



ANNUAL STATISTICS REPORT

Office of the Fire Marshal

2019-2020



16 August 2022

The Honourable John Lohr
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Province of Nova Scotia
Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
P.O. Box 216
Halifax, NS
B3J 2M4

RE: Office of the Fire Marshal 2019-2020 Annual Statistics Report

The Annual Report attached, is a compilation of the activities and data collected from our records for the fiscal year April 1, 2019, through March 31, 2020. During this period, Mr. Fred Jeffers was the appointed Fire Marshal. Today, on his behalf, I have the privilege to submit the report as required by the *Fire Safety Act, 2002, c.6, s.1*.

As the Honourable member is apprised, the Department of Municipal Affairs provides programs, grants and funding to municipalities and community groups. The department provides services and guidance to municipalities, towns and villages in many areas including safety and security, budget planning and finance, and policy and program development. We also help municipalities across the province govern and provide municipal services in times of emergency and are responsible for the Emergency Management Office and the Office of the Fire Marshal.

During this period, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and then the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, was the Honourable Chuck Porter.

Over this period, the dedicated staff from the Office of the Fire Marshal have continued to develop and promote the principles of fire prevention for the protection of Nova Scotians against fire.

Sincerely,
Doug MacKenzie
Fire Marshal



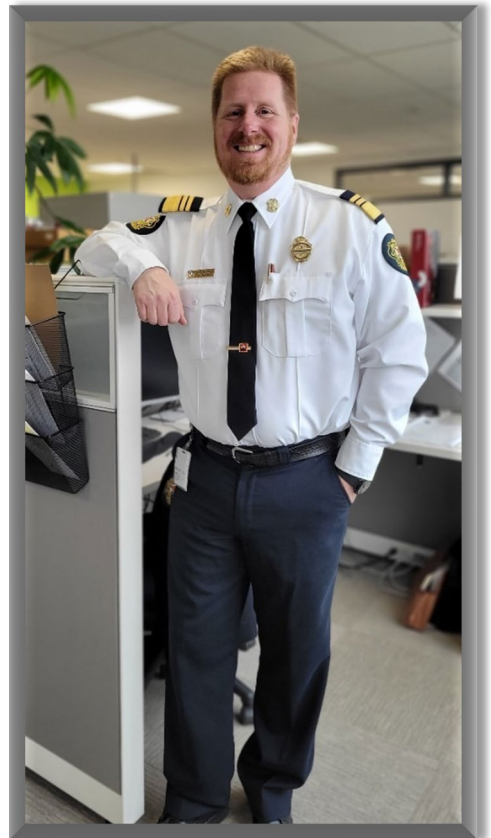
SUMMARY

The Office of the Fire Marshal's (OFM) authorities and responsibilities are contained in the *Fire Safety Act*. The OFM has a mission to promote, coordinate, and facilitate fire and building safety in Nova Scotia. Our vision is that all Nova Scotians will accept their personal responsibility for building and fire safety.

One of the many strengths within the functions of the OFM is fostering successful partnerships. The Office continues to build strong relationships with our key stakeholders, including the fire service, our municipal partners, and other provincial departments. The OFM provides advice and recommendations to persons and/or organizations regarding the principles and practices of fire suppression, fire prevention, fire safety education, safe building code practices, emergency services and related communications systems.

This Annual Report is a compilation of the activities and data collected from our records for the fiscal year April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020.

Doug MacKenzie
Acting Fire Marshal





INTRODUCTION

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

The Minister of Municipal Affairs during this period was the Honourable Chuck Porter, as appointed the Minister of Municipal Affairs on July 5, 2018 and became the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing on June 3, 2019.

Strategically situated within this department, the OFM is well positioned to work closely with the Emergency Management Office, Municipal Services and other key members of the Municipal Affairs team. Our mandate is closely linked with Municipalities, and this connection continues to prove invaluable.

RESOURCES

In 2019-2020, the OFM consisted of eighteen (18) staff located throughout the province:

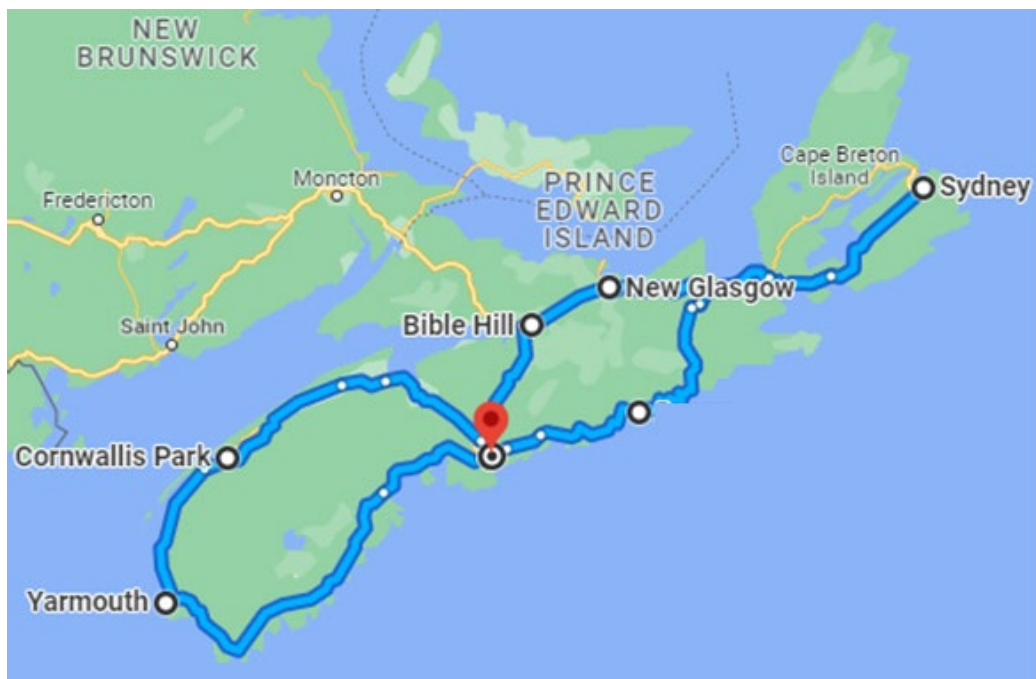
- Fire Marshal, Doug MacKenzie. Director responsible for the overall direction and management of the OFM.
- Assistant Fire Marshal, Jamie Young. Manages the Operations team. A total of nine (9) Deputy Fire Marshals, conduct inspections, investigations & education activities:
 - Arden Weagle
 - Rick Smith
 - Ronald Thibeau
 - Ryan Thibeau
 - Derwin Swinemar, Coordinates and delivers fire prevention programs.
 - Martyn Payge
 - Bentley Rice
 - Andrew Wentzell
 - Lynelle Vetsch
- Manager of Corporate Policy, Kirk Janes. Manages the Administration and Codes' team:
 - Fire Service Coordinator, Sheila Harvey. Provides certification and awards support to fire services.
 - Administrative Assistant, Becky Wilson. Provides administrative support for the OFM.
 - Research & Statistics Officer, Jonathan Gilles. Maintains databases, provides statistical reporting.
 - Fire Code Coordinator, Lorelei Atkinson. Conducts plan reviews, provides technical support.
 - Building Code Coordinator, Joe Rogers. Leads policy and administration related to building codes.
 - Assistant Code Coordinator, Lisa Cadger. Supports Building and Fire Code Coordinators.

