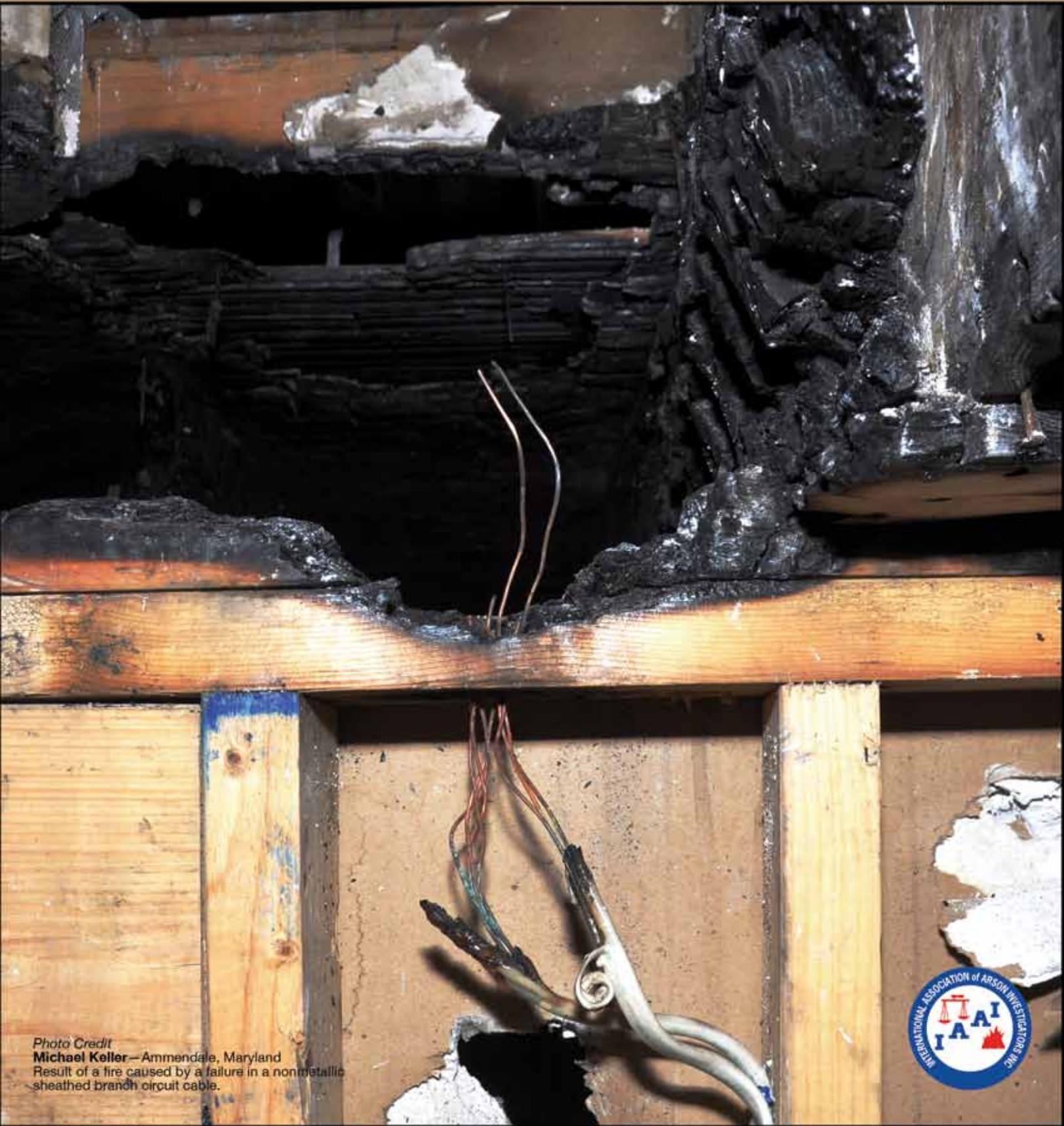


# FIRE & ARSON INVESTIGATOR

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*Photo Credit*  
**Michael Keller**—Ammendale, Maryland  
Result of a fire caused by a failure in a non-metallic sheathed branch circuit cable.



IAAI is continually looking for strategic training partners. On August 24, 2010, IAAI entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Society of Professional Insurance Investigators (“NSPII”) for the purpose of developing and delivering joint training programs that share investigative knowledge and expertise of the partners related to fire/arson investigations, with a focus on the professional development of insurance investigators.

## IAAI and NSPII: A STRATEGIC TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

By: Roger Krupp, IAAI-CFI, IAAI 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
and Carmen Sarge, ESQ., NSPII President

The objective of this undertaking is to share the cumulative knowledge of the investigative community, public and private, to enhance the participant’s ability to conduct fire investigations and to positively impact the investigation of arson-related crimes. Mike Reynolds, IAAI-CFI, FCLS, Assistant Vice-President, Unified Investigations & Sciences and NSPII’s current First Vice-President, approached IAAI several years ago to further the idea of getting NSPII and IAAI to develop relationships between the two organizations to boost interest in membership. Through subsequent discussions between IAAI and NSPII

leadership, the understanding grew that both organizations could benefit from a stronger strategic relationship. IAAI has members primarily from fire service and law enforcement, and NSPII is looking to expand its membership from these two areas. The training partnership agreement followed a meeting in Orlando during IAAI’s 2010 conference between NSPII and a group from IAAI’s Training Committee.

