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2017 Fire in Alaska Report Released

Report covering fatalities, injuries and property damage due to fire

September 18, 2018 ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Division of Fire & Life Safety (FLS) has published the Fire in Alaska 2017 to its website. The report details fire fatality and injuries across Alaska. The report is a compilation of data that was provided to FLS from 170 Fire Departments. It also contains information regarding treatment of burns at clinics and medical centers. FLS would like to thank all the fire departments that contributed to the report.

There were 19 fire deaths in Alaska in 2017, a 6% increase from the previous year. Of those deaths, six were children under the age of 10. Additionally, juvenile firesetters were responsible for igniting 22% of all intentionally set fires. These deaths and incidents show that more education is needed to warn of the dangers fires (matches, lighters and other open flames) pose to families.

“We are watching statistics closely on fire deaths and injuries because the lives of Alaskans matter,” said David Tyler, Alaska Fire Marshal. “What we are seeing are deaths and injuries that are preventable and the trends give us important clues to how we can make Alaska safer.”

Another way of combatting fires is prevention through making building as safe as possible by having thorough plan reviews completed. Plan reviews are necessary for any construction, repair, remodel, addition, or change of occupancy in any commercial structure in order to ensure safety and compliance with state law. Due to budget reductions, wait times for plan review approvals had jumped to over two months in some cases. The Division of Fire & Life Safety’s Plan Review Bureau continues to pursue innovative ways to decrease the amount of time plan reviews and approvals take. The Plan Review Bureau has changed queue management practices and fast-tracked simpler plans to help reduce wait times.

Every 11 hours a fire department in Alaska in 2017 respond to a residential fire.

The full report can be found online at <https://dps.alaska.gov/getmedia/99aae84c-403a-417a-96c2-26146d5a6e27/Fire-In-Alaska-2017d>.

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