FINANCE

For the period 2019-2020, the Office of the Fire Marshal has an annual budget of approximately \$2.9M.

LOCATION

The OFM head office is centrally located in Halifax. Field offices are located throughout Nova Scotia, in Yarmouth, Cornwallis, Bible Hill (Oct 2019), New Glasgow (Aug 2019), and Sydney.



INTEGRATION

From within DMA, and through other branches of government, the OFM is supported with regards to Human Resources, Information Technology, Payroll, Financial, Procurement, Legal and Information Access. These key services play an important role in the success of the Office of the Fire Marshal.

OFM ACTIVITIES

OVERVIEW

Over the course of 2019-2020, the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM):

- conducted fire inspections;
- performed fire investigations;
- maintained a database of activities, including fire incident statistics & trends;
- provided advice and support to stakeholders;
- promoted building safety;
- reviewed building plans;
- provided resources to support fire services;
- licensed portable extinguisher service providers; and
- provided fire safety education and training to the general public, government and industry throughout the province.

In 2019-2020, the Office also administered the Emergency Services Provider Fund.

In January 2020, Deputy Fire Marshal Lynelle Vetsch joined the OFM team. Deputy Vetsch is the first female Deputy Fire Marshal in the Province of Nova Scotia and located in the Cape Breton office.



INSPECTIONS

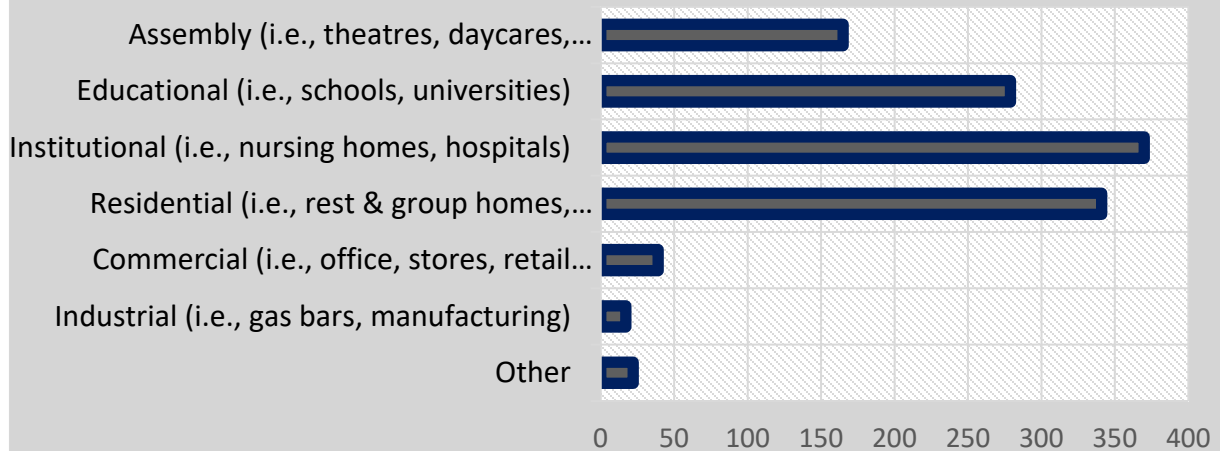
Throughout this fiscal year, the OFM conducted a total of 1202 activities at various buildings and properties, which generated 792 inspection reports, 48 orders to take action, 3 appeals, 47 training events and 290 other-event correspondence.

Many of the inspections undertaken were in concert with our provincial partners in the Departments of Health & Wellness, Community Services, Education & Early Childhood Development and the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services.

During the year, we visited numerous nursing homes, group & small option homes, schools, hospitals and public venues. The numbers and types of inspections undertaken are illustrated below:



Inspections 2019-2020

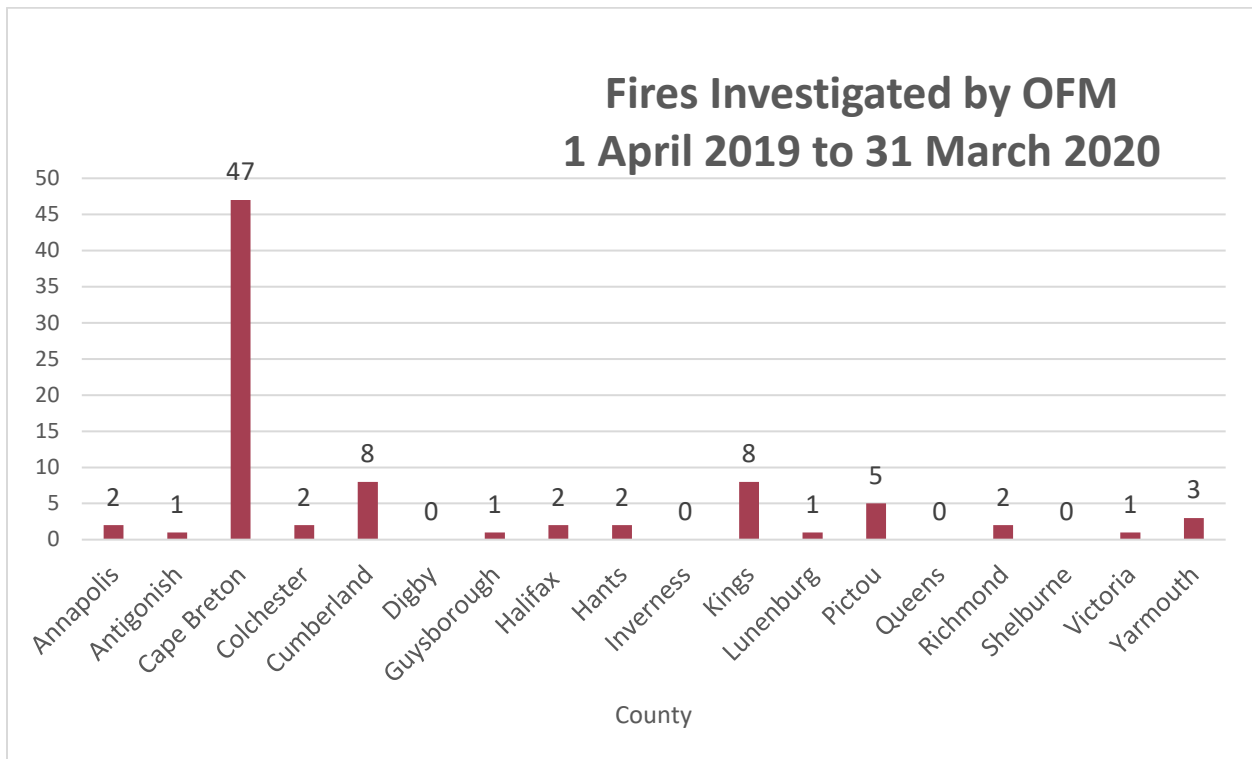


INVESTIGATIONS

The Office of the Fire Marshal provided support to Local Assistants (Fire Chiefs) in determining the cause and origin of fires. An on-call Duty Deputy Fire Marshal monitored a 24-hour call in number available to fire services. Deputy Fire Marshals are available to respond throughout the province around the clock when requested to conduct fire investigations.

