## Review of Fire Data Policy

This brief factsheet provides an overview of Fire Data Policy at the Federal and State levels.

## United States Fire Administration (USFA)

The Federal Fire Prevention Act of 1974 authorized the US Fire Administration to establish the National Fire Data Center (NFDC). This integrated, comprehensive NFDC would provide *"for the selection, analysis, publication, and dissemination of information related to the prevention, occurrence, control, and results of fires of all types."* The NFDC *"shall be designed to (1) provide an accurate nationwide analysis of the fire problem, (2) identify major problem areas, (3) assist in setting priorities, (4) determine possible solutions to problems, and (5) monitor the progress of programs to reduce fire losses."*

**To carry out these functions, the Center shall gather and analyze:**

1. Information on the frequency, causes, spread, and extinguishment of fires
2. Information on the number of injuries and deaths resulting from fires
   - Including the cause and nature of the injuries and deaths were possible
   - Information on property loss
3. Information on the occupational hazards faced by fire fighters
   - Causes of deaths and injuries directly or indirectly associated with firefighting activities
4. Information on all types of firefighting activities including inspections
5. Technical performance of building construction and the fire properties of materials
6. Information of Fire Prevention and control systems, methods, techniques, and administrative structures used in foreign nations
7. Information on the causes, behavior, and best method to control other types of fire including forest, brush, underground, oil blow---out, and water---borne
8. Such other information and data as deemed useful and applicable

**The USFA Administrator is authorized to:**

1. Develop standardized data reporting methods
2. Encourage and assist state, local, and other agencies in developing and reporting information
3. Make full use of existing data gathering and analysis organizations

The Administrator shall insure dissemination of information to the maximum extent possible.

# National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)

In order to carry out the intentions of the Federal Fire Prevention Act of 1974, the National Fire Data Center has established the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

- **The reporting of fire data is voluntary and not mandated.**
- **State participation in NFIRS is voluntary.**
- 50 states and the District of Columbia report NFIRS data.
- The NFIRS database is estimated to comprise 75 percent of all reported fires that occur annually.
- Local Fire Department participation is based on one of the two following requirements:
  - An individual state's requirement to collect and submit NFIRS data
  - Receipt of funds from the FEMA Assistance to Fire Firefighter Grant Program

# State Fire Incident Reporting Requirements

In 2016, all 50 state Fire Marshal's Offices were contacted and asked about state statutes, regulations or policy regarding NFIRS fire data collection and submission.

A total of 17 states have either laws, statutes, regulations, or policy that require NFIRS data to be collected and submitted.  An additional 4 states allow the State Fire Marshal to establish data collection rules, guidelines, or recommendations for fire data collection based on NFIRS system.  The remaining 29 states have no requirement to collect or submit fire data based on NFIRS though some have chosen to do so.