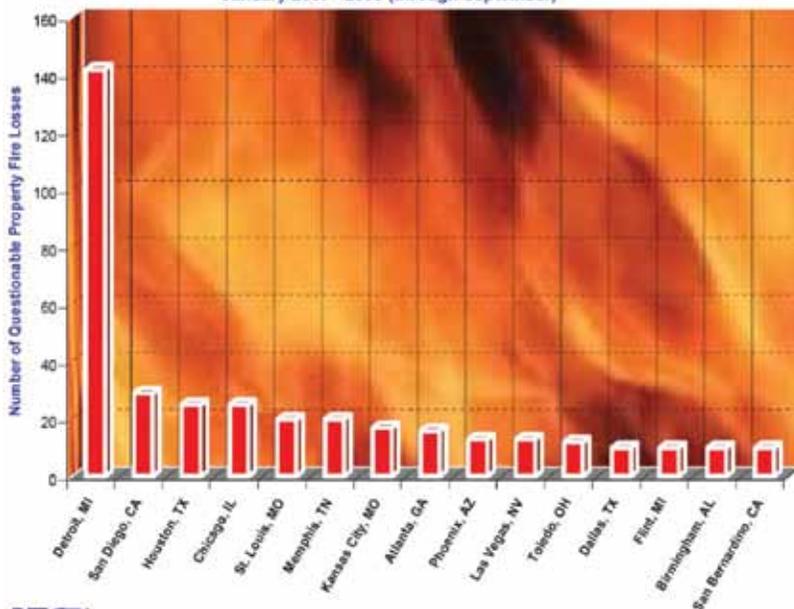
NSPII was formed in 1983 by members of the insurance industry, legal profession, and origin and cause experts, among others. NSPII is a non-profit

organization established for the purpose of providing recognition, encouragement and support to individuals who demonstrate the highest degree of professionalism in conducting insurance investigations. The Society sponsors seminars and workshops, offering in-

depth case management concepts and principles for fraud detection and prevention. It also publishes a quarterly newsletter and holds an annual National Advanced Insurance Fraud Seminar, which is being held this year on November 14-15, at the Hilton Chicago Indian Lakes Resort in Bloomingdale, Illinois. NSPII does not seek to compete with other groups, such as IAAI. Rather, NSPII has coordinated routinely with other organizations, such as IAAI at local levels, the International Association of Special Investigation Units, the National Insurance Crime Bureau, and various states’ Departments of Insurance to hold joint seminars, share published articles, compare strategic plans and share complimentary booth space, among other things. NSPII is growing.

This year NSPII held kick-off events for its newly formed Arizona and New York Chapters. Past NSPII Presidents, Matthew J. Smith, founder of Smith, Rolfes & Skavdahl Company, LPA, a Cincinnati, Ohio based insurance defense law firm, and Jack Morgan, Assistant Vice President and Regional Manager of The Cincinnati Insurance Company’s Special Investigation Unit, are the speakers for the IAAI/NSPII training programs scheduled in 2011 entitled “Strengthening Relationships Between Public and Private Sector Fire Investigators and Addressing Ethical Considerations.”

Chart 3A: Top Questionable Property Fire Loss Cities  
January 2007 - 2008 (through September)



This program, which was scheduled to occur in 2011 in four venues, includes the topics of emerging investigation trends, ethical considerations in the investigation of fire losses and detection of deception in interviewing. The first of these pilot training programs took place in Irving, Texas in March, 2011 and received excellent feedback from those who attended. The second joint training event held in Jamaica, New York on June 28, 2011 was paired with the NSPII kick-off for its new New York Chapter and was well attended. "The audiences were very responsive and interested in the topic discussion and were all very well pleased with the time they spent with us, in my observation," says Jack Morgan. He shares the following feedback from attendees: "I didn't want to come to this program, but I was told I had to... I am glad I did because it was the best ethics presentation on arson investigation I have ever been to! Excellent presentation, the use of video clips and the audience participation was more than I expected!"

As of preparation of this article, the next course offerings are scheduled for the Portland Fire Department Training Center in Portland, Oregon on August 16, 2011, and then in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on October 19, 2011. Registrations are made directly on the IAAI website and questions regarding registration and course availability can be referred to Deb Bell, IAAI, at 1-800-468-4224. Both IAAI and NSPII hope to continue to grow the training partnership with more members of each organization becoming members of the other, attending training together and developing a broader network between insurance and public fire investigators. Plans are underway to continue joint course offerings in 2012 and explore other possibilities for partnering between our organizations.

The chart herein, provided courtesy of the National Insurance Crime Bureau ("NICB"), shows in 2007 and 2008 a spike in questionable property fire losses in Detroit, Michigan. The trends mentioned are still relevant today. In Michigan, NICB partnered with local law enforcement and industry special investigation units to develop a designated prosecutor to address arsons in Detroit. That pilot project is nearing its one year anniversary and has been one of the most successful of its kind. "It is a perfect illustration of the importance of working together," reports Vickie Neal, Area 8 Director, NICB. "Although the investigations of public and private fire investigators are separate investigations, many states have immunity laws which protect proper and ethical sharing of information between public and private investigators which can lead to more productive investigations," says Carmen Sarge, NSPII's current President and co-author of this article. NSPII welcomes this opportunity to partner with IAAI and encourages participation of members of both groups at future joint training events. For more information about NSPII, visit NSPII.com or contact Mary Beth Robinson at 1-888-677-4498.

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