

## Chris A Grooms | Senior Fire Investigator, IAAI-CFI, NAFI-CFEI

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### Professional Summary:

Mr. Grooms began his career in the fire service as a Volunteer Firefighter Ketchum, Idaho Fire Department and soon added an Emergency Medical Technician certification. Mr. Grooms later relocated to Caldwell, Idaho and was a volunteer there for several years before moving to Alaska. There he was selected as a volunteer Fire Captain in Skagway, obtaining Firefighter I and EMT Level III certifications, and served for seven years. Mr. Grooms began performing commercial plans review and bi-annual commercial building inspections for the State of Alaska; which gave him insight into how larger buildings were constructed and maintained, with fire prevention and failure analysis as the primary goals. Mr. Grooms has participated in several Firefighter 1 classes as an assistant and then primary instructor. Other fire related classes taught include sprinklers, evidence spoliation, building construction, ventilation, scene documentation.

### Areas of Expertise:

- Fire Origin and Cause
- Vehicle Origin and Cause
- Evidence identification, collection, and processing
- Interview and Interrogation

### Licenses and Certifications:

Certified Fire Investigator, International Association of Arson Investigators, #36-042805

National Board of Fire Service Professional Qualifications – Pro Board, #382216

Certified Fire and Explosion Investigator, National Association of Fire Investigators, #24384-14808

National Incident Management System 100, 200 and 700, Federal Emergency Management System

Hazardous Material Technician, Skagway Fire Department, #19140509

Alaska Law Enforcement Training Academy, Department of Public Safety, Session 1001

Certified Police Officer, Alaska Police Standards Council, #5820

Fire Extinguisher Permit Class II, State of Alaska, #18-0008-2

### Project Experience:

#### **Warehouse, Equipment and Pallet Storage Facility in Unalaska, Alaska Large Loss Commercial**

Lead Investigator in a multi-million-dollar loss involving fishing nets, other fish handling equipment and 2,500+ pallets. Origin and cause were discovered to be hot parts from the overhead door closer when a forklift bumped the door track, not allowing the door to close properly. These parts fell onto pallets, causing them to smolder and then burn.

#### **Clearwater Lodge and Residence, Clearwater, Alaska Large Loss Commercial/Residential**

Lead Investigator in two related, but separate fires: a local bar/restaurant and then a residence, both owned by the same couple. Both structures were a total loss, but through site investigation and interviews, an arrest and charges were filed against the suspect for intentionally starting the fires.

#### **State of Alaska, Department of Transportation Shop, Kodiak, Alaska Large Loss Commercial**

Lead Investigator in a multi-million-dollar loss involving an outlying DOT shop, stored mechanical and rolling stock equipment. An intentionally set fire was determined, but a suspect was never located.

#### **8-Plex Apartment Building, Nome, Alaska Large Loss Residential Complex**

Lead Investigator involving an 8-plex residential unit consisting of a two-story building with four units on each end and a stairway between each set of four units. The right end of the building was totally gutted on both floors, beginning on the upper floor. Through site investigation, interviews and fire department video, an arrest and charges were filed against the suspect for intentionally starting the fire.

### Professional Experience:

City of Middleton, Idaho, Building Official, February 2019 to Present

Alaska Forensics, Insurance Fire Investigator, July 2018 to October 2023

City of Ketchikan, Alaska, Fire Marshal, May 2015 – February 2019

EFI Global, Insurance Fire Investigator – June 2017 to July 2018

State of Alaska, Plans Examiner/Deputy Fire Marshal, May 2008 – May 2015

City of Skagway, Alaska, Building Inspector – June 2006 to May 2008

City of Skagway, Alaska, Volunteer Firefighter/EMT – July 2001 to May 2008

City of Caldwell, Idaho, Volunteer Firefighter – January 1990 to June 1997

City of Ketchum, Idaho Volunteer Firefighter/EMT – September 1987 to October 1989

