency's delivery of service is to complete a Community Risk Assessment (CRA). If you want to know more about completing a CRA, come on out to one of the Fire Safe Colorado's free half-hour training on what a CRA is and how to complete one.

The next two CRR classes are on November 17 and 18, 2021 in La Junta (the 17th), or Pueblo (the 18th). **[Click here to register!](#)**

For more info, email chuck.altvater@state.co.us.

What is the biggest failure I see in Investigations?

By: Dawn Tollis, Lead Investigator

As unfortunate as it is, a significant part of being an investigator is assisting with fatal fires. I am often asked, “Do you think this loss of life could have been prevented?” I absolutely believe there are things that we as a community can do. One of those measures we can take is to get early warning in the case there is a fire.

I have participated in many investigations where smoke alarms were not installed in the structure or not functioning correctly. According to NFPA’s “Smoke Alarms in US Home Fires” report:

- Almost three of every five home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms (41%) or no working smoke alarms (16%).
- The death rate per 1,000 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 (13.0 deaths vs. 5.8 deaths per 1,000 fires).
- In fires in which the smoke alarms were present but did not operate, two of every five (41%) of the smoke alarms had missing or disconnected batteries.
- Dead batteries caused one-quarter (26%) of the smoke alarm failures.

I encourage you all to test your alarms monthly, and with daylight savings time ending on November 7th, check the batteries on your systems. This is only one of many measures that we can take to prevent a catastrophic end to an already traumatic event that hopefully none of us have to endure. So, in honor of Fire Prevention Week, Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety! Don’t wait until you hear the “chirp”!



Professional Development Unit Update

By: Kyle Parag, Professional Development Educator

The Professional Development Unit (PDU) is taking shape and evolving to meet the demands of the industry in the modern world. COVID presented challenges that we overcame, now as we look past the pandemic into the future and the needs of code professionals in regards to training, it is becoming clearer to the type of training that is needed throughout the state.

COVID opened the minds to all educators and forced a reevaluation of the methods, procedures and effectiveness of training. As we move beyond the heavy implementation of a virtual medium, we truly understand how powerful and beneficial in-person training can be given the right conditions. We are very excited to move forward into creating educational opportunities that are not only accessible for people with busy schedules but are also effective in simplifying difficult topics and fostering professional development. Visit our webpage Professional Development Unit for recorded training opportunities. New training will be added shortly.



BEST Grant for Schools

By: By: Jim Riddell, Fire Inspector

The Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) has been extraordinarily busy this summer, and it does not appear that winter will be much slower. Construction has certainly not ceased to grow in the post-quarantine era, and all of our inspectors are spread thin throughout the state as a number of projects begin to near completion. Among these are 3 schools in Southern Colorado which extend from the Manzanola Junior/Senior High School expansive addition (just outside of Rocky Ford), over to La Veta's brand new Preschool through 12th grade (at the base of the Spanish Peaks), and Blanca's new Sierra Grande Consolidated School for Preschool through 12th grade (near Alamosa). These have been consistent visitation sites over the course of the past year.

Each of these schools is looking at target opening dates of early to mid-2022, and have been largely funded by the B.E.S.T. Grant Program, which stands for "Building Excellent Schools Today". The money received from this grant program has provided valuable resources to areas of Colorado which have been largely ignored during renovation projects in recent decades, and which are now woefully overdue for such improvements. The B.E.S.T. assistance funding comes from the following four revenue sources: Colorado Lottery Spillover Funds, State Land Trust Funds from the Colorado State Land Board, Marijuana Tax Revenue and Excise Taxes from the Colorado Department of Revenue, and accumulated monetary interest from these sources. As of January 20th, 2019, B.E.S.T had awarded 354 grants in 141 school districts, and had improved the health, safety and security of nearly 225,000 students in 524 schools. 2.1 billion dollars in capital projects had been generated, and nearly 30,000 jobs had been created. Please bear in mind that this data is nearly 2 years old now, so these numbers have only continued to grow.

With the B.E.S.T Program's goal of alleviating health and safety concerns within public schools throughout Colorado, these three projects in Southern Colorado represent only the beginning of what is to come. Many more school districts throughout the state will undoubtedly see the potential benefits of this program and will be applying for assistance now that the word is out. DFPC will likely be tasked with heading up several of these plan reviews and inspections in the more remote rural areas where the proper inspection knowledge and required certifications are still lacking. This means that next summer will likely be even busier than this summer as the construction on new school projects begins to ramp up in another 6 months, but the current DFPC team of inspectors is always up for such a challenge and will continue to provide professionalism in every part of Colorado that needs our services in 2022, no matter how remote it might be.



