

**HOME STRUCTURE FIRES  
INVOLVING KITCHEN EQUIPMENT  
OTHER THAN COOKING EQUIPMENT**

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## **Abstract**

In 2003-2006, an estimated 2,800 reported U.S. home structure fires per year involving equipment normally used in kitchen for food preparation, storage or disposal but excluding cooking equipment resulted in annual averages of 11 reported civilian deaths, 100 civilian injuries, and \$73 million in direct property damage.

Nearly all home fires involving kitchen equipment excluding cooking equipment specifically involve refrigerators and freezers or dishwashers. Other equipment in this group include garbage disposers, blenders, juicers, food processors, can openers, coffee grinders, and knife sharpeners.

These estimates are based on data from the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA's) National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA's) annual fire department experience survey.

Keywords: Refrigerator, freezer, dishwasher, kitchen, cooking, scald, fire statistics

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## Executive Summary

In 2003-2006, an estimated 2,800 reported U.S. home structure fires involving kitchen equipment excluding cooking equipment resulted in annual averages of 11 civilian deaths, 100 civilian injuries, and \$73 million in direct property damage.

Nearly all home fires involving kitchen equipment excluding cooking equipment specifically involve refrigerators and freezers or dishwashers.

Refrigerators, separate freezers, and separate ice makers together were involved in 1,600 home structure fires reported to U.S. fire departments per year in 2003-2006. These fires resulted in eight civilian deaths, 70 civilian injuries, and \$49 million in direct property damage per year.

Dishwashers were involved in 1,200 home structure fires reported to U.S. fire departments per year in 2003-2006. These fires resulted in four civilian deaths, 30 civilian injuries, and \$24 million in direct property damage per year.

The other equipment types in this group – garbage disposer, blender, juicer, food processor, can opener, coffee grinder, and knife sharpener – collectively were involved in 100 home structure fires reported to U.S. fire departments per year in 2003-2006.

Refrigerators, separate freezers, and separate ice makers were involved in an estimated 39,270 injuries reported to hospital emergency rooms in 2006. Most of these injuries did not involve burns or fire but instead involved sprains or strains, contusions or abrasions, lacerations, or fractures. Dishwashers were involved in 8,300 injuries reported to hospital emergency rooms in 2006.

Most 2003-2006 home non-confined structure fires involving refrigerators, separate freezers, or separate ice makers began with ignition of appliance housing or casing (31%) or wire or cable insulation (29%).\* Most 2003-2006 home non-confined structure fires involving dishwashers also began with ignition of appliance housing or casing (39%) or wire or cable insulation (28%).

More than one-third (35%) of 2003-2006 home non-confined structure fires involving refrigerators, separate freezers, or separate ice makers began in a room other than the kitchen, starting with the garage (12%). Only 4% of 2003-2006 home non-confined structure fires involving dishwashers began in an area other than the kitchen.

\* Beginning in 1999, the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) has permitted abbreviated reporting for six types of fires reported as confined fires – confined to cooking vessel, boiler or burner, chimney or flue, trash, incinerator or commercial compactor. Because of the abbreviated reporting, these fires are analyzed separately and are not included in most detailed analyses.

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