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OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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State Fire Marshal's Office Releases 2019 Performance Report

BATON ROUGE, LA- State Fire Marshal Chief H. "Butch" Browning has released the agency's 2019 productivity statistics which show more fire investigation calls, completed inspections and new construction project reviews over the previous year.

"Our team of professionals at the State Fire Marshal's Office continues to perform at a high level, exceeding expectations across the board, and the people of Louisiana are reaping the benefits," said Browning.

In 2019, SFM deputies were requested to investigate almost 775 fires compared to 750 the year before. Of those fires, just under 300 were classified as incendiary, on par with 2018's figures. The agency's arrest rate remains in the 40% range for a third year, significantly above the national average.

Unfortunately, there were just as many lives lost this year to residential fires than the previous year, roughly 75, though the fatality count stayed low for much of the year until the last month. Only about 20 of those cases involved structures with smoke alarms with half confirmed as working at the time of the fires.

Deputies also conducted a growing number of inspections in 2018 totaling more than 75,000 reviews of new commercial buildings, fireworks stands and manufactured housing, to name a few. A contributing factor to the increase in completed inspections was a strong emphasis on eliminating the agency's backlog in all four of its coverage areas.

The agency's Plan Review division saw a steady number of project submittals this past year, more than 18,000, with a slightly less estimated value amounting to \$9.8 billion.

Finally, the SFM licensed almost 15,000 individuals and firms in 2019, bringing in around \$2.3 million in revenue. Those licenses apply to a host of industries including Life Safety & Property Protection businesses, amusement ride operators, and boiler systems.

"The State Fire Marshal's Office is doing its part to protect life and property from the hazards of fire and explosion, abate arson, and ensure safety in the constructed environment," said Browning, "We look forward to continuing this good work into 2020 and hope the people of Louisiana pitch in with their own fire safety awareness and prevention efforts."