



# THE GATED WYE

JULY 2021



## OSFM READIES FOR WILDFIRE

In June, the Office of State Fire Marshal continued work to prepare for wildfire. The Deputy State Fire Marshal's met in Sisters for in-service and discussions around wildfire.

Work also continued on the two new initiatives, Response Ready Oregon, and Community Risk Reduction, which was announced in last month's newsletter. On June 21st the OSFM made the decision to preposition resources in Central Oregon through the OFMAS. *READ MORE ON PAGE 3*

## OSFM'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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## Oregon Legislature passes bills to bolster OSFM

The Oregon Legislature wrapped up the 2021 legislative session on June 27th. With that came several pieces of legislation that will profoundly impact and shape the future of the Oregon Office of the State Fire Marshal.

The state's wildfire omnibus bill SB 762 passed on June 26th. This bill directs State Fire Marshal to establish defensible space requirements, administer a community risk reduction program, and establish a Community Risk Reduction Fund in State Treasury. There are many facets to this bill that will impact many state agencies, not just the OSFM. What this means for our office we will be able to increase capacity and bring on more staff to meet the needs of Oregon's wildfire response. In addition, this legislation supports initiatives for the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Fire Adapted Oregon, and Response Ready Oregon. These initiatives will facilitate the creation of fire-adapted communities, reduce community risk, modernize our response through OFMAS, and strengthen training capacity.

HB 2927 passed on Saturday as well. This piece of legislation is exciting for our office as we become our state agency and operative on July 1st, 2023. The Office of State Fire Marshal is renamed the Department of the State Fire Marshal and establishes the department as an independent state agency. The legislation establishes a task force to decide whether the State Fire Marshal should be made an independent state agency or housed within an existing state agency, operative immediately. It also directs the task force to report recommendations by February 1st, 2022.

These key pieces of legislation put the OSFM in a position to be better prepared and equipped to meet the challenges of a changing wildfire reality that face the Oregon fire service. We thank those who put in the time and effort to make this investment not only into our office but into the future of Oregon.

The OSFM will be sending out further communications on other pieces of legislation that impact the OSFM and our fire service partners.





# OSFM prepositions resources in Central Oregon for threat of wildfire



With lightning in the forecast and several parts of the state under a Red Flag Warning or a Fire Weather Watch, the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal staged firefighting resources in Central Oregon.

This was a proactive move for the state to be better prepared and bolster any initial fire attack. Through the Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System (OFMAS), 27 firefighters, eight engines, and two tenders.

The two task forces were not assigned to a specific incident but were an added resource. The two firefighting task forces, one from Marion County and one from Washington County, were stationed in Deschutes County, ready to respond and help local resources respond to fire start and threaten structures. The teams were prepositioned for 72-hours and were prepared to stay longer if they are needed.

"We know the conditions across the state are dry, and with thunderstorms in the forecast, even the smallest spark could trigger a wildfire, that is why we prepositioned these resources," Oregon State Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple said. "We can't control the weather, but we can plan for what we can control, and that is strategically placing resources ahead of this weather event."

On Friday morning, June 25th, the two task forces demobilized and returned home. We thank them for going to Central Oregon to help us be more prepared in the event a wildfire started.



## Alan Fitzpatrick joins OSFM as Regional Mobilization Coordinator

In June, Alan Fitzpatrick joined the Office of State Fire Marshal in the capacity of Regional Mobilization Coordinator (RMC). Fitzpatrick has been assigned to the Region A and will be responsible for the Northwest corner of Oregon.

Fitzpatrick grew up in the Willamette Valley. He spent 20 years in the Army Reserve as a combat medic before retiring in 2016. He has also volunteered with non-profits, both of which have taken him around the world. He says he has always enjoyed returning home to the resource rich and beautiful landscape of the Northwest.

In 2006 he became a career Firefighter/Paramedic. He has volunteered with faith-based organizations, youth athletics, fire districts, veteran service organizations, environmental and fish & wildlife conservation efforts as well as local, state, and federal agencies.

