

State of Idaho  
**DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE**

**BRAD LITTLE**  
Governor

700 West State Street, 3rd Floor  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, Idaho 83720-0043  
Phone 208-334-4250  
Fax 208-334-4398  
Website: <https://doi.idaho.gov>

**DEAN L. CAMERON**  
Director

**Idaho Department of Insurance News Release**

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Contact: Julie Robinson, 208-334-4312  
[Julie.Robinson@doi.idaho.gov](mailto:Julie.Robinson@doi.idaho.gov)



**Coeur d’Alene police building fire determined**

**BOISE, ID (June 18, 2024)** – Fire investigators from the Idaho State Fire Marshal’s Office, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the Coeur d’Alene Fire Department have completed their investigation of the Coeur d’Alene Police Storage Building that occurred in the early morning hours of June 9, 2024.

The Idaho State Fire Marshal’s Office was tasked as the lead investigating agency due to the complexities and high dollar loss of this fire. ATF provided additional assistance due to the large loss from a government entity.

“This was a difficult, multi-day investigation,” said State Fire Marshal Knute Sandahl. “There were many complex aspects of the fire that needed to be sorted out.” The building not only housed equipment of the police department, but also a large amount of computer equipment. Several police vehicles were destroyed, including police motorcycles.

Fire pattern analysis had investigators focus on recently acquired battery operated e-bicycles, one of which clearly showed evidence of a catastrophic failure of the lithium-ion battery pack that was being charged after being used that evening by police. Officers assigned to bike patrol had received training on the e-bicycles’ use and charging after use, before they were placed into service. Examination of the charging station showed that it was properly plugged into an outlet and there was no evidence of misuse or prior damage of either the e-bicycle or charging unit.

“This was an unfortunate and unexpected failure that caused the fire and is being ruled an accident,” said Sandahl. A forensic analysis will be conducted by the city’s insurance company, but the results will not be known for several months. “This is pretty typical for an insurance company because the failed product is so new, and the loss is so great,” Sandahl added.

“The Idaho State Fire Marshal’s Office would like to thank the Coeur d’Alene Police Department and their officers for their cooperation during this difficult investigation,” said Fire Marshal Sandahl. “We also appreciate the Coeur d’Alene Parks Department for providing heavy equipment to remove debris and structural components that hampered investigators. A special thank you to Coeur d’Alene Fire Department personnel who helped remove debris and provided video footage via drone. This made a huge impact on the timeliness of this investigation.”

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**About the Idaho State Fire Marshal’s Office**

The State Fire Marshal’s Office participates in and coordinates an integrated statewide system designed to protect human life from fire and explosions through fire prevention, investigation and public education activities. The program involves fire prevention activities, fire/arson investigation, code enforcement and the operation of the National Fire Incident Reporting System. The State Fire Marshal’s Office provides assistance to local fire agencies throughout the state.