

MARYLAND
STATE FIRE
PREVENTION
COMMISSION



**ANNUAL
REPORT**

FISCAL YEAR 2019
July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

MSAR #2029
Commission No. SP-0156

The State Fire Prevention Commission was established in 1964 and consists of nine (9) members appointed to a maximum of two five-year terms by the Secretary of the State Police, with the approval of the Governor in accordance with Public Safety Article Title 6-201. The following members served on the Commission in Fiscal Year 2019:

C. Daniel Davis, Jr. Chairman Term Expires June 30, 2020*	Southern Maryland Volunteer Fire Company
Mark A. Bilger Vice Chairman (January-June 2019) Term Expired June 30, 2019**	Eastern Shore Volunteer Fire Company
Joseph L. Scheffey Vice Chairman (June-December 2018) (Resigned December 2018)	Washington-Metropolitan Industry Representative
Douglas Alexander Term Expires June 30, 2023	Western Maryland Volunteer Fire Company
Emily K. Devan Term Expires June 30, 2024*	At-Large Member of Public
K. C. Harrington Term Expired June 30, 2018***	At-Large Building Contractor
Mark F. Hubbard (Replaced September 2018)	Central Maryland Career Fire Company
Kevin J. Simmons Term Expires June 30, 2022	Central Maryland Career Fire Company
Edward S. Tochterman, Jr. Term Expires June 30, 2021	At-Large Industry Representative
Stacy N. Welch Term Expires June 30, 2022*	At-Large Architect/Engineer
Vacant	Washington-Metro Industry Representative

*Second Term – Not eligible for reappointment

**Reappointment to second term pending

***Second term expired – Serving until replaced

The Fire Prevention Commission may be contacted as follows:
 Maryland State Police/Western Operations Center
 18345 Colonel H.K. Douglas Drive, Suite 240
 Hagerstown MD 21740
 Telephone: 301-766-3899 Toll-Free: 877-890-0199
 Fax: 301-766-3889
 E-Mail: mshp.sfpc@maryland.gov
 Website: <http://sfpc.mdsp.org>
 Secretary: Heidi Ritchie

PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE TITLE 6-204:

The Commission is mandated to hold a minimum of six regular meetings every year. A quorum was achieved at all meetings. Public meeting agendas and approved minutes are posted at the Commission's website: <http://sfpc.mdsp.org>

FISCAL YEAR ATTENDANCE ROSTER						
MEETING DATES LOCATION & MEMBERS	8/16/18 Laurel	10/18/2018 Laurel	12/20/2018 Pikesville	2/21/2019 Laurel	4/18/19 Laurel	6/18/19 Ocean City
ALEXANDER	P	P	P	P	A	P
BILGER	P	P	A	P	P	P
DAVIS	P	P	A	P	P	P
DEVAN	N/A	N/A	P	P	P	A
HARRINGTON	A	A	A	P	P	A
HUBBARD	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SCHEFFEY	P	P	P	N/A	N/A	N/A
SIMMONS	N/A	P	P	P	P	P
TOCHTERMAN	P	P	P	P	P	P
WELCH	P	A	P	P	P	A

P=Present A=Absent N/A Not Appointed

PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE TITLE 6-501:

The Commission is empowered to hear appeals filed by a person who is aggrieved by an order or decision of the State Fire Marshal or his designee in the course of enforcing the State Fire Prevention Code. The following appeals were received or heard in Fiscal Year 2019:

- Appeal 18-01 Maryland School for the Deaf, Frederick, Frederick County. The school appealed the State Fire Marshal's order to require fire alarm text notification signs display within ten seconds of alarm activation as required by NFPA 72. The Commission upheld the order of the Fire Marshal.
- Appeal 18-02 Blackwater Distilling, Stevensville, Queen Anne's County. The tavern appealed the Queen Anne's County Fire Marshal's order to install an automatic fire sprinkler system if the tavern hosts live music events. The Commission upheld the order of the Fire Marshal. The appellant has filed a petition for a judiciary review of the Commission's decision in Queen Anne's County Circuit Court. A hearing date has not been scheduled.
- Appeal 18-03 Joseph Arbano, Maryland Licensed Fireworks Shooter. Mr. Arbano appealed the State Fire Marshal's denial to renew his fireworks shooter's license. Procedural issues were resolved and the license was issued prior to the appeal being heard. The appeal was withdrawn.

PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE TITLE 6-206:

The Commission is empowered to promulgate, amend, and repeal regulations for the safeguarding of life and property from the hazards of fire and explosion and to hold public hearings pertaining to such regulations. Code of Maryland Regulations as promulgated by the Commission may be viewed at the Commission's website: <http://sfpc.mdsp.org>

COMAR 29.06.01 State Fire Prevention Code

With the publication of the 2018 editions of NFPA 1 Fire Code and NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, the Commission delegated a committee to review changes in these national standards. Commissioners Stacy Welch and Edward Tochtermann served on the committee along with members of the Office of the State Fire Marshal and other local fire and building code authorities. A public hearing on the proposed regulations is scheduled for August 15, 2019.

PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE TITLE 6-205:

The Commission is mandated to promote and conduct seminars, conferences, workshops and meetings at least once each year to inform the public and firefighting personnel of the latest techniques in fire prevention programs and procedures, life safety measures, changes in the State Fire Prevention Code, and developments in improved fire and life safety goals.

The Fire Prevention Commission co-sponsored the Mid-Atlantic Life Safety Conference held September 25, 2018, in Laurel, Maryland. This annual conference offers a variety of safety oriented workshops presented by some of the nation's leading fire and emergency services professionals. Approximately 250-300 persons attend this annual event, including several Commission members. Vice Chairman Mark Bilger serves on the Conference Steering Committee.

In anticipation of adopting the 2018 editions of NFPA 1 Fire Code and NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, the Commission in conjunction with the Office of the State Fire Marshal provided training classes on these codes and related amendments to the State Fire Prevention Code. Approximately 400 building and fire code officials from throughout the state attended the training which was instructed by staff of the National Fire Protection Association.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

At its February 21, 2019, meeting, the Commission unanimously voted to elect Commissioner Mark Bilger as Vice Chairman to replace outgoing Vice Chairman Joseph Scheffey.

The Commission received and welcomed guests to various meetings throughout the year to remark on topics of interest in Maryland:

- To address fire and life safety concerns in existing non-sprinklered high-rise buildings, the Commission formed a workgroup to gather data and make recommendations as to whether, if any, legislative or regulatory action should be taken to require fire sprinklers or other fire protection features. Vice Chairman Scheffey, Commissioner Tochterman, Chief Fire Protection Engineer Ken Bush with the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Ron Wineholt with the Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington and Montgomery County Battalion Chief Matthew Kerrigan, and Joe Felton, Manager of Fire Prevention, Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services, are participated in the workgroup to develop suggestions to improve fire and life safety. Mr. Wineholt attended several Commission meetings throughout the year to provide input.
- Commissioner of Labor and Industry Matt Helminiak and Director of Building Code Administration Norman Wang, under the Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation, attended several Commission meetings to provide insight into the Maryland building codes and the enforcement of requirements for residential fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes.

Some local jurisdictions are seeking either through local ordinances or state legislation to opt out of the mandatory building code requirements for residential fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes. The Fire Prevention Commission is pro-actively working with the State Fire Marshal and the Maryland Fire Service to ensure residential fire sprinklers in new homes remains a statewide requirement.

Throughout the year, Commission members attend and participate in a variety of activities and serve on committees involving fire prevention education, fire and emergency services, fire and explosive investigation, and code enforcement:

- **Maryland State Firemen's Association**
Chairman Davis, Vice Chairman Bilger, and Commissioner Alexander participate in activities or serve on a variety of committees under the auspices of this association. The association membership is comprised of volunteer departments from throughout the State whose mission is to serve, promote, advocate and represent the interests of the volunteer fire, rescue, and emergency medical services of Maryland. Several commission members attended and participated in the association's annual convention in Ocean City.
- **National Fire Protection Association**
Commissioner Stacy Welch serves as a member of the National Fire Protection Association's Board of Directors. NFPA board members are chosen from various disciplines and backgrounds and are elected based on experience in business, finance, or administration; respect of peers; respect as a member of the safety community; commitment to the Association's goals; and appreciation for the relationship NFPA must maintain with the changing needs of society. Commissioner Welch is Vice President of Fire Protection and Life Safety for Marriott International.
- **Maryland Rehabilitation Code Advisory Council**
Commissioner Tochterman represents the Commission on this council. The council encourages private investment in existing buildings by streamlining the code requirements for rehabilitation work in buildings older than one year.
- **Fire and Explosive Investigation Advisory Workgroup**
Commissioner Alexander represents the Commission on this workgroup. The group consists of representatives associated with various public and private fire/explosive investigation agencies and organizations, forensic experts, and fire/explosive investigation instructors. The group is tasked with reviewing developments in fire/explosive training/certification standards, advancements in forensic sciences and investigative techniques, and conducting peer reviews of selected fire/explosive investigations and reports to identify areas which can be improved.