"I have really enjoyed my last 15 years as a career firefighter" Fitzpatrick said, "I look forward to the opportunity to work with the Fire Services in this area to ensure we have a Response Ready Oregon for the upcoming wildfire season."



## Oregon firefighters take part in MAWS 2021

A helicopter in the air, the chirp of radios, and live fire on the ground made for a great training opportunity for firefighters across the state to learn and prepare for wildland fire. This year, the Metro Advanced Wildland School (MAWS) was held in Molalla, Ore. on June 4th and June 5th.

The training was provided at no cost thanks to a state Department of Public Safety Standards and Training grant.

This year, over 70 firefighters from over 42 different Oregon agencies took part in the training. The group was under the direction and support of a 28-person overhead team.

Firefighters worked with live fire to learn skills from communications to burnout operations. A water-dropping helicopter was on hand both days to teach skills associated with aerial firefighting resources. Some of those skills included practicing water drops as directed by ground crews. This valuable training provides task book opportunities for Strike Team and Task Force Leaders, Engine Bosses, and Wildland Interface Firefighter Type 1 trainees as well as IMT trainees.

The goal of the training was to provide a realistic environment for students to practice skills learned in the classroom. MAWS is a unique opportunity for everyone involved to have conversations and work together in a low-stress environment and hone the skills necessary for effective response to wildland fire.

The event, which was canceled last year because of the pandemic, marked the ninth year of MAWS, organized by the Northwest Association of Fire Trainers (NAFT) and hosted by Molalla Fire.

The OSFM extends a sincere thank you to all team members who participated and all agencies who took advantage of the training opportunity. We are thankful to NAFT, which provides our agency the opportunity to help support this valuable training.





# OSFM announces 2021 Sparky Awards

In mid-June, the Office of the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) announced the 2021 Sparky Awards. Each year the OSFM awards the Golden Sparky award to a fire service member and a Silver Sparky Award to a member of the public for their contributions to fire prevention and fire safety.

This year's Golden Sparky was awarded to Firefighter John Rossi, a Public Information Officer with Mt. Angel Fire. Rossi's public information and education work has elevated the community and the region's fire prevention and preparedness efforts.

"He spends countless hours installing smoke alarms for those that need it the most," Oregon Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple said. "John's commitment to his community and service to others shines through in his work through his tireless dedication to community prevention efforts."



Rossi has created a social media following that has allowed for great reach in the community to educate on various topics, including smoke alarms, defensible space, and burn bans.



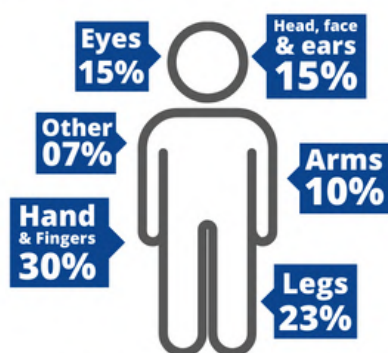
This year, Kris Babbs, the president of Keep Oregon Green, was awarded the Silver Sparky. Keep Oregon Green is a non-profit that focuses on fire prevention across the state of Oregon. Babbs puts in countless hours and possesses a remarkable dedication to prevent fires across the state. In addition, Babbs' leadership has elevated relationships among state and federal agencies. Her projects have brought OSFM and the fire service into the conversation and leveraged our programs and footprint in Oregon to further prevention and life safety.

"Oregon has never needed such an important leader in this space now and into our future," Ruiz-Temple said. "I want to thank Kris for being a friend to OSFM, the fire service, and for being a strong partner."

## KEEP IT LEGAL, KEEP IT SAFE

### MOST INJURED BODY PARTS BY FIREWORKS

- 58% EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT-TREATED INJURIES WERE BURNS
- CHILDREN UNDER 15 MAKE UP 36% OF THE ESTIMATED FIREWORKS-RELATED INJURIES
- 12% OF PATIENTS WERE TREATED AND TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER HOSPITAL OR ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL.



