

HOME STRUCTURE FIRES THAT BEGAN WITH DECORATIONS

**Marty Ahrens
Fire Analysis and Research Division
National Fire Protection Association**

November 2007



**National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471
www.nfpa.org**

Abstract

During the four-year-period of 2002-2005, NFPA estimates that decorations were the item first ignited in an estimated average of 1,150 reported home structure fires per year. These fires caused an estimated average of three civilian deaths, 56 civilian injuries and \$24.8 million in direct property damage per year. 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.

One-quarter of the home structure decoration fires occurred in December. Half of these fires occurred because the decoration was too close to a heat source. Fifty-six percent of these incidents were started by candles. One-quarter started in the living room, family room, or den.

Keywords: Fire statistics, decorations, home fires, holiday fires

Acknowledgements

The National Fire Protection Association thanks all the fire departments and state fire authorities who participate in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and the annual NFPA fire experience survey. These firefighters are the original sources of the detailed data that make this analysis possible. Their contributions allow us to estimate the size of the fire problem.

We are also grateful to the U.S. Fire Administration for its work in developing, coordinating, and maintaining NFIRS.

For more information about the National Fire Protection Association, visit www.nfpa.org or call 617-770-3000. To learn more about the One-Stop Data Shop go to www.nfpa.org/osds or call 617-984-7450.

Copies of this analysis are available from:

National Fire Protection Association
One-Stop Data Shop
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169-7471
www.nfpa.org
e-mail: osds@nfpa.org
phone: 617-984-7450

NFPA No. USS38

Copyright © 2007, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, MA

List of Figures and Tables

Figure or Table	Page	
Figure 1	Home Structure Decoration Fires by Year	1
Figure 2.	Home Structure Fires in which Decorations Were First Ignited by Month	2
Figure 3.	Leading Areas of Origin in Non-Confined Home Decoration Structure Fires: January to November vs. December	3
Figure 4.	Home Structure Decoration Fires by Heat Source	3
Table 1.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structure Fires in Which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited by Year	5
Table 2.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structures Fires in which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited, by Extent of Flame Damage by Extent of Flame Damage	6
Table 3.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structures Fires in which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited, by Cause	7
Table 4.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structures Fires in which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited, by Factor Contributing to Ignition	8
Table 5.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structures Fires in which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited, by Equipment Involved in Ignition	9
Table 6.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structures Fires in which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited, by Area of Origin	10
Table 7.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structures Fires in which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited, by Heat Source	11
Table 8.	U.S. Non-Confined Home Structures Fires in which Decorations Were the Item First Ignited, by Type of Material First Ignited	12

Appendix

Appendix A.	How National Estimates Statistics Are Calculated	13
-------------	--	----