During the investigation process, the OFM collaborates closely with Fire Services, Provincial Police Services, NS Medical Examiners Service and the Insurance Industry. A Memorandum of Understanding was established with the Halifax Regional Municipality for formal agreement, prevention of a duplication of service and definition of jurisdictional boundaries. The OFM maintains and continues responsibility for inspections of all licensed care facilities, group homes, hospitals including nursing homes, provincial buildings and all community colleges and universities. Halifax Fire Prevention Division carry out their own system of investigations, with assistance provided by the OFM if requested.

In 2019-2020, the OFM received 240 requests from local assistants and policing services. Through consultations with our on-duty Deputy Fire Marshals, the Local Assistants were guided through the process to determine the cause of the fire or to make the determination if it was safe for Deputy Fire Marshals to attend the scene, resulting in 85 fire investigations being performed by the OFM.



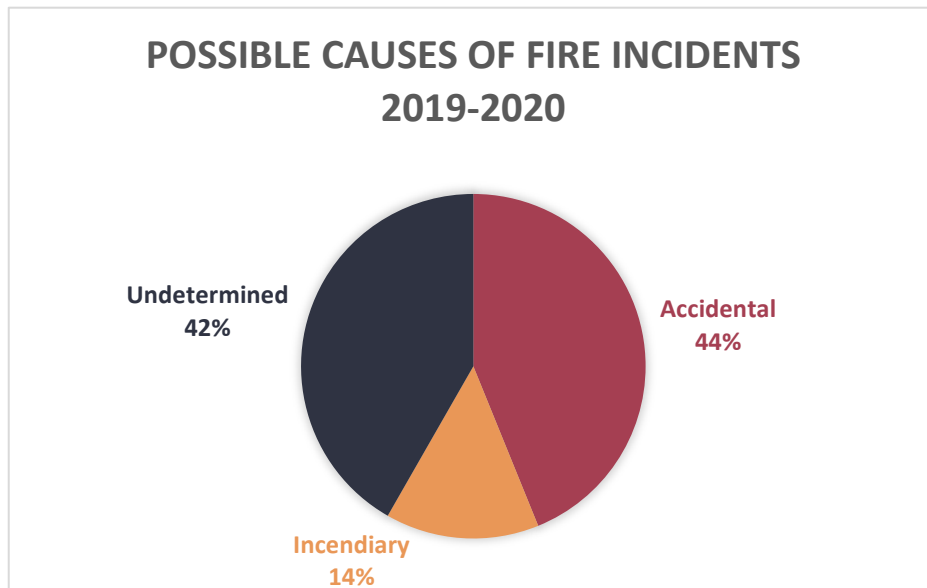
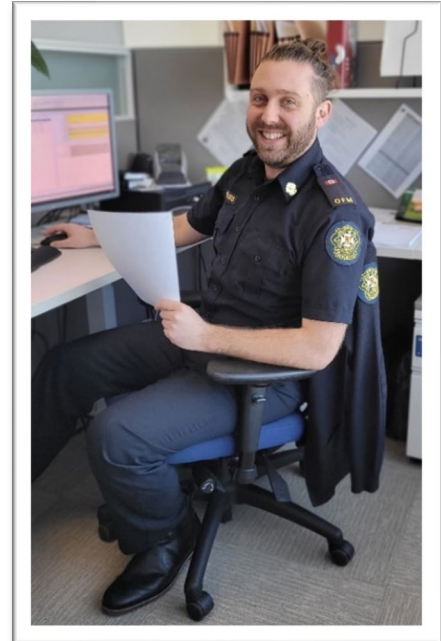
STATISTICS

The Office of the Fire Marshal maintains a fire incident database from information submitted by the fire service, OFM staff and the insurance industry. This data forms the basis of the analysis of statistics and trends of fires in Nova Scotia which assists in the development of fire safety education programming.

In 2019-2020, there were 1888 fire service response events reported to the OFM of which 1247 were fire related incidents. There was a reported structure loss of \$35,451,847; a reported contents loss of \$9,441,399; for a total fire loss of \$44,893,246.

Fire Causes are divided into four categories:

- Accidental fires are those for which the proven cause does not involve an intentional human act and include mechanical/electrical misuse and failure, construction/design deficiency and misuse of ignition sources or materials.
- Incendiary fires are fires that are deliberately set with the intent to cause a fire to occur in an area where the fire should not be.
- Natural fires are those fires caused without direct human intervention or action and include fires resulting from lightning, earthquake, wind and flood.
- Undetermined fires are those fires where the cause cannot be proven to an acceptable level of certainty and include fires that are under investigation, where additional evidence may change the cause determination.



A total of 453, or 44%, of the reported fires were found to be Accidental. There were 149 Incendiary fires reported. Of all reported fires, a total of 431, or 42%, the cause was deemed to be undetermined.

In 2019-2020, there were 6 reported fire related fatalities and 27 fire related injuries reported, including 6 cases of firefighter injury. The number of fire fatalities decreased from the past few years. There were less fire related injuries and the number of firefighter injuries was reduced from the 15 reported cases last year.

There were also 75 confirmed cases of arson and 11 suspicious fires which was consistent from 2018-2019. Throughout this year, 42 accidental fire incidents caused by unattended cooking were reported.

There were 397 Single Dwelling Fires and 140 Semi Detached / Town House / Multi Unit Dwelling Fires. A complete outline of fire incident data for 2019-2020 is illustrated in Appendices A-1 to A-5.

CONSULTING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

One of the key activities for staff from the Office of the Fire Marshal is to act as a resource for the many partners and stakeholders with whom we interact. OFM staff at all levels provide information, advice and recommendations regarding numerous aspects of building & fire safety as well as fire service delivery. This includes support for municipal building and fire inspectors, architects, engineers and other consultants as well as private citizens.

The OFM collaborates regularly with many provincial counterparts from the Departments of Justice, Health & Wellness, Education & Early Childhood Development, Community Services, Natural Resources, Labour & Advanced Education, and Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal. Office of the Fire Marshal staff conduct numerous inspections for provincial licensing and provide advice and recommendations relating to fire and building safety for all provincially owned properties.

The Office of the Fire Marshal continues to foster and develop relationships with fire services in Nova Scotia. The OFM provides information and often works closely with fire services as a bridge to other Provincial departments, the Association of Municipal Administrators, and the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) for a variety of subjects such as: dispatching; wildfire management; motor vehicle concerns; training standards; occupational health & safety; procedure advice on bylaws; authority under the Municipal Government Act and the Fire Safety Act.

BUILDING SAFETY

With regard to Building Safety, the OFM establishes policies, regulations and programs for the regulation of construction for all buildings in Nova Scotia. OFM staff develop education materials, deliver training, and provide stakeholders with sound technical advice on construction codes.

