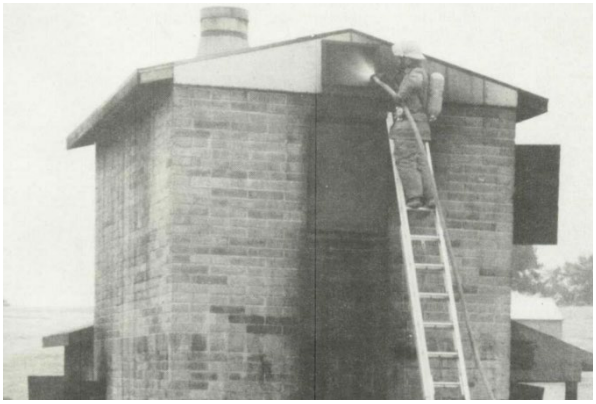
100 Years of Office of the State Fire Marshal History

On May 23, 1923, The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) was established when California Gov. Friend William Richardson signed Assembly Bill 409. The original act stated that the Fire Marshal should "safeguard life and property from fire and see that all laws and ordinances relating to fires and fire protection are enforced and that he should attend, if possible, all fires other than forest, brush or grain, which occur outside of incorporated cities and take charge and protect all property imperiled".

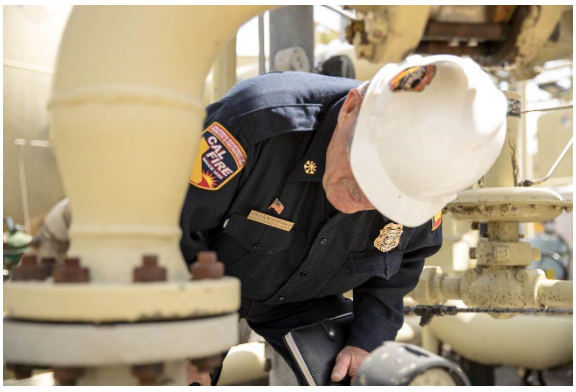


It is believed one of the reasons the office was created was after the Oakland Hills Fire in 1921, there was a recognized need to bring the fire service closer together and show there was a need for a statewide fire authority, though there are not concrete records enough to confirm the speculation.

Initially, the office had only six sections in its act, but over the years, it expanded to include several hundred statutes and Title 19 Rules.

Until consolidation with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in 1995/1996, the Office of State Fire Marshal was one of the smallest independent departments in State Government.

On June 5, 1995, the State of California Little Hoover Commission sent letters supporting the "Governor's Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1995" which merges the Office of the California State Fire Marshal with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.



The Office of the State Fire Marshal has a dedicated focus on fire prevention and carries out various fire safety responsibilities. These include regulating buildings, controlling substances and products that can cause fire-related injuries or destruction, providing statewide direction for fire prevention in wildland areas, regulating hazardous liquid pipelines, developing, and reviewing regulations and building standards, and providing training and education in fire protection methods.

These achievements are accomplished through several major program elements including engineering, education, and enforcement.

The six programs of OSFM include:

- **Code Development and Analysis**: Reviews all of California's regulations relating to fire and life safety for relevancy, necessity, conflict, duplication and/or overlap. The division also prepares the California State Fire Marshal's fire and life safety regulations and building standards for review and adoption by the California Building Standards Commission.
- **Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation:** The various programs within the division allow CAL FIRE to continue to build local and regional capacity, as well as developing, prioritizing, and implementing strategies and projects that create wildfire prepared communities. The tasks involve working with stakeholders on wildfire planning to reduce or eliminate fire hazards and risks, modifying the environment by removing or reducing receptive fuels, conducting fire hazard compliance inspections, and providing education and grant opportunities for wildfire prevention efforts.
- **Fire and Life Safety:** Is responsible for the application of laws and regulations related to fire and panic safety. OSFM has jurisdictional authority for enforcement of these laws and regulations in State-Owned buildings, Specified State-Occupied buildings, and State Institutions. This is achieved through plan review and fire and life safety inspections for new construction, existing buildings, fire protection systems, special events, pyrotechnics, and special hazards. The Fire and Life Safety Division maintains relationships with the California Fire Service through partnering in various code related issues within their jurisdictions.
- **Fire Engineering and Investigations:** Administers licensing programs and performs engineering functions affecting consumer services and product evaluation, approval and listing. The program requires staff with academic training in fire protection engineering and other disciplines, as well as technical expertise in laboratory testing procedures. The division is responsible for 11 statewide programs, which includes the Building Materials Listing; Portable Fire Extinguishers; Flame Retardant Chemicals and Fabrics; Vapor Recovery; Automatic Fire Extinguishing Systems; Fire Safe Cigarettes; Arson Bomb Investigation; Licensing Enforcement and Inspection; Laboratory Accreditation; Fireworks; and Motion Picture and Entertainment. The Fire Engineering Division's primary functions are licensing, product approval, and licensing enforcement.
- **Pipeline Safety and CUPA:** Regulates the safety of intrastate hazardous liquid pipeline in California. OSFM Pipeline Safety Division staff inspect pipeline operators to ensure compliance with federal and state pipeline safety laws and regulations, and consist of engineers, Geographical Information System (GIS)/mapping staff, analytical staff, and clerical support located throughout California.
- **State Fire Training:** Is the OSFM division that establishes, develops, and delivers standardized training and education for the California fire service. The State Fire Training website serves as a valuable resource and a one-stop-shop for all things related to the State Fire Training. Check this website regularly as content is updated periodically or follow us on social media.

Learn more about the history of OSFM and 16 individuals who have served as State Fire Marshal HERE.