NFPA's Latest Estimates of

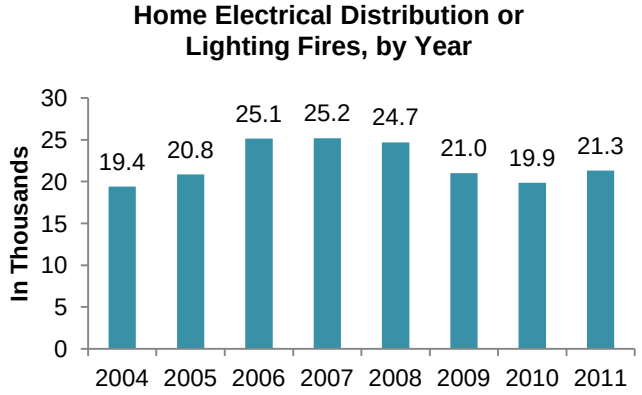
NFPA Fire Analysis & Research

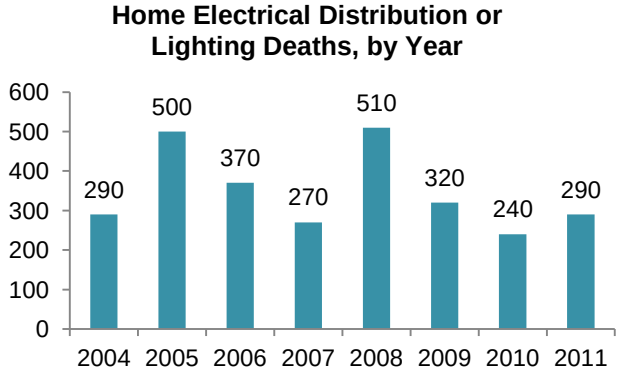
Home Fires Involving Electrical Distribution or Lighting Equipment - 2011

In 2011, electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in an estimated 21,300 home structure fires reported to U.S. fire departments. These fires caused:

- 295 deaths,
- 840 injuries, and
- $822 million in direct property damage.

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 6% of reported home fires, 13% of home fire deaths, 7% of home fire injuries, and 11% of the direct property damage from home fires in 2011.





More about Electrical Distribution or Lighting in Home Fires

NFPA's detailed analysis of reported home electrical distribution and lighting equipment fires through 2011 is available at Home Electrical Fires. Because of normal fluctuation from year to year, NFPA uses five-year annual averages in its detailed analyses.

Key findings

Three broad categories of equipment dominate these fires.

- Wiring or related equipment was involved in an average of 14,100 home fires and 160 deaths per year in 2007-2011.
  Home electrical safety begins with NFPA 70, National Electrical Code® and other documents related to homes, notably NFPA 73, Electrical Inspection Code for Existing Dwellings.
  Call a qualified electrician if your home has electrical problems or if you need electrical repairs.
- Lamps, light fixtures and bulbs were involved in an average of 4,500 home fires and 50 deaths per year.
  Keep lamps, light fixtures, and light bulbs away from anything that can burn.
- Cords and plugs were involved in an average of 2,500 home fires and 100 deaths per year.
  Avoid putting cords where they can be damaged or pinched by furniture, under rugs and carpets, or across doorways. Extension cords are for temporary use only. Have a qualified electrician determine if additional circuits or outlets are needed.

Homes include one and two-family homes, apartments and other multi-family housing. Estimates were derived from the USFA's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and NFPA's annual fire department experience survey. More information on how these estimates were calculated is available here (Latest Estimates on Major Fire Causes).