In 2019-2020, the OFM Building Safety team supported our partners, the Nova Scotia Building Officials Association, in their delivery of 15 Building Code Courses provided to Municipal Building Officials and others.

Code presentations were given to stakeholders such as the Nova Scotia Architects Association, Nova Scotia Building Officials Association, Bright Business Conference and Nova Scotia Community College.

Heather Corrigan continued to act as the Chair of the Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee (NSBAC). The Committee is currently comprised of 12 members who represent building construction stakeholders and include members from the design, construction and regulatory fields. Throughout the year, this committee scheduled and held 8 meetings. The NSBAC also received, reviewed, and actioned 3 appeals regarding the application of the Nova Scotia Building Code. Code changes related to recreational cabins, adaptable housing and tiny homes were phased in during 2019. The 2017 National Energy Code for Buildings was adopted along with the adoption of the Errata and Addendum to the Codes came into effect on January 1, 2020.

BUILDING PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

The *Nova Scotia Fire Safety Regulations* and the *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* require building plans be submitted to the OFM for review by the owner for certain occupancies. These occupancies include:

- Assembly occupancy (Group A) that are more than 3 stories high including the stories below grade, or have an area greater than 600 m², or non-residential buildings used for a school, college or university and that has an occupant load of more than 40 persons;
- Care or Detention occupancy (Group B);
- Residential occupancy (Group C) that is licensed or regulated under the Homes for Special Care Act; and
- High hazard Industrial occupancies (Group F1) more than 2 stories high or has an area greater than 600 m².

The OFM also conducts fire and life safety plan reviews for Nova Scotia Government projects that do not fall within the scope of the occupancies noted in the Fire Safety Regulations when requested. The Office of the Fire Marshal employs a full-time Fire Code Coordinator to fill the need for full time plans review. Plans submitted to the OFM are reviewed to ensure conformance to *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations* for Fire and Life Safety requirements to ensure fire and life safety to occupants. The OFM responds to all plans received recognizing receipt of plans, and once a plan review is complete, sending out correspondence identifying compliance or deficiencies and advising if, or when, inspections by a Deputy Fire Marshal are required.

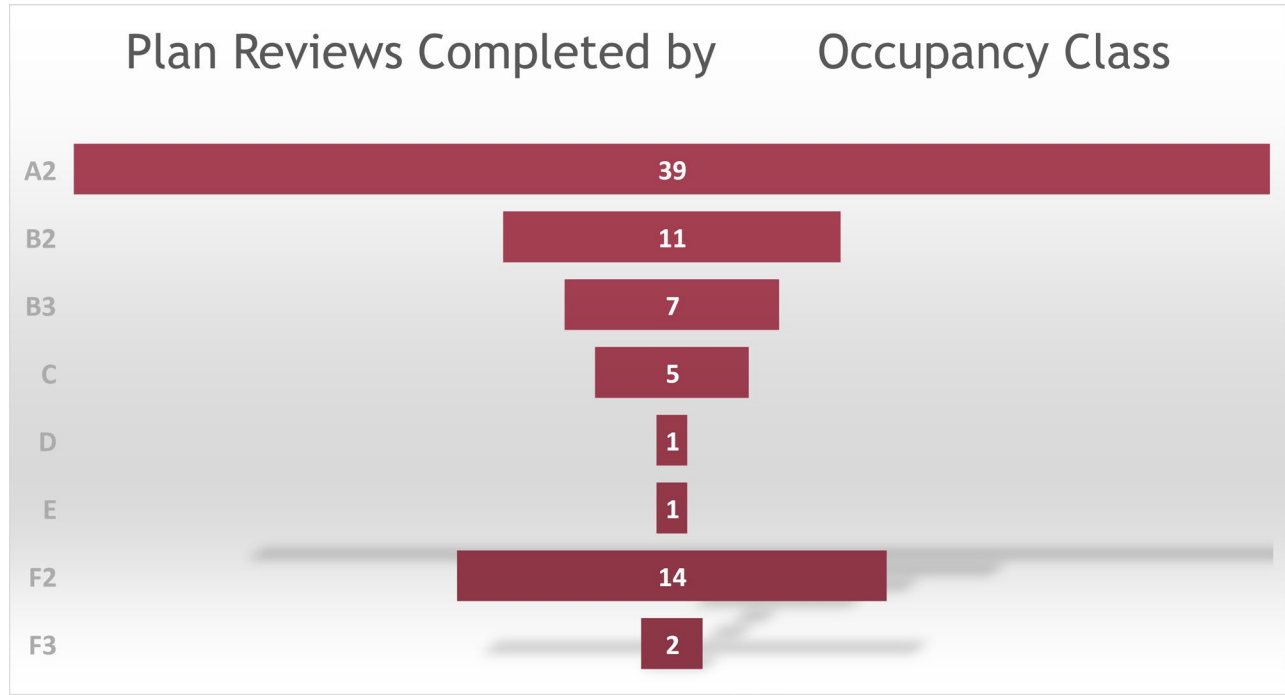


BUILDING PLANS REVIEW SUMMARY

In 2019-2020, 80 separate building plans were received by the OFM. Of this number, 75 were reviewed to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Nova Scotia Fire Safety Act* and *Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations*, and 5 plans did not require a review due to the scope of the projects and applicants were notified of this.

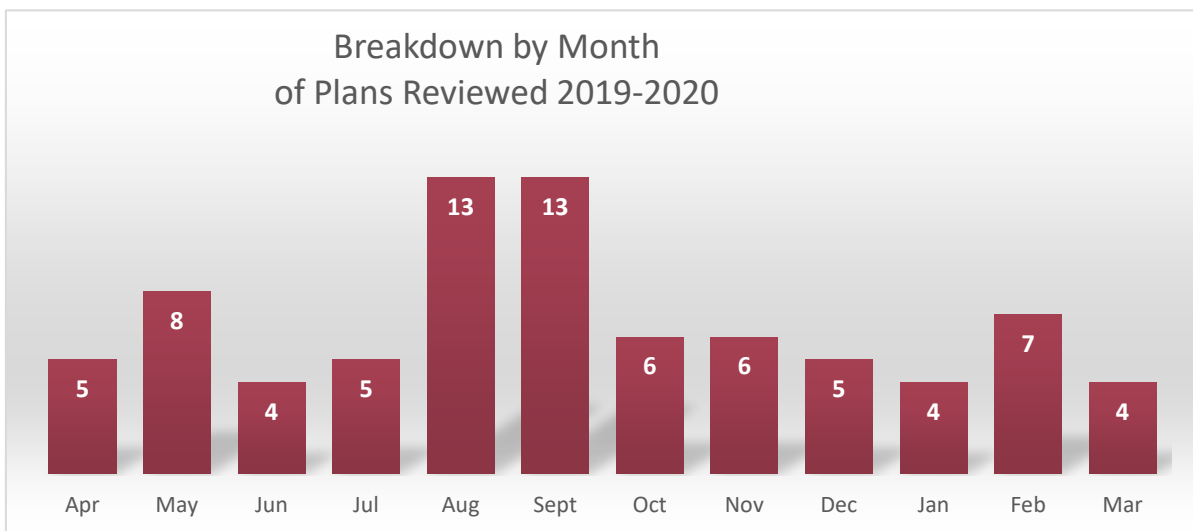
The average number of days involved to complete a plan review was 13 days. This average does not take into account 17 sets of plans that were received incomplete, requiring the OFM to wait until full plans

were received, which was as long as up to six months. The time required to review a set of plans is dependent on several factors and whether the submission contains all the information necessary. The size and complexity of the building plays a large part in the amount of time it takes to review a plan and in some cases the time of year can also affect the timeframe. Springtime generally results in an influx of plans. A lower number are received during the summer months, which is typically construction season.