### Specialized Education:

Where Fire Investigators Go Wrong – CFITrainer, 2022

Insurance and Law Enforcement, CFITrainer, 2022

Ethics and Social Media, CFITrainer, 2022

Annual Training Conference, Idaho section of IAAI, 2022

Giving Stronger Depositions & Trial Testimony, CFITrainer, 2021

Annual Training Conference, Idaho section of IAAI, 2021

Annual Training Conference, National Association of Fire Investigators, 2021  
Commonly Reported Accidental Causes, CFITrainer, 2019  
Understanding Undetermined, CFITrainer, 2019  
Fire Flow Analysis, CFITrainer, 2019  
Charting Your Career Path, CFITrainer 2019  
Motor Vehicles: Transmission, Exhaust, Brake & Accessory Systems, CFITrainer, 2019  
Motor Vehicles: Engine, Ignition Electrical & Fuel Systems, CFITrainer, 2019  
Basic/Advanced Crime Scene Processing, Ketchikan Police Department, 2019  
Fire Chemistry, CFITrainer, 2018  
Discovery in Criminal Cases, CFITrainer, 2018  
Using Resources to Validate Your Hypothesis, CFITrainer, 2018  
Advanced Origin /Cause and Courtroom Testimony, ATF, 2018  
Discovery in Criminal Cases, CFITrainer 2017  
What Insurance Professionals Need to Know About Fire Investigation, CFITrainer 2017  
Preparation for the Marine Fire Scene, CFITrainer, 2017  
Means, Motive and Opportunity, CFITrainer, 2017  
International Training Conference, IAAI, 2017  
Thermometry, Heat, and Heat Transfer, CFITrainer, 2017  
Fire Investigation: Electrical Systems, National Fire Academy, 2017  
Understanding the Fire Investigator's Job, CFITrainer, 2016  
The Deposition Part 1, CFITrainer, 2016  
The Deposition Part 2, CFITrainer, 2016  
Managing Complex Fire Scene Investigations, CFITrainer, 2016  
Residential Electrical Systems, CFITrainer, 2016  
Explosion Dynamics, CFITrainer, 2016  
Post Flashover Fire, CFITrainer, 2016  
Basic Electricity, CFITrainer, 2016  
International Training Conference, IAAI, 2016  
Basic ARFF Training Course, Ketchikan Airport, 2016  
Investigating Natural Gas Systems, CFITrainer, 2015  
An Analysis of the Station Nightclub Fire, CFITrainer, 2015  
Residential Natural Gas Systems, CFITrainer, 2015  
Writing the Initial Origin and Cause Report, CFITrainer, 2014  
Forensic Evidence Collection, National Fire Academy, 2014  
Alaska Association of Fire and Arson Investigators, Seminar, AAFAI, 2014  
The Practical Application/Relationship Between NFPA 1033 and 921, CFITrainer, 2013  
DNA, CFITrainer, 2013  
Fire Protection Systems, CFITrainer, 2013  
A Ventilation-Focused Approach – Impact on Fire, CFITrainer, 2013  
Fire Protection Systems, CFITrainer, 2013  
NFPA 1033 and Your Career, CFITrainer, 2013  
ARC Mapping Basics, CFITrainer, 2013  
Alaska Public Safety Information Network, State of Alaska, 2013  
Information Collected on Patrol (InCOP), State of Alaska, 2013  
Reid Technique of Interviewing and Interrogation, 2011

### Education:

Bachelor of Arts, Recreation Management, University of Montana, Missoula, Montana, 1976  
Alaska Law Enforcement Academy, Class 2010A

**Affiliations:**

International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI)  
National Association of Fire Investigators (NAFI)  
International Association of Arson Investigators – Idaho Chapter

**Courses Instructed/ Guest Lecturer:**

Firefighter 1  
Building Safety Week Presentations  
Introduction to Fire Sprinklers  
Flashover Training Trailer  
Fire Scene Evidence Spoliation  
Building Construction  
Fire Code Deficiencies  
Public Relations  
Documentation of the Fire Scene