



U. S. Fire Administration

The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)

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FEMA

What is the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)?

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (PL 93-498) authorizes the National Fire Data Center in the United States Fire Administration (USFA) to gather and analyze information on the magnitude of the Nation's fire problem as well as detailed characteristics and trends. The act further authorizes the USFA to develop uniform data reporting methods, and to encourage and assist State agencies in developing data and reporting fire damage.

In order to carry out the intentions of the Act, the National Fire Data Center established the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) in the mid-1970's.

The NFIRS has two objectives: to help State and local governments develop fire reporting and analysis capability for their own use, and to obtain data that can be used to assess and subsequently to combat the fire problem more accurately at a national level. To meet these objectives, the USFA has developed a standard NFIRS package consisting of forms, a coding structure for data processing purposes, a standard system specification, manuals, computer software, procedures, and documentation for using the system. In 1999, an updated version of the NFIRS was introduced, which expands the collection of data beyond fires to include the full range of fire department activity on a national scale. Where previous versions of the NFIRS were fire based, the

revised version is an all-incident reporting system. The NFIRS includes much expanded utility for users of the system at both the State and fire department levels. The addition of an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Module, a Wildland Fire Module, and an Arson/Juvenile Firesetter Module to the system, along with the inclusion of new Apparatus/Resources and Personnel Modules ensures greater usefulness of the system.

Within the NFIRS States, participating fire departments fill out incident, casualty, and optional reports for fires and other incident types as they occur. They forward the completed incidents via paper forms or computer files to their State office, where the data are validated and consolidated into a single computerized database.

Periodically, the aggregate statewide data are sent to the National Fire Data Center at the USFA to be released and included in the National Database.

This database is used to answer questions about the nature and causes of injuries, deaths, and property loss resulting from fires. The information is disseminated through a variety of means to States and other organizations.

The National Fire Incident Reporting System is a model of successful Federal, State, and local partnership. The database constitutes the world's largest national annual collection of incident information.



Facts about the NFIRS

The NFIRS represents the world's largest national annual database of fire incident information.

State participation in the NFIRS is voluntary.

Fifty States and the District of Columbia have reported NFIRS data.

Thirty-eight fire departments with a protected population of over 500,000 have participated in the NFIRS.

Approximately 20,000 fire departments nationally participate in the NFIRS each year.

Participating departments report an average of 900,000 fires each year.

The NFIRS database comprises more than one half of all fires that occur annually.

For program information please contact

U.S. Fire Administration

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