In addition to numerous other correspondence via email, there were 97 formal responses relating to plan reviews were mailed out from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

A complete summary of Building Plans Submitted to the OFM for Review for 2019-2020 is illustrated in Appendix B-1.



SUPPORT TO NOVA SCOTIA FIRE SERVICES

As part of our continuing commitment to the fire services in Nova Scotia, the Office of the Fire Marshal employs a full-time Fire Service Coordinator to administer several programs to support these first responders.

Nova Scotia Fire Services Long Service Medal

First awarded in 1980, "The Fire Services Long Service Medal" is an expression of public appreciation for the dedication and hard work of Nova Scotia firefighters. It is officially recognized by the province and is included in the *Fire Safety Act, 2003*. Both career and volunteer firefighters can qualify for the medal.

The long service medal is available to those who have achieved a minimum of 25-years in the fire service. In 2015, 35, and 45-year service bars were made available. Service bars are only available to recipients who achieved their 35-years of service on or after 31 December 2007 and 45-years of service on or after 31 December 2017.



The OFM provides support to the Nova Scotia Fire Service as the administrator of the Long Service Medal review and approval process. During the fiscal year 2019-2020, the Fire Marshal recommended to the Minister of Municipal Affairs the awarding of 75 Nova Scotia Long Service Medals (25 years of service) and 63 Nova Scotia Long Service Bars (35 years of service) and 34 Nova Scotia Long Service Bar (45 years).

Governor General's Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal

The Governor General presents honours and awards on behalf of all Canadians to recognize those people who have demonstrated excellence, courage or exceptional dedication to service in ways that bring special credit to this country.

The Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal, created on August 29, 1985, honours members of a recognized Canadian fire service who have completed 20 years of service, ten years of which have been served in the performance of duties involving potential risks, and were employed on or after the date of creation of the Medal. Recognized fire services include Canadian fire departments, fire marshals' offices, fire commissioners' offices and the Canadian Forces fire services. Exemplary service is characterized by good conduct, industry and efficiency.

The Office of the Fire Marshal has been established as the provincial awards committee whose primary function is to make recommendations to the Governor General for the medal or bar.

During the fiscal year 2019-2020, the OFM recommended to the Governor General the awarding of: 106 Fire Services Exemplary Service Medals (20 years of service); 88 Fire Services Exemplary Service Bar (30 years of service); 56 Fire Services Exemplary Service Bar (40 years of service); 1 Fire Services Exemplary Service Bar (50 years of service); 1 Fire Services Exemplary Service Bar (60 years of service).

Nova Scotia Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board

The Nova Scotia Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board (NSFSPQB) was formed in 1997 under the auspices of the Registry of Joint Stocks and is governed by and reports to the Office of the Fire Marshal. The Board consists of members from stakeholder groups that are involved in fire service training. The OFM has a permanent seat on the Board which is held by the Fire Marshal.

It is the objective of the NSFSPQB to provide a forum for firefighters to access a provincial firefighter certification program. It is the goal of the NSFSPQB that the combined efforts of the member entities will provide for an effective, efficient and cost-effective certification program.

The NSFSPQB provides a mechanism for the establishment of uniformity in fire service training and testing and promotes safety for firefighters and civilians through certification. The certification process offered by the NSFSPQB is accredited through both the ProBoard Fire Service Professional Qualifications System and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress and is accepted worldwide in the fire service community.

The OFM Fire Service Coordinator provides support for the NSFSPQB through the preparation and grading of examinations and by providing certifications, which are distributed by the partners of the Nova Scotia Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board.

In support of the NS Professional Fire Services Qualifications Board, the OFM processed 558 fire service certifications during the fiscal year 2019-2020.

LICENSING OF PORTABLE EXTINGUISHER SERVICE PROVIDERS

Under the *Fire Safety Act*, agencies that sell and service portable extinguishers are provided to be licensed by the Province of Nova Scotia on an annual basis. The OFM administers this licensing process and during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, 41 licenses were issued. A current list of licensed service providers is maintained on the OFM webpage as a resource for the general public and other regulatory authorities: <https://beta.novascotia.ca/documents/licensed-fire-extinguisher-maintenance-companies-and-individuals>

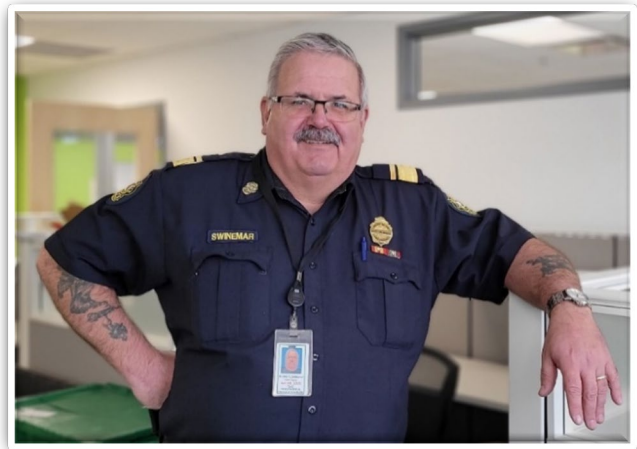
PUBLIC EDUCATION

As part of the OFM's continued commitment to Fire Prevention and Public Education, one Deputy Fire Marshal is dedicated to this program full-time. During this period, many education power point presentations were created and/or updated to meet current requirements, fill identified fire safety education priorities and/or to bring existing training up to date.

The Office of the Fire Marshal completed a total of 58 sessions with 733 people trained in fire and life safety programs. We are pleased to continue to increase the fire and life safety education initiatives during 2019-2020, including the following:

Fire and Life Safety Program – Long Term Care

The OFM completed 72 sessions of the 6-hour Fire and Life Safety program that is facilitated to all long-term care facilities including nursing homes, residential care facilities, group homes, and others who provide or teach care to the residents of these facilities. These seminars provide caregivers with information on how to select and use a portable fire extinguisher, their duties when the fire alarm sounds, and how they can control a fire until the fire department arrives.



Fire Equipment and Evacuation Training (FEET)

The OFM conducted 15 Fire Equipment and Evacuation Training (FEET) sessions throughout the year. This two-day program is directed toward correctional officers within secure facilities, facility management personnel and focusses on a more in depth look at fire protection systems and evacuation planning.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Assistants

The OFM held 2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Assistants Course for local fire chiefs or other local assistants to the Fire Marshal. The program outlines the expectations for this position, legislative responsibilities and provides insight on how the role can be better fulfilled.

