

# Preventing Arson at Houses of Worship

2017 Arson Awareness Week

# 103

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' U.S. Bomb Data Center's Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS), there have been an average of **103 arson fires per year** at houses of worship reported by federal, state and local agencies, during the 16-year period from 2000 to 2015. BATS shows the most house of worship fires in 2003 with 140 reported and the fewest in 2011 with 72 arson fires. **Less than 2 percent (1.86 percent) were initially investigated as a hate crime.**



In the U.S., between 1996 and 2015, **51 percent** of the reported incidents at houses of worship were determined to be **caused by arson**, according to a recent analysis by the Pew Research Center.

# 1,600

 fires

**2** civilian deaths | **16** civilian injuries | **\$105 million** dollars

The National Fire Protection Association reports that the 2007 to 2011 annual averages for structure fires in religious properties (church, mosque, synagogue, temple or chapel) are **1,600 fires with two civilian deaths, 16 civilian injuries, and \$105 million in direct property damage.**

## Arson Prevention Tips for Houses of Worship



Illuminate exterior and entrances — Arsonists, like burglars, fear light.



Clear obstructions like shrubbery that block the view of the building.



Install smoke alarms and a fire sprinkler system.



Keep doors and windows locked.



Clean up — Remove anything that could fuel a fire for an arsonist.



Establish an arson watch program.



For more information, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov/aaw](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/aaw).