FIREFIGHTER DEATH AND INJURY STATISTICS

US and NY STATE

2015
The National Picture: analysis of 2015 deaths

source: NFPA, “FIREFIGHTER FATALITIES IN THE UNITED STATES - 2015” (June 2016)
Note: There are always discrepancies between NFPA and USFA casualty numbers due to differences defining “firefighters” and “line-of-duty”. We generally use NFPA’s figures...
US Firefighting Deaths

(Includes personnel such as military, contractors, wildland crews, etc.)


2005: 87
2006: 89
2007: 102
2008: 103
2009: 82
2010: 72
2011: 61
2012: 64
2013: 97
2014: 64
2015: 68
US Firefighter Deaths: Career & Volunteer
2005 - 2015
(excludes non-FD personnel)
US Firefighting Deaths by Type of Duty, 2015

- Fireground: 35%
- Responding to or Returning from Alarms: 16%
- Other on-duty: 21%
- Training: 13%
- Non-Fire Emergencies: 15%

Source: NFPA
US Firefighting Deaths by Cause of Injury, 2015

- Overexertion, stress, medical related: 59%
- Crashes: 12%
- Structural collapse: 9%
- Overexertion, stress, medical related: 59%
- Fatal Assault: 1%
- Structural collapse: 9%
- Lost inside: 1%
- Crashes: 12%
- Fatal Assault: 1%
- Rapid fire progress / explosion: 1%
- Fell/Jumped: 6%
- Struck by or Contact with Object: 9%
- Caught Underwater: 1%
- Crashes: 12%
US Firefighting Deaths by Nature of Injury, 2015

- Sudden Cardiac: 51%
- Internal trauma/crushing: 24%
- Stroke / Aneurysm: 6%
- Asphyxiation: 13%
- Burns: 3%
- Other: 3%
US Firefighter Deaths by Age & Cause of Death, 2015

- **Age**
  - Under 21: 3
  - 21-30: 4
  - 31-40: 8
  - 41-50: 7
  - 51-60: 7
  - Over 60: 10

- **Cause of Death**
  - Sudden cardiac death
  - Other cause of death

- **Career**: Pink bars
- **Volunteer**: Blue bars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Volunteer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background Information on US Firefighter Deaths

Source: National Fire Protection Association
2015 US Firefighter Fatalities

68 firefighters died while on duty.

- "The largest share of deaths occurred at fire scenes (24)"
- "Sudden cardiac arrest accounted for the majority of on-duty deaths (35)"
- "Deaths among volunteer firefighters and deaths in road vehicle crashes continued low in 2015"

-- NFPA
2015 Firefighting Fatalities
Who is dying?

- Career firefighters (defined as those who are employed full-time as firefighters) suffered 24 deaths.
- Volunteer and part-time paid firefighters accounted for 32 deaths.
- 12 additional deaths (6 were employees of federal land management agencies, 3 were federal contractors, 1 was an employee of a state land management agency, 1 was a civilian employee of the military, and 1 was a state prison inmate) were reported by NFPA.
- The median age of firefighters who died on duty was 49.5 years.
The largest single cause (59%) of firefighter deaths in 2015 were medical - sudden cardiac vascular or cardiac events.

“Of the 40 deaths in this category, 35 were classified as sudden cardiac deaths (usually heart attacks), three were due to strokes and one to an aneurysm.” – NFPA

The second largest cause of fatal injury to firefighters involved vehicles.

“Vehicle crashes… claimed eight lives. Another five firefighters were struck and killed by vehicles- four at or during emergency responses and one in a deliberate act against the victim” – NFPA
2015 Firefighter Fatalities

Where are we dying?

Over one-third (24) of firefighter fatalities occurred on the fireground.

11 firefighters died either en route or returning emergency calls - 8 of those due to sudden cardiac events, and 1 from a stroke.

10 firefighters died at non-fire emergencies, including 5 at medical emergencies.
2015 Firefighter Fatalities
Where are we dying?

17 of the 24 fireground deaths occurred at 16 separate structure fires. In addition there were 5 deaths at 3 wildland fires, and 2 deaths at vehicle fires.

9 sudden cardiac deaths occurred during training activities, including 5 who were working out at the station and 1 during a wildland firefighting fitness test.

1 firefighter committed suicide, and 1 was murdered.
New York State Line of Duty Deaths and Injuries 2015

Note: Injury statistics are from the NYS Fire Incident Reporting System (report IIIC series). Since participation is voluntary, the numbers are incomplete and reflect only reported casualties.

FDNY injuries are not included here. There were no FDNY deaths in 2015.

Fatality information taken from USFA.
New York State Line of Duty Deaths, 2005-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Charles V. Wallace, 2/3/15, age 74, Montgomery Volunteer FD
Firefighter Wallace was struck by a van while directing traffic outside the fire station and died from his injuries a month later.

Timothy T. Gunther, 5/4/15, age 54, Poughkeepsie FD
Firefighter Gunther suffered a heart attack while battling a residential structure fire, he received treatment, including surgery, but died the following day.

Lawrence G. Sesso, 8/22/15, age 40, Sayville FD
Firefighter Sesso went into cardiac arrest several hours after battling a commercial structure fire.

Barry Miller, 9/23/15, age 50, Bergen FD
Chief Miller died from injuries sustained after the ambulance he was a passenger in collided with a backhoe loader.

Jack H. Rose, 12/19/15, age 19, Mount Marion FD
Captain Rose was separated from his unit while battling a basement fire, became unresponsive shortly after being removed from the basement, and succumbed to his injuries in a local hospital.
Online map 2009 to present with USFA list of line-of-duty deaths

Right-click map below, then “Open Hyperlink” to see where NYS LODDs occurred (with names, dates, details)
2015 NYS Fire Service Injuries by Type of Duty (if reported)

- Suppression: 95%
- EMS: 2%
- Undetermined or Other: 2%
- Other (Admin., Investigation, Training, etc.): 1%
2015 NYS Fire Service Injuries by Cause (if reported)

- Fall, Jump, Slip/Trip
- Overexertion/Strain
- Exposure to Hazard
- Struck/Assaulted
- Contact with Object
- Undetermined or Other
2015 NYS Fire Service Injuries by Symptom (if reported)

- Smoke/Hazardous Inhalation
- Shortness of Breath
- Burn
- Cut, Puncture Wound, Bruise, Abrasion
- Dislocation, Fracture, Strain, Sprain, Swelling, Crushing, Amputation
- Cardiac/Respiratory Arrest
- Stroke/Heat Stroke
- Undisclosed Sickness or Pain
- Other or Undetermined
2015 NYS Firefighter Injuries by Location (if reported)

- At Scene/In Structure: 35%
- At Scene/Outside: 42%
- At FD Location: 14%
- Returning from Incident: 1%
- Other Locations: 5%
- Enroute to Incident FD or Medical facility: 3%
For more information:

Firefighter Fatalities in the United States (USFA)

Firefighter Fatalities in the United States (NFPA)

Firefighter Injuries in the United States (NFPA)

Patterns of Firefighter Fireground Injuries (NFPA)

What’s Changed Over the Past 30 Years? (NFPA, 2007)

Firefighter Fatalities and Injuries resource page (NFPA)
Slides based on:

“Firefighter Fatalities in the US – 2015” by NFPA

Casualty Report IIC Report 2.3 series by NYS OFPC

USFA provisional reports on firefighter fatalities

Compiled by Diana Robinson & Dan Kelly

Thank you, and be safe!