

March 2009



IMPORTANT DATES

January 1, 2009
2009 Version 4

(paper) incidents will not be accepted.

February 15, 2009
Jan Incidents are due.

March 15, 2009
Feb Incidents are due.

March 16, 2009
VFIRS AUDIT DUE-Last day to submit 2008 Incident reports

April 15, 2009
Mar Incidents are due.



VFIRS

Training Schedule

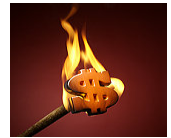
VFIRS/NFIRS Data Analysis & Problem Solving Techniques
March 14, 2009
Glen Allen, VA
8:30am-4:30pm

NFIRS Program Manager Training
June 7-12, 2009
Emmitsburg, MD

Please contact the Info and Stats Division for additional information.

Virginia Fire Incident Reporting (VFIRS)

The Importance of Estimating Fire Dollar Loss and Property Value



In 2008, Virginia fire departments responded to 27,299 fires with a total fire loss of \$418,462,591.¹ Are your fire department's numbers included? Information from fire incident data is becoming a crucial tool in decision-making and in helping to reduce loss to life and property due to fires. Also, the distinction between a paid versus volunteer firefighter does not matter when it comes to properly documenting an incident. Estimating fire dollar loss and property value are important pieces of data when assessing fire at local, state, and national levels. It is a measure that is frequently ask for and used.

THE RULES

- In National Fire Incident Reporting (NFIRS), the fire department with primary command of an incident involving a fire (Incident Type Codes 100's) is responsible for recording property dollar loss and contents dollar loss. Reporting losses are required.
- The loss is a rough estimate of the total loss to the property and contents, in terms of replacement cost in like kind and quantity. The estimate of the fire loss includes contents damaged by fire, smoke, water, and overhaul.²
- Pre-incident value is an estimate of the replacement cost of the property and contents.
- \$0 fire loss means no reportable loss to the property or contents. It does not mean unknown.
- Changed the initial dollar estimates when additional information becomes available.

LIABILITIES

FIREFIGHTERS ARE NOT EXPECTED TO BE INSURANCE ADJUSTORS. The fire dollar loss and property/contents values recorded are NOT official insurance estimates but internal fire department estimates based on observation, experience, training, and professional judgment.

HELP IS AVAILABLE.

There are many sources available in estimating fire dollar loss:

- Vehicle Fires - visit Kelly Blue Book, www.kbb.com .
- Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Property - visit Saylor Publications, www.saylor.com .
- Residential 1-to-2 family dwellings - visit www.zillow.com Real Estate values.
- Local realtors
- For property loss:
 - Estimate the size (amount) of fire damage: e.g. 500 sq. ft.;
 - Estimate the cost of replacement: e.g. \$93.52 per sq. ft.;
 - Multiply the size of the damage by the replacement cost: e.g. 500 sq. ft. x \$93.52 =\$46,760;
 - Estimate the contents loss: e.g. ½ the value of the property loss → \$46,760 / 2 = \$23,380;
 - Document the loss: e.g. Property Loss = \$46,760, Contents Loss = \$23,230,
 - Total Fire Dollar Loss = \$70,140

PROPERTY SAVED

Capturing pre-incident values allow the fire service to estimate property value saved. It is an effective measure when explaining the value of fire alarm systems, fire suppression systems, fire education programs, and fire department effectiveness. Without these resources, the possibility of more injuries, deaths, and greater loss to property exist. Subtracting property and contents losses from the pre-incident values of the property and contents give a measure of property and contents saved.

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Info and Stats Contact Information

Marion Long
VFIRS Program Manager/Info and Stats Manager
804-249-1990 (Office)
804-371-3444 (Fax)
804-840-3714 (Cell)
marion.long@vdfp.virginia.gov

Dwight Crews
Fire Research Analyst
804-249-1989 (Office)
804-371-3444 (Fax)
dwight.crews@vdfp.virginia.gov

Renee Tabb
Program Support Technician
804-249-1987 (Office)
804-371-3444 (Fax)
renee.tabb@vdfp.virginia.gov



'Conscience is the root of all true courage; if a man would be brave let him obey his conscience.'

James Freeman Clark

The Importance of Estimating Fire Dollar Loss and Property Value

(continued)

GET CREDIT FOR EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO

It is time for the Virginia fire departments to get credit for everything that they do. To do so, the fire service must do a better job of documenting and reporting made at local, state, and national levels on the fire service behalf based on fire departments reporting or lack of reporting in VFIRS. **GET CREDIT – REPORT ALL INCIDENTS AND REPORT ACCURATE, COMPLETE, AND TIMELY DATA**

1. As of February 18, 2009 - final Calendar Year 2008 are determined on April 1, 2009.
2. U.S. Fire Administration, *NFIRS Version 5.0 Complete Reference Guide* (January 2006)
3. Fire Departments are automatically participating in the National Fire Reporting System if they are participating in the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System

FIRE SERVICE CASUALTIES

An incident report should be completed for ANY firefighter injury while on duty. An incident report and a fire service casualty report are completed. For example - complete a report for an injury that occurs during training or any other activities in or away from the fire station. The incident type will most likely be an emergency medical service call (e.g. Code 321). Activity at time of injury codes 80's (Station Activity) and 90's (Other Activity) describes these types of incidents. Documenting in NFIRS anytime a firefighter is injured helps to better account for, evaluate, develop remedies, and assist our firefighters

What constitutes an Exposure Fire?

The following examples describe what an exposure fire would be as well as examples of what would NOT constitute an exposure fire.

Exposure Fires:

- A building that burns as a result of radiant heat from a fire in an adjacent building.
- A vehicle parked on a street(or motor home parked next to a garage/house) that burns as a result of radiant heat from a fire in an adjacent building.
- A fire that spreads from one separate building to another separate building.

Fires that are NOT Exposure Fires:

- A fire in a garage attached to a house where the fire originates in the house but spreads to the garage.
- A fire that spreads through separate shops contained in a business block, building or shopping mall that burns.
- Vehicles parked in a garage or building (e.g. underground parking lot) that burn as a result of a fire in the garage or building. In this case, the vehicles

are considered contents of the garage or building. However, if the damage is confined to the vehicle, it will be considered a vehicle fire. Should the fire spread beyond the vehicle and damage any part of the garage, the incident will be considered a structure fire listing the vehicle(s) as contents.

- A fire that occurs in a boat tied up to or moored at a wharf or marina and the damage is confined to the boat, is a boat fire. However, if the fire spreads from the boat to other boats tied up or moored at the wharf or marina, whether attached by mooring lines or contained within sheds, the original boat is considered as contents of the marina. Damage to other boats or surrounding structures is considered part of the property fire and reported as contents losses or building losses, respectively. Boats burned in this manner are not individual exposure fires.

www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/firecom/fire_reporting_manual