2021 Fire Prevention Week Live Burn Demonstrations

By: Craig Montoya, Inspector

Fire Prevention Week started in 1922 and was proclaimed a national observance by President Calvin Coolidge in 1925. It has since become the longest running public health observance in our country, and it is exciting to know that 2022 will mark 100 years since the first Fire Prevention Week. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has sponsored the week, and has created themes annually since its inception. Fire Prevention Week is held on the week of October 9th every year to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire which killed more than 250 people, destroyed 17,400 structures, and left 100,000 homeless. To think about 100,000 people homeless think of the entire population Boulder (106,392 2019) or Longmont (94,445 2019), another example is Coors Field, the capacity is 50,398, now double that and that's about how many people were left homeless from this fire!

This year's theme for Fire Prevention Week was "Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety." Throughout the week we promoted the sounds of Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms and encouraged the public to test their alarms at least monthly or in accordance with their manufacture specifications and replace batteries every 6 months or whatever the manufacture specifications state to do for that specific alarm. A not-so-fun fact is that you don't always smell smoke while you are sleeping and that is why your smoke alarm in your home is so loud, so it can wake you up from the noise! What if you have really bad hearing or are hearing impaired? Well, there are manufactures that make strobe lights or pillow or bed shakers that vibrate to wake you up if your smoke alarms activate. Whatever your specific situation is there is always a solution to help you stay safer than having no protection or notification at all!

This year the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control co-hosted two Fire Prevention Week events. First we teamed up with the Grand Junction Fire Department to promote Fire Prevention Week as well as an open house at their newest fire station. There was tons of community involvement and quite an exciting event. The second event we co-hosted was at the Aurora Municipal Center with the Aurora Fire Rescue. At this event we had numerous families. There were multiple booths such as Aurora Public Schools, Aurora Public Library, Aurora Fire Rescue, and the American Red Cross. During this event we were also honored to have the Mayor and a few members of the Aurora City Council attend.

These events both had a live Side-by-Side burn where we set fire to two mock living rooms. One is sprinkler protected and one is not. It distinctively shows how quickly a house fire can get out of control and demonstrates the importance of getting out of the house when you hear a smoke alarm activate. We also had an impressive muster to show off Fire and rescue apparatus at each event. [Watch the live event here!](#)

The events were a great showing of inter-agency partnerships as the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control came together with the Grand Junction Fire Department, Aurora Fire Rescue, The National Fire Sprinkler Association, The National Fire Protection Association and other partners to educate the public to help make a safer Colorado. I would like to thank all the aforementioned agencies that were involved, as well as, as well as DFPC's Fire Prevention Week Team and volunteers, Rob Gislinger with the NFSA and Bob Sullivan from the NFPA. Also I would like to thank all the attendees for participating in the events.

One of my favorite slogans in the Fire world is said best by the NFPA: "It's a Big World. Let's Protect It Together."

Building Code Branch Updates

By: S. Joellen Thiel

Preliminary Meetings

All preliminary meetings are now scheduled through the **DFPC website here!**

Notification of Delegation to a Prequalified Building Department

Notification is required from the Prequalified Building Department or School Board anytime the building permit review and inspection process is delegated to a Prequalified Building Department instead of using DFPC. This is per 8 CCR 1507-30, Article 6.1.1 - Code Enforcement and Certification of Inspectors for Public Schools, Charter Schools and Junior Colleges.

When a Prequalified Building Department is used, the information must be submitted electronically on the DFPC website by **clicking here** or by going to the Prequalified Building Department **Information Tab here!**

DFPC Form 4040 Notification of Delegation to a Prequalified Building Department will no longer be used or accepted. The electronic submittal of this information through the website has replaced that form.

A list of prequalified building departments can be found on the DFPC **website by clicking here** under the Prequalified Building Department Information Tab.

Plan Review Queue

Permit applicants can now view the location of their applications in the plan review queue by logging into the permit portal also known as “RMS” (Record Management System) **at this web page.**

The project enters the plan review queue after three requirements are met:

1. The electronic application is in the “submitted” status. Applications in the “new” status have not been officially submitted and cannot be processed.
2. Required documents have been uploaded to BOX. Remember BOX is separate from the permit portal. It is the “container” where documents are uploaded and downloaded.
3. 50% of the fee has been paid.

Previously, plan reviewers were able to pull and review projects prior to the 50% fee being made. This is no longer the case. It is imperative that all three steps above are completed, so the project enters the queue immediately and is not delayed.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to the FLS Permit Technician, Phyllis LoSordo, at PermitTech@state.co.us.



