

State Fire Marshall

John Ticer, a State Fire Marshall, spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on Saturday, October 8. He has worked for the Iowa Department of Public Safety since 1990. In 1999 he was assigned as one of the ten special agents in the state of Iowa.

Fire Marshalls are not fire fighters. They are certified peace officers. Sworn officers do inspections of schools, nursing homes, jails, etc. John worked as an inspector for 6-7 years.

As a special agent, John has been in most counties in the state. His primary responsibility is fire investigations and explosives. He is the only agent currently handling a accelerant canine. His dog, Rocket, a yellow lab, can determine if any gasoline, kerosene, or other fire agents have been used in a fire. Robert is about 9 years old, so he will probably retire in about 3 years.

John said that some fires are drug related and insurance fraud. Nationally, about 25% of fires are intentional.

John started his career in the Air Force for six years. There he was fortunate to work with the President. After that he worked with the Iowa Capitol Police for 18 months.

Besides investigating suspicious fires, John also does training for fire investigators. He mainly just investigates fires where people are injured or killed.

Asked about farm fires, John said that there are a lot of farm fires in the Northern part of the state caused by farm equipment and dry conditions. If the state does not get rain in the next 10 days, there will probably be a statewide fire ban.