

BOOK REVIEW

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Review of: *Kirk's Fire Investigation, 7th edn*

REFERENCE: DeHaan J, Icove D. Kirks fire investigation, 7th edn. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011, ISBN-13: 978-0135082638, 800 pp.

This latest edition of Kirk's fire investigation is truly an excellent piece of work. It has been comprehensively revised and updated, maintaining its place as the definitive text for fire investigators of all levels of experience. John DeHaan has been joined by David Icove to produce the seventh revision of the text. Both authors are very well known and respected across the fire investigation community worldwide and really are at the top of their game in terms of knowledge, experience, professional practice, training delivery, and research.

The authors comprehensively reveal the essential aspects of fire investigation in a clear and concise format. The text provides excellent information relating to fire chemistry, fire dynamics, building construction, electricity and electrical cause of fire, and many more essential areas of knowledge required to understand and investigate fire cause, origin, and development. The reader is exposed to the various stages of fire development from ignition to decay, as well as details of how various materials impact and influence the development of a fire. Aspects essential to the determination of origin, cause, and fire development are all dealt with in an unassuming but comprehensive manner that has become the hallmark of this excellent text.

The book has been expanded on previous versions to comprehensively include structural fires, wildland fires, fires in vehicles of various types, clothing and fabric fires, fatal fires, chemical fires, as

well as explosions, and explosive combustion. The book also includes sections relating to fire modeling, the recovery of evidential material from fire scenes, laboratory analysis of fire debris samples, the essentials of recording scenes through note taking, and effective documentation and the production of professional reports suitable for court proceedings.

The introduction of a link to online resources through the "myfirekit" brings a new dimension to the use of Kirk's fire investigation as a recommended text for the delivery of fire investigation training at all levels. This provides access to extra course materials, which can be used to support learning and training of students at all levels. The material included consists of extra images, example questions, and notes to stimulate topic discussions. This is a tremendous step forward for the delivery of training using texts such as Kirk's fire investigation across the fire investigation community and one to be very much applauded. It introduces a new dimension and versatility into the educational use of texts such as this one.

This text is packed with useful and insightful illustrations and tables of data and fully complemented with appropriate, useful, and informative photographs, essential in a book of its type. The book appears crisp and easy to read and follow, either as a text to dip in and out of or to completely read through.

This book is a must have for all fire investigators who are serious about their craft, regardless of experience. I commend the authors for their diligence and perseverance in producing this latest version of Paul Kirk's remarkable text. He would have been very proud of how it has been developed.

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