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Incident Coding for Smoke Detectors

When coding smoke detectors you want to start with the Basic Module, H2 – Detector, choose from

- 1 Detector alerted occupants
- 2 Detector did not alert occupants
- U Unknown

However, if the fire was unconfined you can skip the H2 – Detector field and work your way to the Structure Fire Module L1 – L6.

Here are some examples:

Your department responds to a structure fire where the battery operated smoke detector failed to alert the occupants since the batteries were missing from the device.

Under the Structure Fire Module you would choose

- L1 – Presence of Detectors
 - 1 Present
- L2 – Detector Type
 - 1 Smoke
- L3 – Detector Power Supply
 - 1 Battery only
- L4 – Detector Operation
 - 3 Failed to operate
- L6 – Detector Failure Reason
 - 5 Battery missing or disconnected

Your department responds to a structure fire where the battery operated smoke detector alerted the occupants who escaped the fire.

Under the Structure Fire Module you would choose

- L1 – Presence of Detectors
 - 1 Present
- L2 – Detector Type
 - 1 Smoke
- L3 – Detector Power Supply
 - 1 Battery only
- L4 – Detector Operation
 - 2 Operated
- L5 – Detector Effectiveness
 - 1 Alerted occupants, occupants responded

NH Statistics show over the past 5 years there have been a total of 277 residential structure fires where the Detector has failed. This is a summary of these 277 fires:

Hardwired power failure, shut-off or disconnect – 24	Battery missing or disconnected – 68
Improper installation or placement – 8	Battery discharged or dead – 20
Defective – 6	Other – 16
Lack of cleaning – 9	Undetermined – 126

As you can see the Undetermined field is fairly large and we hope in the future to decrease this number by having more accurate incident data being reported.

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