Remembering When

The Remembering When program is an internationally acclaimed fire safety and falls prevention program provided to local fire service, caregivers, and other stakeholders interested in seniors' safety. The intent of this program is to provide local individuals with the training and skills to take the Remembering When program out to seniors within their own communities. This year, seminars were conducted on 3 occasions.

Arson Prevention Program for Children: TAPP-C

The Arson Prevention Program for Children, known as TAPP-C, is aimed at children and youth with some potential interest or risk for fire setting. The program provides participants with information on the consequences of fires to themselves, family, friends, and property. TAPP-C consists of three one-hour sessions, for all age groups. The first session begins at the family home or place of residence. The other two are held at the local fire station. It has been very successful and those who participate have learned that fire is good when used in an acceptable manner. This year, 3 separate youth programs of 3 sessions each were conducted with the Program Administrator for a total of 9 sessions.

The Tapp-C Train the Trainer T3 Program was conducted for members of the Nova Scotia Office of the Fire Marshal as well as for seven members of Halifax Fire Prevention.

Portable Fire Extinguishers / Floor Warden / Fire Warden

A total of 5 fire extinguisher training programs with the Bullex digital system were held.

Fire Warden / Floor Warden training involved 6 sessions.

Fire Prevention Week

National Fire Prevention Week is observed in the United States and Canada, during the week (from Sunday to Saturday) in which October 9 falls. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) continues to be the international sponsor of the week. In 2020, the Fire Prevention Week theme was:

“Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen!”™

From October 4-10, 2020, the campaign, “Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen!™” worked to educate everyone about the simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves, and those around them, safe in the kitchen. Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in Canada. The majority of reported home fires started in the kitchen. Most home fires start with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.



The most important step you should take before making a meal, is to Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen! A cooking fire can grow quickly. Many homes are damaged, and people injured, by fires that could easily have been prevented. Safety tips to keep you from having a cooking fire:

- ☆ Never leave cooking food unattended. Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling food. If you have to leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove.
- ☆ If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly. Remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.
- ☆ You have to be alert when cooking. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have taken medicine or drugs, or have consumed alcohol that makes you drowsy.
- ☆ Always keep an oven mitt and pan lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan to smother the flame. Turn off the burner, and leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.
- ☆ Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 1 metre around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

Conferences, Displays and Tradeshow

The OFM attended the Special Committee Emergency Planning (SCEPA) Emergency preparedness LTC , Fire Safety Plan presentation in Truro, NS; the Canadian Healthcare Engineering Society CHES conference in Moncton, NB; the NFPA Conference & Expo Public Educators conference and Fire Prevention Week presentations at the Chester Fire Department, Chester, NS.

In addition, on November 6, 2019, the OFM participated in the Government of Nova Scotia Career Fair, held at the Marriott Harbourfront Hotel, in Halifax. The Government of Nova Scotia showcased the public service as an employer to students providing exhibitors from different departments and offices.

It was a great opportunity for the OFM to present the OFM's role in the province and to provide messages about home fire escape planning and practice. Attendees enjoyed trying to put out a virtual fire with the OFM's Bullex digital fire extinguisher system and posed fire safety questions to OFM members.

COMMUNICATIONS

Several communication programs with new public education materials and methods were explored and went into development:

- Social Media
The OFM team worked to create and highlight many public education messages encouraging fire and building safety to be shared through the Municipal Affairs & Housing Twitter account.
- Power Point
Several presentations were created utilizing Power Point and others were refurbished with current information as they are used throughout OFM presentations, training, education and other activities.
- Banners
Five banners were conceived toward a complimenting series for education and communication. The first three are complete (shown below) with the final two in development:

Completed Banners

Office of the Fire Marshal Identification
Fire Investigation
Building and Fire Safety Education

Banners in Development

Inspection & Enforcement
Codes and Construction Practices



To complete the series, the final two banners are anticipated to be created within the next year. The banners can be used all together as one large display unit or they may be separated for various setting purposes, depending upon the needs and location of the OFM offices. The banners will feature OFM staff and the recognizable Sparky™.

EMERGENCY SERVICES PROVIDER FUND

The Emergency Services Provider Fund (ESPF) is intended to assist first responder organizations in Nova Scotia with the purchase of equipment used directly in response to fire or emergency situations. Fire departments, hazardous materials (HazMat) organizations, and ground search & rescue groups may apply for funding for personal protective equipment (PPE) AND Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), Communications, Miscellaneous Fire Fighting Equipment, Rescue Equipment, HazMat and Water Supply and Suppression Equipment. The Program pays 75% of the total eligible costs, up to a maximum grant of \$20,000.

Priority was given to those organizations that received low percentage of ESPF funding in the past and in the most need of financial help. As financial statements are required to be provided for this purpose, if not provided the application is not evaluated.

In 2019-2020, the OFM supported applications totaling \$1,434,000.

PARTNERSHIPS

In 2019-2020 the Office of the Fire Marshal continued to build on its positive working relationships with many partners, including in part:

- Federal – Staff from the OFM participate in many Federal Provincial/Territorial Advisory Councils and Committees on behalf of the Province of Nova Scotia;
- Provincial – As part of our ongoing responsibility to provide advice to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, staff from the OFM participate in many Provincial Agencies, Boards, and Commissions;
- OFM staff also support a number of other key stakeholder organizations which support municipalities.



LOOKING FORWARD

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In 2019, the world was devastated with the spread of a viral pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). In March of 2020, the first three (travel-related) presumptive cases of COVID-19 in the province were announced and subsequently a provincial state of emergency was declared. To reduce the spread of the highly infectious COVID-19, residents and workplaces were required to take precautions to ensure the health and safety of their employees and clients. All were advised to take protective measures and asked to work together to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep each other safe.

Restricted visitation and operation or closure affected many, including in part hospitals, long-term care facilities, public schools, day cares, correctional facilities, stores, offices, bars and restaurants. All points of entry were tightened. There was enhancement of infectious disease control measures in hospitals, restriction of regulated health professions to virtual care except for emergency or urgent cases, all non-regulated health professions closed, and the reopening of some activity was on a limited, reduced contact basis. Self-isolation requirements and gathering limitations were enacted. Viral testing assessment centres were established. Despite best efforts, community spread reached levels that anyone could potentially have the virus regardless of travel history.

In the first few months of the pandemic, many stakeholders reached out to the Office of the Fire Marshal for information and support within the climate of growing fear of the unknown. Despite the uncertainty, the Office of the Fire Marshal continued with their responsibilities to promote and enforce building and fire safety and advise various levels of government on building and fire-related matters, including fire protection. The OFM continued working with fire services partners throughout the province and continued plans reviews, inspections, leading, coordinating and providing government departments, municipalities, and the public with effective approaches for building and fire safety.



Despite the limited availability of safety supplies and high level protocols to be met, the Office of the Fire Marshal continued to work with municipal and provincial partners to support their efforts in achieving building and fire safety. Members of the OFM across the province worked within a mixture of home, office and field. Meetings were held virtually and technology utilized as much as possible. The Office of the Fire Marshal's dedicated staff maintained a high level of professionalism as they worked with our partners to support the many initiatives and programs that we undertake.



