

# Upper Makefield *Township*

1076 Eagle Road | Newtown, PA 18940 | p 215.968.3340 | f 215.968.9228 | www.uppermakefield.org

August 2025

TO: Township Manager  
CC: BOS, P&Z, Engineer & Solicitor  
FR: John C. Kernan - Chief Fire Marshal FM-272  
RE: Monthly Update

## Investigations

- Investigating and followed-up on all township-wide fire alarm calls dispatched by Bucks Radio Room
- Reported “Fuel/Chemical Spill” Taylorsville & Walker “Street Sweeper Hydraulic Line Failure”
- Posted “No Parking” signage Keith Lane at Dutchess Farm Development - adopted
- Reported “Dwelling Fire” Old Cabin Rd. – “On-Going Investigation” exterior air conditioner no extension  
\*NOTE on scene “Destructive Evidence Review” schedule with insurance carrier mechanical engineer 8/21
- Reported “Wires Outside” Washington Crossing Road “Natural-Accidental”
- Reported “Brush Fire” Highland Rd & Wrightstown Rd “Undetermined”
- Reported “Brush Fire” Pebbletown Rd “Lightening Strike”

## Projects / Initiatives / Training

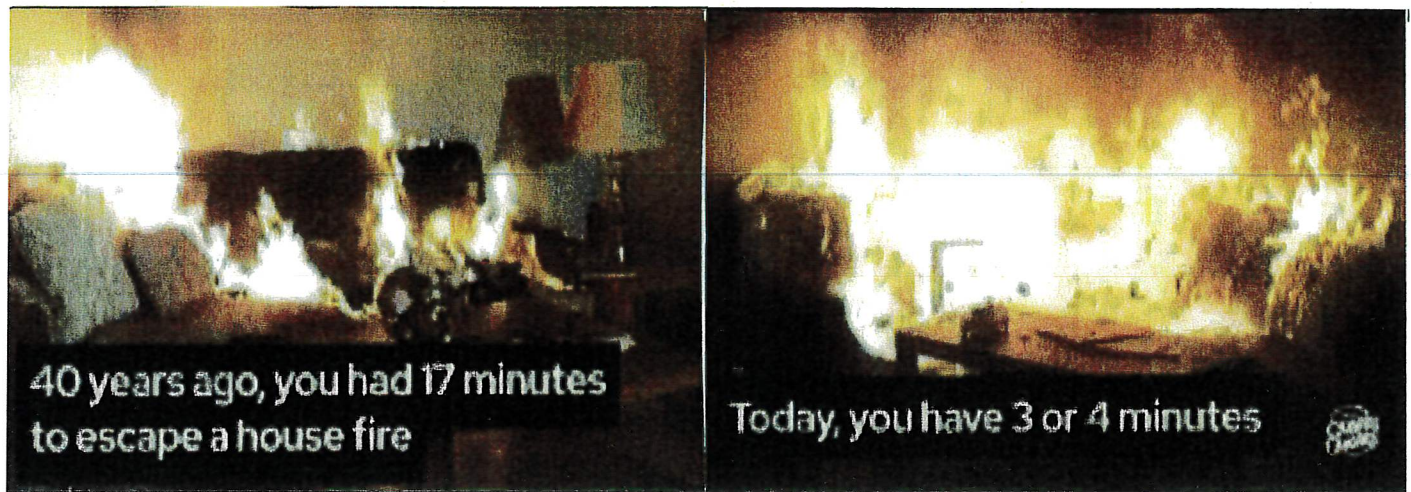
- Developed and distributed “Homes Burning Much Faster – Synthetic Materials” article for Sol Feinstone & Co-Op Nursery, local media, township website, cable channel & homeowner’s associations
- Monitoring Sunoco / Energy Transfer abatement logistics Mt. Eyre Community
- IAAI-CFI Trainer: “Introduction to Youth-Set Fires” 3hrs TESTED
- IAAI-CFI Trainer: “Legal Aspects of Investigating Youth-Set Fires” 3hrs TESTED
- Project: NFPA #1033 Member of Select Committee “Standard for Qualifications for Fire Investigator” two-day Second Draft TC Meeting \*8/18 & 19
- National Fire Protection Association 3-hour seminar “Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home” COMPLETED
- Preparing and drafting 2025 Fire Prevention Week “Charge into Fire Safety: Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home” program and presentations for local schools and HOA’s

## Inspections & Reviews

- Sol Feinstone School – hallways, exits and egress success prior to school opening in September
- Dominick’s Pizza – housekeeping cleanup of accumulated debris at rear of building
- Energy Transfer equipment staging in Mt. Eyre neighborhood and emergency vehicle egress
- P&Z requested Fire Code Plan Reviews – twelve (10) individual plan reviews conducted
- Washington Crossing Inn – out buildings and storage areas
- Pineapple Hill B&B – final
- The Inn at Bowman’s Hill – kitchen duct cleaning service required \* follow-up
- Colonial Farms – reviewed guidelines for satellite parking-lot storage containers & trash compactor
- Francisco’s on the River – exterior tent heater and system
- House Demolition logistics and utility compliance River Road
- Bowman’s Tavern – valet parking shelter and electrical system
- Heritage Hills Development – on-going reviews of fire hydrant testing and maintenance program

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40 years ago, you had 17 minutes to escape a house fire. Today, you might have just 3.

Why? One word: Synthetics.

Back then, homes were built with solid wood and filled with natural materials like cotton, wool, and real leather. Fires in those homes spread slowly, buying precious time to wake up, react, and get out.

But today, nearly everything in our homes – from sofas and carpets to mattresses, curtains, and even coffee tables – is made from synthetic, petroleum-based materials. These ignite faster, burn hotter, and release far more toxic gases. What once took over 15 minutes to become deadly can now engulf a room in under three.

In a dramatic test by Underwriters Laboratories, two side-by-side rooms – one furnished like the 1970s, the other in modern style – were set on fire. The vintage room burned slowly, taking over 30 minutes to be fully consumed. The modern one? Just three minutes. That's all the time you'd have to understand what's happening, alert others, and escape.

And it's not just about speed. It's about what's burning. Modern fires produce more poisonous smoke – including carbon monoxide and hydrogen cyanide – which can incapacitate you before flames even get close. In fact, smoke inhalation, not burns, is the leading cause of death in house fires.

That's why working smoke alarms and a practiced escape plan are more crucial than ever. Install alarms on every level of your home and inside every bedroom. Test them monthly, replace the batteries regularly, and swap out alarms every 10 years. Make sure everyone in your household knows two ways out of every room, where to meet outside, and what to do when the alarm sounds. And practice it – don't just talk about it.

We may not be able to change the materials in our homes. But we can change how we prepare. And when every second counts, preparation is what gives you a fighting chance.

John C. Kernan  
Chief Fire Marshal

