

About NFIRS/Release Notes

The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) is a program of:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency
United States Fire Administration
National Fire Data Center
<http://www.usfa.fema.gov>

Additional information and documentation on the NFIRS are available here:

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/NFIRS>.

Release Notes

RELEASED 11/15/2022

National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)
2021 Public Data Release (PDR)

This is the initial release of the 2021 NFIRS PDR database tables. The USFA releases two versions of the NFIRS PDR. The Fire and Hazardous Materials PDR includes all incidents where the incident type corresponds to a fire or hazardous materials incident (100 and 400 series) and the records from all modules that correspond to those incidents (available on CD). The All-Incident PDR includes all incident types (available on DVD). Additionally, downloadable NFIRS PDR files from 1980 to 2021 are available at: <https://www.fema.gov/about/openfema/data-sets/fema-usfa-nfirs-annual-data>. For 2021, the fire and hazmat PDR data were extracted from the NFIRS national production database on 10/15/2022 and the all-incident PDR data were also extracted on 10/15/2022.

For 2021, only 96 incidents from the District of Columbia's Fire and EMS Department could be included on the NFIRS PDR file due to an issue in the department's third-party software program. The issue is expected to be resolved at a later date as the District plans to submit their year 2021 data to the NFIRS production database and Enterprise Data Warehouse.

FILE FORMAT:

The NFIRS PDR file format changed starting with the 2012 data year from dbase table files to delimited text files. Fields are separated by the "^" character, text fields are enclosed by double quotes, and the file uses Latin-1 encoding. Note that these files can be opened directly in Microsoft Excel but if the row count exceeds 1,048,576, some of the data will be truncated. Most database and statistical tools support loading of this delimited text format.

In 2019, a primary id key (INCIDENT_KEY) field was added to the PDR files. This field uniquely identifies each incident and consists of the following 5 data fields: STATE, FDID, INC_DATE,

INC_NO, and EXP_NO. Except for this primary id key field, the format of the files and the data fields is the same in the dbase table files and the delimited text files.

The NFIRS PDR file format provides the field name, field description, data type, and field length for all data elements in each data table. The file format is found in the "Public Data Release Format v1_8.pdf" file.

QUALITY CONTROL NOTES:

Please see the "2021 NFIRS Data Quality Notes_11-14-2022.pdf" file included in this release. Additionally, see the "Data Quality Errata Addendum_PDR2021.pdf."

OTHER NOTES:

The NFIRS Structure Fire Cause codes are included as a table in the "causes.txt" file. It may be matched with the other tables on the NFIRS key (INCIDENT_KEY). Documentation is included in the "Structure Fire Cause.pdf" file. Beginning with 2016 NFIRS data, the cause file was modified to include only structure fire incidents versus all fire incidents as in the past, and the OLD_CAUSE and OLD_PCC fields were retired and are no longer included on this file.

The "NFIRS and PDR Overview 2021.pdf" guide provides a brief overview of the NFIRS, its data, and its limitations in data analyses at the state and national levels, as well as analytic resources. A brief overview of the PDR files is also discussed.

A guide to analyzing the NFIRS fire data is also included. The file is: "NFIRS 5.0 Fire Data Analysis Guidelines and Issues.pdf."

For information about how the files in the PDR relate to one another, please refer to the NFIRSRelationDiagram.pdf file. For information about the data elements and lookup codes within each PDR file, refer to the codelookup.txt file. Also, please see the NFIRS Complete Reference Guide (CRG) for answers to questions about code descriptions and field definitions.

The number of records included in each delimited text file for the 2021 PDR is shown below.

PDR File	Fire and HazMat PDR	All Incident PDR
arson.txt	95,371	103,083
arsonagencyreferral.txt	39,796	47,133
arsonjuvsub.txt	1,669	1,669
basicaid.txt	286,734	1,420,531
basicincident.txt	2,109,645	29,066,077
civiliancasualty.txt	8,255	8,313
ems.txt	1,887	1,136,971
fdheader.txt	38,071	38,071
ffcasualty.txt	8,449	54,938
ffequipfail.txt	56	928
fireincident.txt	558,385	558,426
hazchem.txt	11,252	12,196
hazmat.txt	11,581	12,667
hazmatequipinvolved.txt	11,581	12,667
hazmobprop.txt	11,581	12,667
incidentaddress.txt	2,109,645	29,066,077
wildlands.txt	68,473	68,515
causes.txt	287,760	287,760

USFA NFIRS DATA DISCLAIMER:

Caution: The NFIRS is not a repository of all incidents that occur in the United States. The NFIRS is a voluntary system, and it includes only those incidents reported to the system by fire departments that participate in the NFIRS. The PDR contains incidents that have been released by state NFIRS program managers, which may be different than the incidents reported by fire departments. In most years, all states, the District of Columbia, and many Native American Tribal Authorities report to the NFIRS, but not all fire departments that report to the NFIRS within a state necessarily report all their incidents. Also, some fire departments that report fire incidents do not report associated casualties or estimated dollar losses. States and/or fire departments that report in one particular year may not report to the NFIRS the following year. Therefore, the NFIRS is not a census of all incidents or casualties.

NFIRS Support Center

Hours of Operation - Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. ET.

Call 888-382-3827 or email FEMA-NFIRSHelp@fema.dhs.gov.