

**INDIANA STATE FIRE
MARSHAL. SECOND
ANNUAL REPORT TO
THE GOVERNOR FOR 1914**

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Indiana State Fire Marshal. Second Annual Report to the Governor for 1914 by Various

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VARIOUS

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Indiana State Fire Marshal

Second Annual Report to the
Governor for 1914

INDIANAPOLIS :
WM. B. BURFORD, CONTRACTOR FOR STATE PRINTING AND BINDING
1915

THE STATE OF INDIANA,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
March 24, 1915.

Received by the Governor, examined and referred to the Auditor of State for verification of the financial statement.

OFFICE OF AUDITOR OF STATE,
INDIANAPOLIS, April 2, 1915.

The within report, so far as the same relates to moneys drawn from the State Treasury, has been examined and found correct.

DALE J. CRITTENBERGER,
Auditor of State.

APRIL 2, 1915.

Returned by the Auditor of State, with above certificate, and transmitted to Secretary of State for publication, upon the order of the Board of Commissioners of Public Printing and Binding.

B. B. JOHNSON,
Secretary to the Governor.

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State of the State of Indiana, April 2, 1915.

HOMER L. COOK,
Secretary of State.

Received the within report and delivered to the printer March 27, 1915.

ED D. DONNELL,
Clerk Printing Board.

Indorsement of the 1915 report

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

DECEMBER 31, 1914.

Honorable Samuel M. Halston, Governor:

Dear Sir—I herewith present to you the second annual report of the work of the department over which I have the honor to preside.

In accordance with the plan followed in the report of 1913 this summary will be found to be the combined records of the activities of the three divisions of my department. The head of each division has been given an opportunity to review completely, but briefly, accomplishment of the past year. The financial statement is closed at the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 1914. The report in general is for the calendar year ending December 31, 1914.

This department, at the end of the second year of its history, finds the field for endeavor in fire prevention practically limitless. The campaign has been waged along educational lines, in inspection of structural work and in the investigation and prosecution of violations of building laws and the criminal code in reference to arson.

The demands upon the department have not lessened. On the contrary the operations of the department are constantly creating additional demands for service. It has not been possible to give prompt attention to each request for service owing to inadequate facilities. Discrimination in giving the most pressing and important needs first attention has resulted, without doubt, in errors. But it is with confidence born of increased understanding and efficiency that this department faces a new year.

Acknowledgment is hereby made of the co-operation of other departments of the State. Evidence of progress is found in the willing and efficient assistance given employees of this department by county, city and township officials of the State.

Allow me respectfully to ask that you give to the following pages such attention as your valuable time will permit.

Sincerely,

W. E. LONGLEY,
State Fire Marshal.

REPORT OF INSPECTION DIVISION

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., December 31, 1914.

Gen. W. E. Longley, State Fire Marshal:

Dear Sir—I beg to submit the following report of the inspection division for the year ending December 31, 1914.

This division has through its inspectors and assistants over the State made seventeen thousand, nine hundred and six (17,906) inspections, and issued orders for the correction of defects as follows:

1. Places ordered cleaned.....	5,688
2. Waste paper and rubbish ordered removed.....	2,862
3. Attics and closets ordered cleaned.....	2,040
4. Elevator shafts ordered cleaned.....	567
5. Ashes ordered removed.....	808
6. Receptacles ordered for ashes and oily waste.....	852
7. Defective flues and smoke pipes ordered repaired.....	832
8. Flue openings ordered protected by shields.....	248
9. Stoves and ranges ordered protected.....	322
10. Hot air pipes ordered repaired.....	193
11. Steam pipes ordered protected.....	41
12. Defective electric wiring ordered corrected.....	432
13. Gas lights ordered protected.....	136
14. Cellar doors and gratings ordered repaired or protected.....	164
15. Cellars ordered equipped with automatic pipe lines.....	1
16. Window lights ordered replaced.....	132
17. Exits ordered cleared.....	855
18. Fire extinguishers ordered recharged.....	617
19. Gasolene systems ordered placed underground.....	228
20. Dynamite ordered removed or stored properly.....	15
21. Moving picture machine booths ordered made safe.....	12
22. Dilapidated buildings ordered down.....	292
23. Complaints investigated.....	1,059