UPGRADES TO DATABASE SYSTEM

Significant upgrades to the main database system have been ongoing. The OFM looks forward to greatly enhancing information gathering capabilities and opportunities to acquire information in areas not previously captured.

IN CLOSING

The Office of the Fire Marshal continues to promote and develop building and fire safety in Nova Scotia. As we carry out our daily tasks and activities, we will take advantage of opportunities to improve upon our effectiveness and efficiency. We have learned a great deal from the perspective the past year has provided. We have gained knowledge and focus, despite the intense challenges. The OFM continues to work hard and consistently adapt to continue our work and carry on enhancing the safety of all Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,
Doug MacKenzie
Fire Marshal

On behalf of Fred Jeffers
Fire Marshal, 2017-2021



APPENDIX A: 2019-2020 FIRE INCIDENT STATISTICS

Appendix A-1

Fatalities From Fire 2019-2020

*FF = Firefighter

Property Classification	Igniting Object	Possible Cause	Male Adult Fatality	Male Child Fatality	Male FF* Fatality	Female Adult Fatality	Female Child Fatality	Female FF* Fatality
322 Multi-Unit Dwelling 7-12 Units	99 Undetermined	01 Arson				1		
301 Detached Dwelling	91 Multiple Areas of Origin	01 Arson	1					
301 Detached Dwelling	64 Porch or Balcony	53 Short Circuit	1			1		
301 Detached Dwelling	61 Exterior Wall	68 Undetermined				1		
901 Automobile	86 Passenger Area	67 Other	1					

Appendix A-2

Injuries from Fire 2019-2020								
Property Classification	Igniting Object	Possible Cause	Male Adult Injuries	Male Child Injuries	Male FF Injuries	Female Adult Injuries	Female Child Injuries	Female FF Injuries
301 Detached Dwelling			0	0	0	1	0	0
206 Psychiatric Hospital/Detention	99 Undetermined	01 Arson	1	0	0	0	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	99 Undetermined	04 Youth Vandalism (Age 12-17)	0	0	1	0	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	332 Wood Stove	23 Installation Deficiency	0	0	0	1	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	38 Chimney - Factory Built	23 Installation Deficiency	1	0	0	1	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	16 Deep Fat Fryer	32 Unattended	1	0	0	0	0	0
321 Multi-Unit Dwelling 2- 6 Unit	16 Deep Fat Fryer	32 Unattended	0	0	0	1	0	0
365 Detached Garage	89 Exposure Fire	33 Used/Placed Too Close/Combust	1	0	0	0	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	39 Chimney - Masonry	35 Creosote Buildup	1	0	0	0	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	98 Other	49 Other	0	0	0	1	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	14 Open Fired Barbeque/Fix/Port	51 Mechanical Failure	0	0	0	1	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	41 Other Heating Equipment	52 Electrical Failure	1	0	0	0	0	0
321 Multi-Unit Dwelling 2- 6 Unit	28 Cord/Cable for Appliances	52 Electrical Failure	0	0	0	1	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	99 Undetermined	68 Undetermined	0	0	1	0	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	99 Undetermined	68 Undetermined	0	0	1	1	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	99 Undetermined	68 Undetermined	0	0	2	0	0	1
365 Detached Garage	99 Undetermined	68 Undetermined	0	2	0	0	0	0
301 Detached Dwelling	99 Undetermined	69 Under Investigation	0	1	0	0	0	0
		Totals	6	3	5	8	0	1

Response Type 2019-2020

Property Fires/Explosions	
Fire	1247
Combustion Explosion (No Fire)	1
False Fire Calls	
Alarm Equipment-Malfunction	37
Alarm Equipment - Accidental	88
Human - Malicious	4
Human - Perceived Emergency	21
Human - Accidental	7
Other False Fire Call	11
Public Hazard	
Gas Leak - Propane	1
Gas Leak - Miscellaneous	3
Spill, Gasoline or Fuel	1
Spill, Toxic or Chemical	0
Spill - Miscellaneous	0
Ruptured Water, Steam Pipe	24
Other Public Hazard	21
Power Lines Down - Arcing	85
Rescue	
Vehicle Extraction	0
Water Rescue	1
Persons Trapped in Elevator	1
Vehicle Accident	120
Other Rescue	3
Medical/Resuscitator Call	
Medical Call	207
Other Calls	
Other Calls	5
Total	1888

Possible Causes of Fire Incidents 2019-2020

Incendiary	
Arson	75
Vandalism	12
Youth Vandalism (Age 12-17)	14
Suspicious Fire	11
Accidental	
Vehicle Accident/Collision	3
Construction / Design Deficiency	
Design Deficiency	3
Construction Deficiency	3
Installation Deficiency	8
Maintenance Deficiency	23
Other Deficiency	2
Misuse of Source Of Ignition	
Improperly Discarded	55
Unattended	72
Used/Placed too close to Combustibles	22
Used for Purpose not Intended	2
Creosote Buildup	46
Other Misuse of Source Ignition	14
Misuse of Material Ignited	
Improper Storage	6
Improper Handling	32
Used for Purpose not Intended	2
Other Misuse of Material Ignited	93
Mechanical/Electrical Failure	
Mechanical Failure	32
Electrical Failure	106
Short Circuit	25
Other Undetermined	
Other	59
Undetermined	276
Under Investigation	25
Not Reported	226
Total	1247

Appendix B: Summary of Building Plans Submitted to the OFM for Review

Appendix B-1

Annual Summary of Building Plans Submitted to the OFM for Review
April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020

Occupancy Type	Number of Plans
A2	39
B2	11
B3	7
C	5
D	1
E	1
F2	14
F3	2
Total	80

NSTIR PROJECTS	18	
NSHealth PROJECTS	8	
NSHousing PROJECTS	0	
NSCC	9	
** Education	8	
Others	28	** Plans that did not appear to have NSTIR Oversight (NSTIR not on plans)
Total	80	

