



# NEWS RELEASE

## OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections • Public Safety Services

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[www.lasfm.org](http://www.lasfm.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## 2019 Fire Fatality Numbers Remain Low

*State Fire Marshal Encourages Residents to Continue Fire Safety Practices*

**BATON ROUGE, LA-** State Fire Marshal Chief H. “Butch” Browning is highlighting a notable decrease in fire fatalities across the state so far this year.

Since January 1, the SFM has recorded 16 fatal fires resulting in a total of 17 deaths. By this same time last year, SFM deputies had investigated 30 fire-related deaths. In 2017, 20 had been reported by this date.

“Even one loss of life is one too many,” said Browning, “But these statistics, so far this year, are very encouraging.”

The SFM would like to remind all residents of these electrical safety tips:

- Only use extension cords on a temporary basis and refrain from connecting multiple cords
- Always plug high-wattage appliances and power strips directly into wall sockets
- Be mindful not to overload power strips
- Contact a licensed electrician to conduct any and all electrical work needed in your homes and businesses

And as winter comes to a close, we want to remind residents of basic heating safety tips including keeping space heaters 3-5 feet away from combustibles, refraining from using stoves or ovens for heating and using no more than three logs in wood-burning fireplaces.

As always, we urge all residents to have working smoke alarms in their homes. Visit [lasfm.org](http://lasfm.org) for more information on our smoke alarm program, Operation Save-A-Life.

“I believe the decrease in fire fatalities are an indication that the various messages about fire safety, shared by our agency and the local fire service, are effectively reaching communities, large and small, and that families are taking those safety suggestions seriously,” said Browning, “We hope to see those life-saving efforts continue as the year progresses.”

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