

Fires in Health Care Facilities

Abstract

In 2006-2010, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 6,240 structure fires in or on health care properties per year. These fires caused an average of six civilian deaths, 171 civilian injuries and \$52.1 million in direct property damage annually. Almost half (46%) were at nursing homes, and almost one-quarter (23%) were in hospitals or hospices. Cooking equipment was involved in three out of five (61%) fires; dryers were involved in 7%, 6% were intentionally set; another 6% were started by smoking materials, and heating equipment was also involved in 6%. Only 4% of these fires spread beyond the room of origin. Causes, circumstances, and extent of fire spread varied by occupancy.

This report provides estimates of fire frequency and associated losses for reported fires in: all health care properties; in nursing homes; in hospitals or hospices; in mental health facilities caring for those with developmental disabilities, mental retardation, mental illness or substance abuse issues; and in clinics or doctors' offices. Estimates were derived from NFPA's fire department survey and the USFA's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