RUBBISH AND WASTE MATERIAL

As shown by the above statistics the accumulation of rubbish and waste material is the most common defect found, Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the above table totaling ten thousand five hundred and fifty-seven (10,557) orders issued. Rubbish is generally due to poor housekeeping and carelessness and is a breeder of fires. Rubbish accumulations facilitate the rapid spread of fire. One of the chief difficulties which firemen have to overcome when fighting fires

in basements and out of way places, is the smoke caused by rubbish. Proper precaution incurs no expense and such care more than repays for the trouble it causes.

ASHES

The proper storage and disposal of ashes requires constant effort on the part of inspectors. One never hears of cold ashes starting a fire, but the reports of fires caused by ashes show that the life of fire in ashes is much longer than the average person suspects. Therefore this demands that they be properly stored. In mercantile districts the inspector frequently finds ashes in the basement piled against wooden partitions, or thrown back of the main building against wooden sheds or fences. Householders often use wooden boxes and barrels for storing ashes. Seventy-six (76) fires have been reported to the department during the past winter due directly to this practice.

CHIMNEYS AND FLUES

Statistical Table II shows that defective chimneys and flues are a prolific source of fires. Resultant large losses are frequent. Prospective builders who spend hours with an architect to provide their dwellings with the latest modern conveniences and the greatest comfort, frequently ignore the safety of the buildings and their own lives by neglecting to provide properly constructed chimneys and flues. The same attitude exists toward the installation of stoves, furnaces and other hazardous heating appliances.

EXITS

That there should have been eight hundred and fifty-five (855) orders issued that exits be cleared indicates that the ordinary individual does not give much thought to protecting the lives of the people who visit his place of business or amusement. Only by unceasing watchfulness on the part of inspectors and assistants are emergency exits kept accessible and free from rubbish and debris.

GASOLENE

The use of inflammable liquids in this State has been very greatly increased in the last ten years. Twice as much kerosene is used today as ten years ago, and three times as much gasolene. The increased consumption of gasolene has been especially marked

within the last few years since the use of the automobile has become so general. Prior to 1913 more kerosene was used in Indiana than gasolene, but in 1914 the gasolene used exceeded the kerosene by 5,396,150 gallons.

Considering the dangerous nature of gasolene, it is remarkable that in the use of 36,592,200 gallons of gasolene in 1914, more people were not injured. The chief danger of gasolene arises from the explosive vapor which the gasolene gives off constantly at the ordinary temperature of air. This vapor is heavier than air and consequently seeks the lowest available places. If proper ventilation is not provided, the vapor will remain for days in an out-of-the-way low place. No safeguard will prevent injury to individuals who handle this inflammable liquid carelessly, but proper safeguards can be provided to minimize the risk.

The underground storage of gasolene places the liquid where a fire will not cause an explosion and where inflammable vapors will not be given off. Gasolene stored above ground continually gives off vapor which will ignite or explode from a fire in the immediate vicinity. Gasolene explosion is one of the most frequent causes of fires in stores and is the most frequent cause of serious injury from burning, as shown by the report of deaths and injuries.

EXPLOSIVES

There has been a growing demand for high explosives in the rural districts. Inspections have revealed various firms carrying large quantities of dynamite within the fire limits where accidental explosion would cause great damage. As a rule in these instances, no precaution whatever has been taken to safeguard this hazard. In fifteen (15) cases orders issued by this department have caused the amount of explosives carried to be reduced and proper precaution taken to safeguard its storage.

MOTION PICTURE THEATERS

The ever increasing popularity of the motion picture theater calls for constant attention in safeguarding its inherent hazards which endanger the lives of the audience. Many prospective builders have consulted with this division, and all new theaters have been designed with a view toward making the motion picture theater a place of safety. In twelve (12) instances this division has ordered the managements of theaters already in operation to change the construction of their booths so as to safeguard properly the hazard from film fires.