Revision Clouds

Revision clouds are required on all responses to plan review comments and any revisions made during construction after the permit has been issued. All revision clouds shall remain on the construction documents for the entire project and be identified with deltas.

Newly Adopted Code Interpretations

As more is learned about the newly adopted codes, DFPC is revising interpretations when needed.

Commentaries

The commentaries for A117.1-17, 2021 IECC, IMC, IFGC, and IWUIC are now available through ICC.

Kitchen and Utility Area – Common Code Compliance Issues

Review A117.1-17, 804 for accessible kitchen layouts and commonly missed code items in accessible kitchens. Some examples of code compliance issues are listed below:

Clearances

Required clearances based on the kitchen configuration are addressed in ICC A117.1-17, 804.2. Either 40” or 60” is required between counters depending on the configuration. This often gets missed when there is an island, a pass-through, or a “U” shape layout.





Work Surface

Per A117.1-17, 804.3 when a cooktop or conventional range is provided in a kitchen area, a counter with a 30” clear floor space with knee and toe clearances in accordance with Sections 902 and 306 is required. This feature is often missing from kitchen designs that include a cooktop or range.

Microwaves

Reach ranges must be met for microwave operable parts per ICC A117.1-17, 804.5.2 and 309. When microwaves are mounted on a shelf in the upper cabinets, they typically do not meet the reach ranges.

Ovens

Reach ranges must be met for oven operable parts per ICC A117.1-17, 804.5.2 and 309. When a double oven is provided, the controls are often not within the reach range because they are usually mounted at the top of the top oven.

Cooktop and Oven Controls

Per ICC A117.1-17, 804.5.4.4 and 804.5.5.4 control locations shall not require reaching across burners. Inspectors often find ovens installed with the controls at the back of the units instead of the front.

Dishwashers

When a parallel approach is used at a kitchen sink (often seen in faculty break rooms when there is not a cooktop or range), the dishwasher must be offset from the sink centerline by 27” minimum (24” in existing buildings) in order to meet the parallel approach. See ICC A117.1-17, 804.5.3, 305.3.1 and 305.3.2. The most common mistake DFPC sees is only providing 18” clear to the dishwasher because the sink base cabinet is 36” wide and there is not a knee/toe clearance provided.

Washer/Dryers

DFPC does not consider a stackable washer and dryer to meet the reach ranges for operable parts in ICC A117.1-17, 611.3 or the 36” door height requirement in 611.4. The operable parts, including the door and lint screen, must comply with ICC A117.1-17, 308 and 309. In addition, there are specific requirements for the location of the clear floor space relative to each piece of equipment. This clear space requirement is often not met when the appliance is located in an alcove, closet or adjacent a wall. See ICC A117.1-17, 611.2 for the detailed clear floor space requirements with diagrams.

New Faces at DFPC!



Jade Guerin

Many of you may already know Jade Guerin because she has worked in a temporary administrative support role for the DFPC Fire and Life Safety Section (FLSS) for some time now. If you called the FLSS main number during the last two years, you probably spoke with Jade. She played a very important role during the Covid lockdown because she served as the primary, and most days, the only in office support during that time.

DFPS is very pleased to announce that Jade will now fill the full-time administrative assistant position that serves the Fire Prevention Branch.

Jade is a Colorado native, so much so, that she graduated from Alameda Senior High School in Lakewood which is just a few miles from the DFPC offices on Kipling. Jade also attended Emily Griffith Technical College for Creative Arts and Design where she obtained her licenses in cosmetology and barbering.

She enjoys spending time outside experiencing Colorado's weather, scenery, and beautiful sunsets. Her hobbies include sharing time with family, listening to music, watching movies, cooking, and of course - eating what she prepared! Jade has really enjoyed her last two years with DFPC and is thrilled to now be working for the group in a full-time capacity.

Dexter Williford

In September Dexter Williford relocated from Las Vegas to join the DFPC Fire and Life Safety Section as a Fire Inspector for the Fire Prevention Branch. Previously Dexter worked as a Fire Inspector for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and The State Department at the Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. He has also served as an Emergency Medical Technician for AMR/MedicWest Ambulance and The Venetian Resort, and as a US Army Combat Medic. Dexter began his emergency services career in 1999 as an Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighter for the United States Marine Corps which he retired from in 2015.

Dexter has been married for 25 years and has an adult daughter and son. He enjoys music, nature, recreational shooting, and spending time with his family. Dexter has really enjoyed his career in public safety and looks forward to continuing on this challenging and rewarding path with DFPC. Recently Dexter expressed that, "I wanted to be in an organization that really believes in what they are doing. In the short time that I have been here, this is what I have observed and endeavor to become a part of."



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