

At a Glance

Fatal Fires in Residential Buildings (2018-2020)

Each year, from 2018 to 2020, an estimated average of **1,900** fatal fires in residential buildings were reported to fire departments within the United States.

These fires caused an estimated annual average of:

- 2,745** deaths
- 625** injuries
- \$230 million** in property loss

-  Fatal fires in residential buildings were highest between midnight to 1 a.m. (7%).
-  Fatal fires in residential buildings were more prevalent in the cooler months, peaking in January (14%).
- “Other unintentional, careless” action** was the leading cause of fatal fires in residential buildings (20%).

- 80%**  In 80% of fatal fires in residential buildings, the fire extended beyond the room of origin.
-  Fatal fires in residential buildings most often started in bedrooms (27%) and common areas such as living and family rooms (26%).
-  Smoke alarms were not present in 24% of fatal fires in occupied residential buildings.

The U.S. Fire Administration’s (USFA’s) topical reports are designed to explore facets of the U.S. fire problem as depicted through data collected in the USFA’s National Fire Incident Reporting System from incidents reported by local response agencies. Each topical report briefly addresses the nature of the specific fire or fire-related topic, highlights important findings from the data, and may suggest other resources to consider for further information.

To read the full report, visit usfa.fema.gov.