SOURCE: U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, 2020

## OSFM stresses safety for 4th of July holiday

This year the OSFM launched an updated campaign to promote safety when using fireworks to celebrate the 4th of July holiday. OSFM's public affairs team put together social media messaging and new graphics and sent them to the fire service to help amplify those safety messages.

This year OSFM's Analytics and Intelligence Unit also provided new stats showing how many and who is injured by improper use of fireworks each year

In 2020, the U.S. saw a record-setting year when it comes to the consumption of fireworks. Americans consumed 385.8 million pounds of fireworks, a 55 percent increase from the previous year. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, nationwide, children 0 to 4 years old are injured by fireworks and treated at an emergency department more than any other age group. (5.3 injuries per 100,000 people).

In Oregon, between 2016 and 2020, Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, and Lane Counties have had the highest rates of firework-related injuries.

With an arid spring, much of Oregon experiencing some form of drought, and concerns over an active wildfire season, the Office of the Oregon State Fire Marshal is asking people to be aware of the dry conditions. Always have a bucket of water on hand to drown spent or used fireworks, have a charged hose nearby, and never light fireworks near dry grass or areas that could catch fire easily.

Oregon fireworks sales began on June 23rd and ran through July 6th this year.

## Know the 4 Be's

**BE prepared** before lighting fireworks: keep water available by using a garden hose or bucket.

**BE safe** when lighting fireworks: keep children and pets away from fireworks.

**BE responsible** after lighting fireworks: never relight a dud. Please wait for 15 to 20 minutes, then soak it in a bucket of water before disposal.

**BE Aware:** use only legal fireworks and use them only in legal places.

**BE PREPARED**  
**BE RESPONSIBLE**  
**BE SAFE**  
**BE AWARE**



### KEEP IT LEGAL, KEEP IT SAFE

#### 4TH OF JULY PET SAFETY TIPS



- Keep Pets Indoors:** Dogs and cats who are distressed should be placed inside a room with closed windows and a secure door. A screen door will not stop a frightened dog.
- Identification:** Make sure all pets, even indoor-only cats, wear a collar with an identification tag that includes your name and telephone number. An identification microchip is even better.
- Exercise Early:** Walk dogs in the early evening, well before nightfall, to prevent undue stress from noisy fireworks.
- Talk to the Vet:** For dogs with extreme reactions to fireworks, talk with your veterinarian about the possibility of using canine sedatives.

SOURCE: OREGON HUMANE SOCIETY





## OSFM Partner Spotlight

### NW Fire Diversity Council

This month OSFM wants to highlight the Northwest Fire Diversity Council. The mission of the organization is to increase the number of women, people of color, and other underrepresented groups working in the fire service in Oregon and Washington

NWFDC says a career in the fire service is among the most rewarding that any male or female, from any background, can aspire to. While sometimes looked upon as heroes, they are simply members of the departments they work for, service providers for the cities that employ them, and most importantly, critical support systems for the communities they serve. The council says those in the fire service do this without regard to race, ethnic background, religious beliefs, gender, economic status, age, health, social status, sexual orientation, or language.

There is a special bond with both the community and co-workers that are not often found in other careers within this profession. In many respects, when a person becomes a firefighter or works in emergency services they become part of an extended family. Last but not least, NWFDC says the need to ensure the fire service has the most diverse and capable workforce to fit the communities of the Northwest. They add this must be a group effort, harnessing collective resources, values, and efforts to make it happen.



#### HERE'S WHAT THEY DO

- Mentorship
- Networking opportunities
- Scholarships
- Education
- Leadership development
- Interview skills development
- Resume building workshops
- Camps
- Job shadows
- Tours
- Career and Job Fairs
- Guest Speakers
- Job search assistance
- Internships
- Test taking workshops
- Promote equality and diversity



### RFTD certifies Amber and Probie

We are excited to share that Amber Cross (who works at OSFM) and her therapy dog Probie, who are both volunteers with Sublimity Fire District, are the first team in Oregon to be certified by First Responder Therapy Dogs (FRTD), a program based in California.

