

NHFIRS BULLETIN

How do you code that?



This fire started in a trash dumpster (located at the base of the flames), then extended to the adjacent apartment building. So....how do you code that?

The correct way to report this incident is to identify the dumpster fire as the primary report and the apartment fire as an exposure report. Doing so demonstrates that the fire extended from one property use to another, which otherwise wouldn't have happened if proper fire protection measures and practices were followed.

In the primary report, the Incident Type is 154-Dumpster fire. The Property Use is 938 - Graded/Cared for plot of land, because the dumpster was located outside in a patio/courtyard area adjacent to the apartment building. The Area of Fire Origin is 93-Courtyard, patio. Whether or not this fire was started intentionally and what the specific heat source was would need to be determined and coded accordingly. The Item First

Ignited is 96-Trash; and the Material First Ignited in these situations is generally 99-Multiple types of material; but that can vary from situation to situation.

In the exposure report, the incident number remains the same, but the exposure number is 001. Exposures are the only time a specific incident number can be used for more than one report.

The Incident Type for the exposure is 111-Building fire; the Property Use is 429-Multifamily dwelling. The Area of Fire Origin is 76-Wall surface exterior, as that is what first ignited. The Heat Source is 81-Heat from direct flame, because this was an extension of the dumpster fire. The Item First Ignited is 12-Exterior sidewall covering, surface, including eaves. The Material First Ignited is 63-Sawn wood, which includes all finished wood, lumber, and wood shingles. It is important to list code 71-Exposure fire, in the Factors Contributing to Ignition field.

In this exposure report, the number of living units needs to be identified, as well as any additional human or fire suppression factors.

Because this involved a structure, in the Structure Fire module of the report it should indicate Structure Type 1-Enclosed building. The status of the building, height, and main floor size would need to be determined and entered as well as applicable information regarding smoke alarms and sprinkler systems.

The photo depicts flames not only extending to the building, but spreading up the side of the building. This should be captured in the Structure Fire module as well. The Item Contributing Most to Flame Spread is 12-Exterior sidewall covering, surface; and the Material Contributing Most to Flame Spread is the wood finish of the building code 63-Sawn wood.

Properly reporting incidents such as this helps support fire and building codes. If this dumpster had been located at the correct distance from the building, the fire extension to the building would likely not have occurred.