



UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION



Public Education and Awareness



Training



Technology



Data Collection

“Challenging the Nation’s Fire Problems”

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION



The United States Fire Administration
Office of Fire Management Programs
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The United States Fire Administration

America's fire death rate is one of the highest per capita in the industrialized world. Fire kills over 5,000 people and injures more than 25,000 people each year. Firefighters pay a high price for this terrible fire record as well; approximately 100 firefighters die in the line of duty each year. Direct property losses due to fire exceed \$9 billion a year. Most of these deaths and losses can be prevented.

Yet, despite these losses, dramatic progress is being made against the toll of fire. At the time of the landmark study by the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control that produced the 1973 report, *America Burning*, the annual cost of fire in terms of deaths, injury and property loss was more than twice what it is today. In response, Congress passed in 1974, the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act, establishing the United States Fire Administration (USFA). Since that time, through data collection, public education and awareness, technology and training efforts, USFA has helped reduce fire deaths by at least half, making our communities and our citizens safer. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's United States Fire Administration is the national leader in fire safety and prevention, supporting the efforts of local communities to reduce the number of fires and fire deaths.

**Serving Our Nation
and the
Firefighting Community
for more than 25 years**

Our Mission

To provide leadership, coordination and support for the nation's fire prevention and control, fire training and education, and emergency medical services activities. Through these activities, we save lives and reduce injuries and property losses due to fire.

Public Education and Awareness

Many Americans believe that “fires only happen to other people – not to me and not in my home.” Yet over 70% of fire deaths occur in residences, most often claiming the lives of the young, the elderly and the disadvantaged. American homes suffer an unwanted fire every ten seconds, and every 60 seconds they suffer a fire serious enough to call the fire department. Every two hours someone is killed in a home fire, about 4,000 people per year. Approximately 19,300 people are injured in home fires in a typical year.

USFA sponsors numerous programs to promote residential protection from fire. This includes the use of protective devices, such as smoke alarms and residential fire sprinkler systems to provide early warning of fire, especially at night when families are most vulnerable.

In addition, USFA is working to reduce the number of fire deaths and injuries by:

- increasing public awareness about the dangers of fire.
- promoting research and public awareness about fire detection and control devices.
- assisting in improving fire and life safety at home and in the workplace.

USFA also extends its reach through partnerships and special initiatives with the fire service, the media, other federal agencies and safety interest groups. In recent years, USFA and its partners reached millions of people with fire safety information through the *Fire Stops With You* public education campaign.

Fires kill more Americans than all natural disasters combined. However, unlike other disasters, most fire losses can be prevented.

Training

USFA's National Fire Academy (NFA) was created to “advance the professional development of fire service personnel and other persons engaged in fire prevention and control activities.” Located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, the NFA provides career and volunteer fire service professionals advanced training courses and programs in fire prevention and suppression technologies, fire incident management, fire service leadership and advanced managerial skills in hazardous materials response and emergency medical services delivery. The Academy also trains allied professionals, including code enforcement officials, architects, city managers, administrators and planners.

More than 10,000 fire service professionals participate in NFA-presented/state-sponsored outreach courses each year. Another 100,000 students are reached via NFA train-the-trainer courses offered exclusively by state and local emergency services training agencies. Through a network partnership with seven colleges and universities, NFA's *Degrees at a Distance* initiative provides fire service personnel the opportunity to pursue an academic degree through independent study. Additionally, new distance learning technologies, such as internet-based courses are now coming on-line.

Technology

Through USFA leadership, a National Fire Research Agenda is developed with appropriate input from federal, state and local partners. Using this agenda as the basis for supporting research and technology efforts, USFA addresses the safety of the citizen, the design and operation of effective fire protection systems, and the safety and survivability of the firefighter.

Safety of the American citizen is a function of safe behavior and a safer built environment. The impact of such improved behaviors and technologies result in fewer fires, smaller fires, less damaging fires, and a safer personal environment. USFA's research and

technology program addresses identified fire problems with programs to help eliminate unwanted fire or lessen the impact of fires that may occur. A reduction in the number of fires and severity of fire also improves the firefighter's work environment. To make firefighting safer, USFA focuses on two target areas: Occupational Hazards and Fire Service Administration and Operations.

Research and special studies are conducted on fire detection, suppression, and notification systems as well as issues related to improving the built environment's ability to survive fire. Additionally, special studies address firefighter and emergency responder health and safety. Results of the research and technology initiatives are provided to the fire protection community, national standards making organizations, and others in the fire and life safety arenas.

Data Collection

USFA's National Fire Data Center (NFDC) is responsible for the gathering, analysis, publication and dissemination of data related to the prevention, occurrence, control and results of fires of all types. The program is designed to provide an accurate analysis of fire in the United States by identifying major problem areas, assisting in setting priorities, determining possible solutions and monitoring programs to reduce fire losses. This includes exploring the causes of firefighter fatalities, in order to reduce the number of deaths in future years.

The primary means by which the NFDC collects information on the fire problem is the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). The largest annual collection of fire data in the world, NFIRS receives incident-based fire data voluntarily from local fire departments through participating State fire marshals. Without NFIRS, there would be no centralized and uniform collection of fire data in the United States.

To assist fire departments, the NFDC makes available the handbook *Fire Data Analysis*. This handbook describes statistical techniques to turn data into information that fire departments can use to solve fire problems, improve resource allocation for combating fires and identify training needs.

Special Initiatives



**National Arson
Prevention Clearinghouse
1-888-603-3100**

**For more information, visit our
web site: www.usfa.fema.gov**

The USFA web site is your resource for detailed and comprehensive information on USFA programs, research, publications and fire safety information.

**Children love visiting our Kids Page!
www.usfa.fema.gov/kids**



Where kids can learn about fire safety and have fun too.