



HOSPITAL OR HOSPICE FIRES FACT SHEET

During 2009-2013, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 1,200 fires per year in hospitals or hospices. These fires caused an average of 40 civilian injuries and \$9 million in direct property damage annually. There was an estimated average of less than one death per year during this period. Hospices accounted for only 3%, of the fires in these properties.

Hospital or hospice fires were less common on Saturday and Sunday than the rest of the week. The peak time period was 9:00 a.m. to noon. They were least common between midnight and 6:00 a.m.

Cooking equipment was involved in three out of five (62%) hospital or hospice fires, while 9% were intentionally set. Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 7% of the fires. Heating equipment and smoking materials each were involved in 4% of fires.

Forty-four percent of the hospital or hospice fires started in a kitchen or cooking area, while seven percent started in a lavatory, locker room or check room and 4% started in a bedroom or patient room.

Nearly nine of 10 fires (87%) were confined to the object of origin. Fire spread beyond the room of origin in only 3% of the incidents.

John Hall's report [U.S. Experience with Sprinklers](#) indicates that in 2007-2011, automatic extinguishing equipment was present in eight out of ten (78%) hospital fires, and sprinklers were present in almost two-thirds (63%).

The deadliest hospital fire in U.S. history in this property class was the 1929 Cleveland Clinic fire in Cleveland, Ohio, that killed 125 people. This incident, and a number of other catastrophic hospital fires are summarized in NFPA's 2012 publication, *Major Hospital Fires*, by Marty Ahrens. Additional hospital fire investigation reports are available at [Fire Investigations Health Care Facilities](#).

Watch for a new NFPA report on *Fires in Health Care Facilities* later in 2016.

Source: NFPA, Fire Analysis and Research Division.

Structure Fires in Hospitals and Hospices by Leading Cause, 2009-2013

