NFPA® RESEARCH

Fatal Firefighter Injuries in the US in 2024

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Introduction

The National Fire Protection Association has collected information on on-duty firefighter fatalities since 1977 and published annual reports on key findings. Historically, the *on-duty* criterion meant that deaths were included when they were due to 1) traumatic injury or 2) sudden cardiac incidents, strokes, aneurysms, or medical conditions while the victim was on duty. Fatalities due to heart attack, stroke, aneurysm, or other medical conditions when firefighters were off duty were not included in the study *except* in cases where the victims made a specific medical complaint while on duty.

Since 2022, fatal heart attacks, strokes, aneurysms, or other medical conditions while firefighters are off duty have been included in the study if they occur *within* 24 hours of duty, irrespective of any documented physical complaint by the victim.

The expansion of the inclusion criteria to include fatalities within 24 hours of duty are consistent with those that establish eligibility for federal death benefits under the Hometown Heroes Act of 2003 (deaths within 24 hours of non-routine strenuous or stressful physical activity while on duty). While the assumption that on-duty activity contributed to these deaths is consistent with the historical inclusion criteria, their inclusion has produced an increase in the number of on-duty firefighter fatalities recorded by the study by over 17 percent in each year of their inclusion.

Because an important goal of this study is to identify and follow injury trends, we seek to maintain consistency with historical data by disaggregating the newly added fatalities within 24 hours in much of this report's analysis. Consequently, this report will occasionally report injury totals in two ways — a larger figure that includes the fatalities within 24 hours and a smaller number that excludes the fatalities within 24 hours to represent a historically consistent figure. The report will distinguish between these two measures when discussing the results.

Study background and inclusion criteria

Several types of firefighting populations are eligible for inclusion in this study:

- Career and volunteer firefighters serving in local fire departments
- Seasonal, full-time, and contract employees of state and federal agencies who have fire suppression responsibilities
- Prison inmates serving on firefighting crews
- Military personnel performing assigned fire suppression activities
- Civilian firefighters working at military installations
- Members of facility or industrial fire brigades

At times, there might be a considerable delay between an injury and the resulting death. Fatalities are assigned to the year of the initial injury occurrence in cases where death occurred in a subsequent year. Accordingly, the number of deaths in a particular year might change as additions are made to annual totals following the receipt of new information.[1]

The *on-duty* designation refers to a variety of injury scenarios that are eligible for inclusion in this research. These include injuries sustained while:

- At the scene of an alarm (fire or emergency medical or other responses)
- During transport to or from an alarm
- While participating in other department duties (such as training, maintenance, public education, investigations, etc.)
- While on call or standby for assignment

[1] In 2024, one firefighter died from complications of an injury sustained in 2014 and was added to the 2014 fatality count and one firefighter died as a result of injuries sustained in 2023 and was added to the 2023 fatality count.

This annual study includes only on-duty fatal firefighter injuries that occurred in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Readers should be aware that there are other firefighter fatality data collection efforts whose inclusion criteria differ from those used by NFPA. Readers are cautioned to be attentive to these criteria when seeking information on firefighter fatalities.

Overview of fatal firefighter injuries in 2024

NFPA Research recorded 62 fatal firefighter injuries in the United States in 2024, a 31 percent decrease over the 90 fatal injuries recorded in 2023. As indicated in Table A, 51 of the firefighter fatalities in 2024 were on-duty fatalities consistent with historical inclusion criteria and 11 of the fatalities occurred within 24 hours of duty.

The *on-duty* firefighters included 26 career firefighters, 19 volunteer firefighters, and 6 non-municipal firefighters. The non-municipal firefighters included two state forestry service firefighters, one federal forestry service firefighter, two state contractor employees, and one industrial firefighter. The fatalities *within 24 hours of duty* included eight volunteer and three career firefighters.