Amber and Probie play a key role in helping first responders with emotional support following difficult calls. The team can deploy to visit fire stations, firefighters, wildfire base camps to help with behavioral health and peer support.

"We are so excited to be expanding into Oregon," FRTD Founder and Executive Director Heidi Carman said, "Amber and Probie will be bringing an invaluable service to thousands of first responders who are on the front lines. Welcome to the team. We are lucky to have you."

# Input needed for 2022 Oregon Fire Code



The Oregon Fire Code Committee (OFCC) needs your input as we kick off the 2022 Oregon Fire Code (OCC) adoption process. OSFM is looking for input from the fire service, business/industry members, interested stakeholders, and members of the public.

OFC serves as the fire service's manual to protect the public from hazards of fire, explosions, and dangerous conditions in buildings and other facilities. OFC uses the 2021 International Fire Code (IFC) as the framework to model code.

The OFCC is a subcommittee of the Oregon Fire Code Advisory Board (OFCAB) who makes recommendations to the State Fire Marshal on fire code adoption guidance on issues of code enforcement, regional disputes, policies, and emerging topics that affect the fire protection and life safety of Oregonians.

## How to get involved:

- Sign up to be part of a workgroup of the OFCC to review various assigned chapters of the fire code.
- These committee members will review assigned code chapters, review fire code change proposals, make recommendations for amendments, and develop how those changes may be codified.
- The workgroups review current and pending legislation, standards for equipment used for fire protection, and fire and life safety issues the 2021 IFC may not have addressed.
- Submit a code change proposal.
- If you have identified a deficiency or discrepancy in the Oregon fire code, now is the time to be involved and provide your feedback
- There will be more information when we will begin accepting the code change proposals.

To receive meeting updates and be part of this process or for more information please email or call: [Osfm.ofc@osp.oregon.gov](mailto:Osfm.ofc@osp.oregon.gov) or contact Shari Barrett at 503-934-8256.



## Michelle Vold joins OSFM A&I Unit

The OSFM would like to welcome Michelle Vold to the Analytics & Intelligence unit. Michelle is not a new face around HQ. She comes to OSFM after nearly five years as a member of the CJIS Division with OSP.

She says she is ready to get started and is excited to be part of the A&I team.





## New analysis of data shows tent fires on the rise

Recently reviewed data by the Office of the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) show a stark rise from previous years. Between 2011 and 2019, tent fires were reported on average three times per year.

By the end of 2020, the number of reported incidents totaled 120. Four months into 2021, the state has received reports for over 146 reported incidents, 50% of which have occurred alongside roadways and highways, which presents an additional risk to first responders. These fires represent a relatively small portion of the total incidents within a year, roughly 1.5% of total fire incidents, tent fires are a significant risk to unhoused members in our communities.

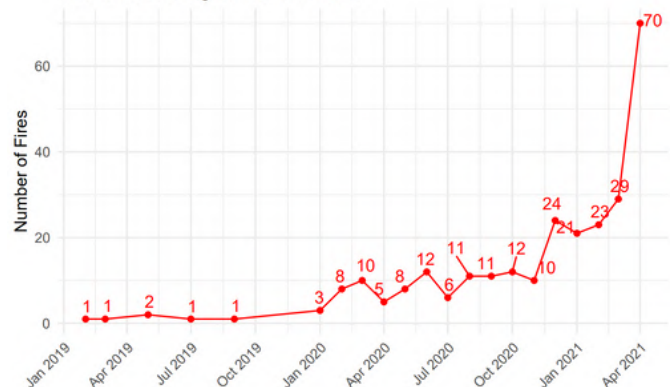
Estimates from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development report 8,877 individuals are experiencing homelessness without shelter on any given day in Oregon. Excluding tent fires at campgrounds, at least 1.6% of unsheltered individuals have experienced a tent fire already this year and the state is on track to triple the number of tent fires reported last year.

