U.S. STORES AND OTHER MERCANTILE PROPERTY STRUCTURE FIRES FACT SHEET

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 13,570 structure fires on stores and other mercantile properties per year during 2009-2013. These fires caused annual averages of

- 12 civilian fire deaths
- 299 civilian fire injuries
- $604 million in direct property damage

Leading Causes of Structure Fires in Stores and Other Mercantile Properties, 2009-2013

One of every five fires in these properties was caused by cooking.

Electrical distribution and lighting was the second leading cause.

11% of these fires were intentional, but they accounted for 20% of the direct property damage.

Smoking materials caused 6% of the fires.

- Heat sources too close to something can burn were a factor in 9% of the fires, but these fires accounted for 40% of civilian deaths.

- During 2009-2013, fires that occurred between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. caused an average of $73,800 of property damage each, while those occurring between 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. caused an average of $33,900 of property loss each.

Source: U.S. Structure Fires in Stores and Other Mercantile Properties, Richard Campbell, NFPA Fire Analysis and Research, Quincy, MA. December 2015