Average number of days to complete a plan review = 13 days

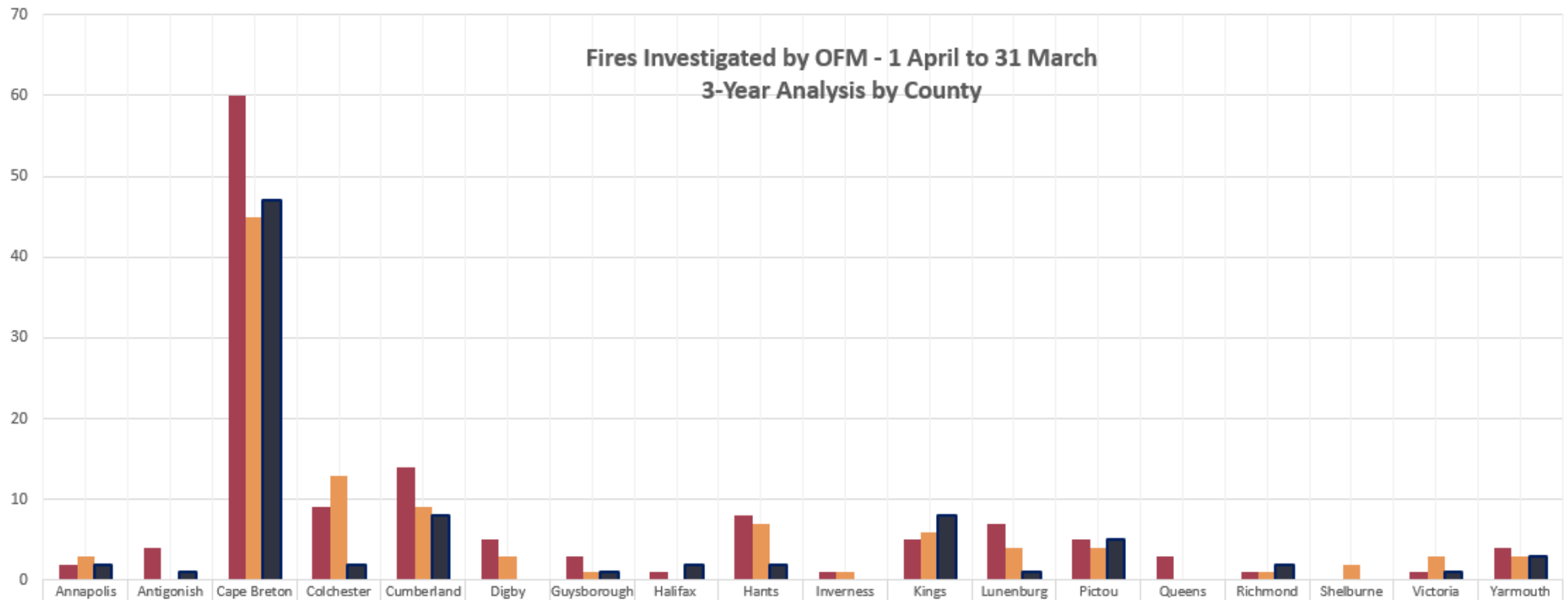
When Plans were Received	Number of Plans
Apr	5
May	8
Jun	4
Jul	5
Aug	13
Sept	13
Oct	6
Nov	6
Dec	5
Jan	4
Feb	7
Mar	4
Total	80



Submission not requiring review (not within scope of FSR)
6

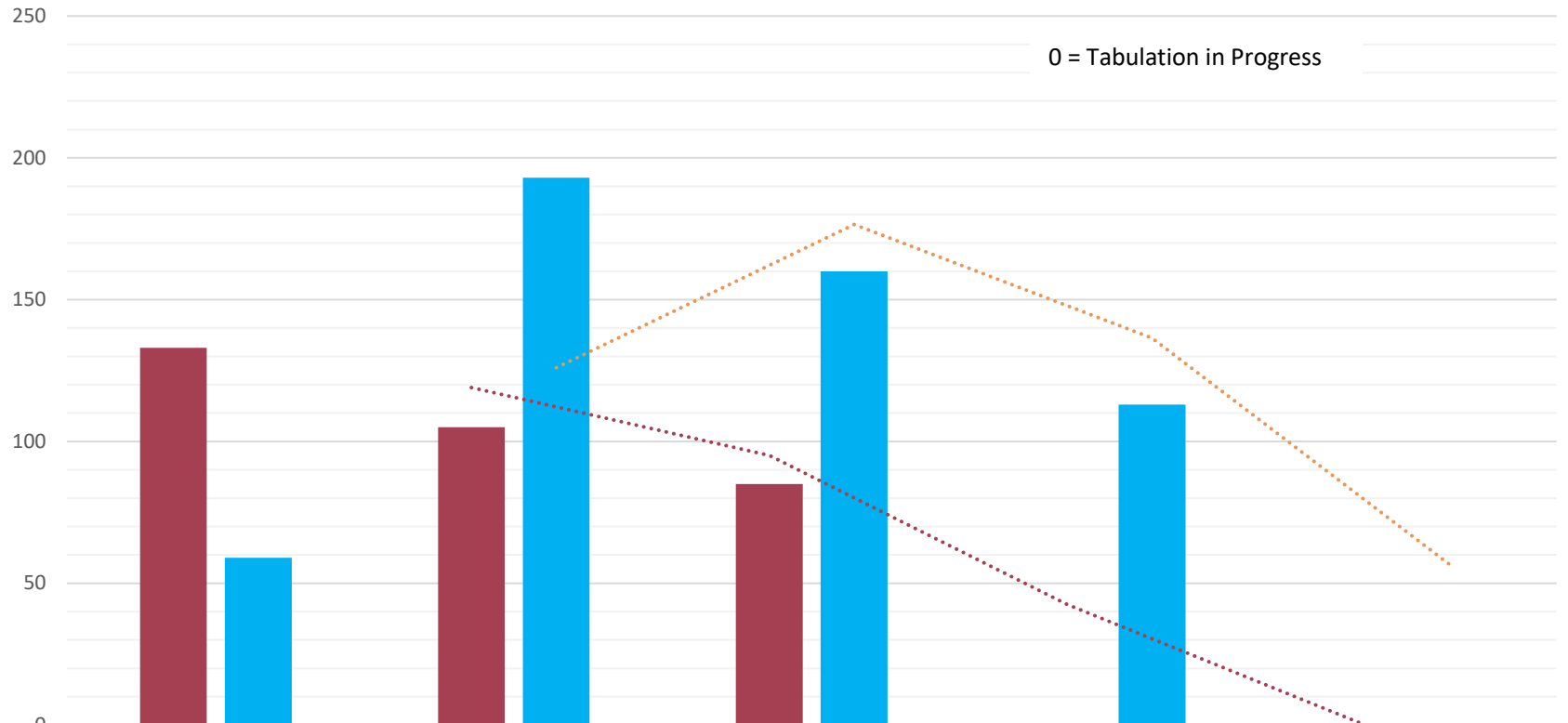
■ 2017-2018 ■ 2018-2019 ■ 2019-2020

Fires Investigated by OFM - 1 April to 31 March
3-Year Analysis by County



	Annapolis	Antigonish	Cape Breton	Colchester	Cumberland	Digby	Guysborough	Halifax	Hants	Inverness	Kings	Lunenburg	Pictou	Queens	Richmond	Shelburne	Victoria	Yarmouth
■ 2017-2018	2	4	60	9	14	5	3	1	8	1	5	7	5	3	1	0	1	4
■ 2018-2019	3	0	45	13	9	3	1	0	7	1	6	4	4	0	1	2	3	3
■ 2019-2020	2	1	47	2	8	0	1	2	2	0	8	1	5	0	2	0	1	3

Number of Fires Investigated by OFM and Number of Local Assistants Trained



	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021 (Covid)	2021-2022 to date
Total Fires	133	105	85	0	0
Assistants Training	59	193	160	113	0

■ Total Fires
 ■ Assistants Training
 ⋯ 2 per. Mov. Avg. (Total Fires)
 ⋯ 2 per. Mov. Avg. (Assistants Training)