One of the primary functions of OSFM's Analytics and Intelligence Unit is to support improved reporting in NFIRS. This includes reporting fires associated with unhoused members of the community. OSFM, through its Oregon Incident Reporting Advisory Commission (OIRAC), will develop methodologies, likely in the form of supplemental questions, to help improve data collection and clarify incident reporting requirements. The addition of supplemental questions to NFIRS fire modules would provide the necessary detail for a future study.

To report a fire in a tent, for example, agencies would typically list the Incident Type Code as 112 on the NFIRS Basic Form, then further identify the structure by marking "Tent - 5" as the Structure Type on the Structure Fire Module. However, some fire agencies may have chosen to report fires in tents using a different methodology. Data surrounding these types of fires are highly valuable and could be used by OSFM Community Risk Reduction Specialists to support increased prevention efforts.

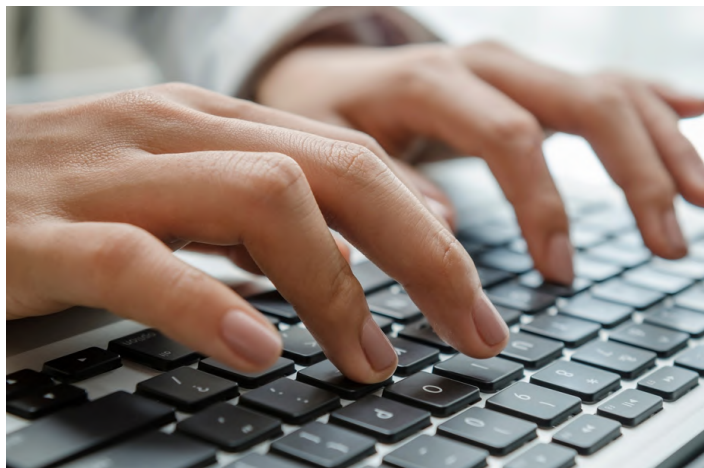
The OSFM is always looking for new ways to assist Oregon communities using data and risk prioritization. Tracking these fires in conjunction with planned efforts around community risk reduction will help communities provide a broader strategic approach than just fire risk to provide better public service to all in Oregon.

Tent fires in Oregon: 2019 to 2021



# Help ensure accurate NFIRS data

In conducting quarterly quality control checks of Oregon's fire incident data, the Office of State Fire Marshal discovered that we are missing 2021 data from several agencies. This is an important process that helps to further the efforts of Oregon's fire service. First please take a moment to visit the Fire Service



Reporting NFIRS web page to access the 2021 Year-to-Date All Incidents Reported spreadsheet to find and ensure your agency's data has been submitted to the Office of State Fire Marshal. In addition to being required by state law (ORS 476.210), your data is necessary for a complete and accurate analysis. To help us avoid delay, please enter or submit your missing incident data by July 15, 2021.

Second, please visit the Incident Report Quality Control web page to review the Quality Control reports. If your agency has data that needs to be corrected or further defined, please correct those calls as soon as possible. NFIRS data reporting is also a requirement for all grant applicants.

## Important Reminders:

1. Incident reports are to be entered or submitted into Elite (the state's Records Management System) within seven days of the incident occurrence.
2. Incidents involving a death or serious injury must be entered or submitted into Elite within 24 hours of occurrence.

**Note:** Agencies unable to meet the 24 hour requirement, must submit a complete Fire Casualty Report Form within 24 hours and the incident report must be reported within seven days of the incident occurrence.

## Important Links

[Approved Oregon Plus One Codes](#)

[USFA Coffee Break Bulletin - Where's the data?](#)

[USFA Coffee Break Bulletin - When should you update your NFIRS Reports?](#)

If you have questions or concerns, or need assistance please let us know.

