

BIOGRAPHY
JOHN D. DeHAAN, Ph.D., FABC, CFI, FCSFS, FIFireE

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Professional Background

A native of Chicago, Illinois, John DeHaan graduated from the University of Illinois – Chicago Circle in 1969 with a B.S. degree in Physics and a minor in Criminalistics. DeHaan worked for four and a half years as a criminalist with the Alameda County Sheriff's Department Crime Lab in Pleasanton, California, and nine and a half years with the California Department of Justice – Sacramento Regional Lab. He then became a Criminalist/Physical Scientist with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, U.S. Treasury Department, at the San Francisco Laboratory Center. Over these years he developed considerable expertise in arson and explosive evidence, human hair, shoe prints, instrumental analysis and crime scene reconstruction. Additionally, John pursued extensive individual research projects in each of these areas and published over thirty research papers and technical reports in a variety of journals in the forensic, police and fire literature. From 1987 to 1998, John DeHaan served as program manager at the California Criminalistics Institute, responsible for the Institute's training programs in low explosives, arson accelerant detection, hair, microscopy, and latent fingerprints. He was awarded his Ph.D. in Pure and Applied Chemistry (Forensic Science) by Strathclyde University in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1995. He has been an independent forensic consultant since 1998.

His initial interest in fire-related evidence was kindled by analyses of fire debris conducted while at Alameda County but has since extended to include research into fire behavior and diagnostic indicators. This research is based on first-hand fire experiments involving full scale structure fires under controlled conditions. He has been involved in hundreds of fire and explosion cases and has been an expert witness in civil and criminal trials across the U.S., as well as overseas. He has helped produce several training videotapes through the California Department of Justice and the Arson-Bomb Investigation Unit of the California Fire Marshal. Lectures have been given by him before police, fire, and forensic audiences across the U.S., Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Among his publishing accomplishments are portions of the California District Attorneys Association manuals Arson Investigation and Arson Prosecution, and co-authoring the chapter on "Gas Chromatography in Arson and Explosives Analysis" in Gas Chromatography in Forensic Science (Ian Tebbett, Ed.). John authored the widely-read textbook, Kirk's Fire Investigation, 2nd Ed. (1983), 3rd Ed. (1991), 4th Ed. (1997), 5th Ed. (2002), 6th Ed. (2007), and 7th Ed. (2011). He is the co-author (with David Icove) of Forensic Fire Scene Reconstruction, 1st Ed. (2004), 2nd Ed. (2009), and 3rd Ed. (2013).

John is a member of the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI); served on the IAAI Forensic Science and Engineering Committees; and is a member of the National Fire Protection Association and served on its Committee on Fire Investigation. He is also a Fellow of the Institution of Fire Engineers (United Kingdom) and a member of the National Association of Fire Investigators. He has been a member of the California Association of Criminalists since 1971 and was its President 1983-1984. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Society of Forensic Science, holds their Diploma in Fire Investigation, is a Fellow of the American Board of Criminalistics (Fire Debris Specialty), is a Certified Fire Investigator with the IAAI, and a Certified Fire and Explosion Investigator with the NAFI. He is the President of his own consulting firm in Vallejo, California. He has offered expert testimony for prosecution, plaintiff and defense. His casework includes both criminal and civil cases involving the reconstruction of fires and explosions all over the U.S., Canada and overseas.