

NFIRS Coding

One of the challenges with the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) can be how to code incidents. Knowing how to properly code incident data goes a long way in providing information that is useful all the way to the national level. It also makes it easier to enter incident data after a call.

There are resources available to assist you when it comes to NFIRS coding. The most comprehensive resource available is the NFIRS Complete Reference Guide, which is available online. In addition to listing available codes for each data field in NFIRS, this guide contains descriptions, definitions, and explains the purpose for each field. **The NFIRS Complete Reference Guide** along with a **Coding Questions & Answers Guide** is available free from their website.

In addition to these guides, the NH State Fire Marshal's Office is available during normal business hours to answer your coding questions at 603-223-4289 email: nhfirs@dos.nh.gov

NFIRS Support Center
888-382-3827 - Eastern Time Zone
NFIRS online technical assistance

NFIRS Tips

For incidents involving fire and hazardous materials/conditions, or fire and EMS, use the fire codes. Always use the lowest numbered code that applies to the incident. You will have more opportunity, later in the report, to describe multiple actions taken.

For vehicle fires in a structure, use the mobile property codes (130-138) unless the structure becomes involved. If the structure becomes involved, the incident

is considered a building/structure fire (codes 111 or 112) and the vehicle is considered contents.

For fires confined to noncombustible containers in a building, use codes 113-118 of the structure fire codes when there is no flame damage beyond the noncombustible container. When entering data, be as accurate and specific as possible. To do this, avoid using codes that end in "0." These are non-specific codes that have the value of "other" and should be used only when absolutely no other code can be used.

Exposures are fires resulting from another fire. In the case of buildings with internal fire separation, treat the fire spread from one separation to another as an exposure. You should not treat multiple ownership of property within a building as exposures, unless they are separated by fire-rated compartments.

Training Opportunities

You can now get NFIRS training right from the comfort of your department through our website at <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/firesafety>. Select Fire Incident Reporting and select Training Resources in the middle of the page. If you would like us to come to your department and help with NFIRS training, please call us at 603-223-4289.