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# Codes Corner: Autogas dispensing operations (part 3)



When liquefied petroleum gas (LP-gas), also known as propane, is used as a vehicle fuel, it is often referred to as autogas. The 2019 Oregon Fire Code (OFC) in Section 2307.7 now allows public refueling of motor vehicles from LP-gas dispensers where it had not otherwise permitted it in previous fire code editions. This revision occurred in response to new technologies available to safeguard autogas refueling operations. If the vehicles being refueled do not belong to the owner of the

fuel-dispensing facility and the fuel-dispensing operator is not an employee of the owner, the facility is considered to be “public.” This section allows vehicle owners to refuel their own vehicles under the supervision of, or after having been trained by, the LP-gas motor fuel-dispensing facility owner or the owner’s designee.

LP-gas propane autogas engine fuel systems in all types of vehicles are fitted with safety devices and shut-off valves that function automatically if the fuel line ruptures. All tanks are equipped with a valve — or combination of valves — in the liquid outlet connection that has manual shut-off, excess flow, and automatic closure features. The valve assembly prevents the flow of fuel when the engine is not operating, even if the ignition switch is in the ON position. The vehicle pressure relief valve must be vented to the outside of the vehicle, and all fittings must be vented to the outside if the tank is in an enclosed area, such as a trunk.

When it comes to the self-service LP-gas dispensing facility, OFC Section 2307.7 contains seven specific provisions for the safe operation of the autogas facility which includes an emergency shutoff switch similar to the emergency shutoff switch required at more traditional motor fuel-dispensing facilities as noted in OFC Section 2303.2.

Emergency breakaway devices on dispenser hoses are also required to prevent a pull-down of the motor fuel dispenser if a car drives away with the hose nozzle valve still attached to the car’s fill pipe. The provisions for autogas differ from other fuels in that it does not specify the location of the emergency breakaway device connection to the hose. Where a hose is equipped with a hose retrieval mechanism, placing the breakaway device between the mechanism’s clamp and the nozzle is important to the proper operation of the valve by preventing the pulling force of the drive-off from being transmitted via the retrieving cable directly to the dispenser.

Propane autogas is indeed a safe fuel when properly stored, transported, handled, and used. Several factors help ensure its safety: the fuel’s natural properties; the quality construction of fuel system components; stringent codes and regulations; and the industry’s extensive training and safety-awareness programs together provide a safe and efficient autogas motor vehicle fuel experience.

## Sara Rubrecht joins OSFM as Regional Mobilization Coordinator



Sara Rubrecht was born in California, although she bills herself as a native Oregonian. She has lived in the Rogue Valley all her life, with a few adventures to Alaska, Hawaii, and Portland, OR. Sara has been married to her husband, David, for 15 years and has three children.

Sara began her career in public safety in 1999 as a Records Clerk for the City of Grants Pass Department of Public Safety. She quickly moved to the exciting position of 911 Dispatcher in Josephine County. In August 2001 Sara began her life in Emergency Management as the assistant to the Emergency Manager in Josephine County. By May 2002 the Emergency Manager had left and Sara was hired as the Emergency Manager and Search & Rescue (SAR) Coordinator. Her first disaster experienced as an Emergency Manager for Josephine County was the Biscuit Fire in 2002.

In 2012, Sara was hired by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office to focus on Department Emergency Planning. In 2013, she was appointed as the Jackson County Emergency Manager, where she spent 6 exciting years. In 2018, Sara was offered the great opportunity to return to her home community of Josephine County as the County Emergency Manager.

In June of 2021, Sara began a new incredible adventure as a Regional Mobilization Coordinator for the region in which she lives – Southern Oregon. Sara is incredibly excited to continue great work with fantastic partners in her region and throughout the state.

## Contact Us

Have an idea for a story or subject you would like to know more about?

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