Table A. Firefighter fatalities: On duty and within 24 hours

Firefighter type	On duty	Within 24 hours
Municipal	45	11
Career	26	3
Volunteer*	19	8
Non-municipal	6	0
Total	51	11

*Includes one paid part-time firefighter

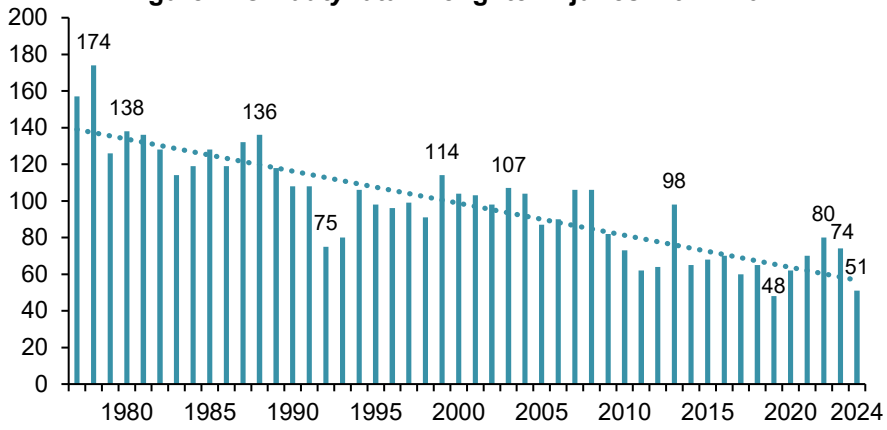
There was one multiple-fatality incident in 2024, making it only the third year since 2000 with one or fewer multiple-fatality incidents; there were no multiple-fatality incidents in 2019 and a single multiple-fatality incident in 2017.

Fatal injuries by year: 1977–2024

Figure 1 shows the annual firefighter fatal injury totals since 1977; however, to maintain trend consistently, this figure does not include the recently added fatalities within 24 hours of duty in order to maintain trend consistency. The data show a distinct downward trend in fatalities over time, despite year-to-year fluctuations, with the high count in each decade being lower than that preceding. The highest annual fatal injury total of 174 firefighter deaths was recorded in 1978 and the lowest of 48 deaths in 2019.

It is encouraging to note that following an uptick in fatalities between 2021 and 2023, the 51 historically consistent firefighter fatalities recorded in 2024 represent the second-lowest annual firefighter fatality total over the course of this study.

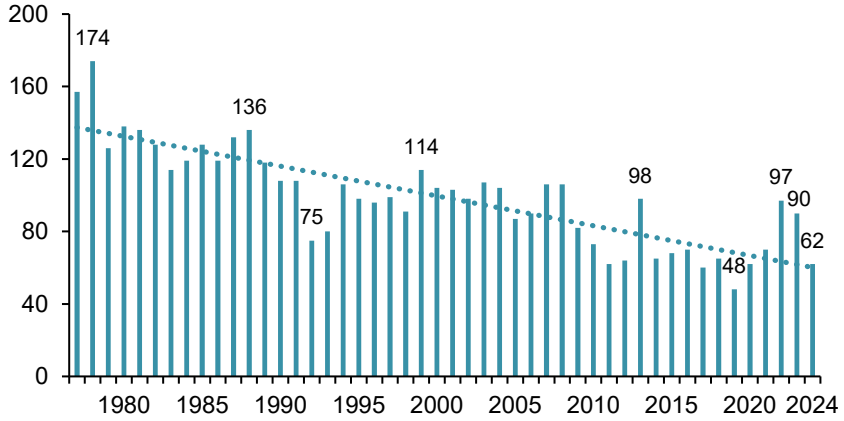
Figure 1. *On-duty* fatal firefighter injuries: 1977–2024



Note: The 2001 fatality count does not include the 340 firefighter deaths that occurred on September 11, 2001.

Figure 2 shows the annual firefighter fatality count with the newly added fatalities within 24 hours included in the totals for 2022 through 2024. The impact of the new 24-hour inclusion criteria on annual trend data is clear; with the addition of 17 fatalities in 2022, 16 fatalities in 2023, and 11 fatalities in 2024, the annual totals in 2022 and 2023 were the highest since 2013.

Figure 2. Fatal firefighter injuries: 1977–2024

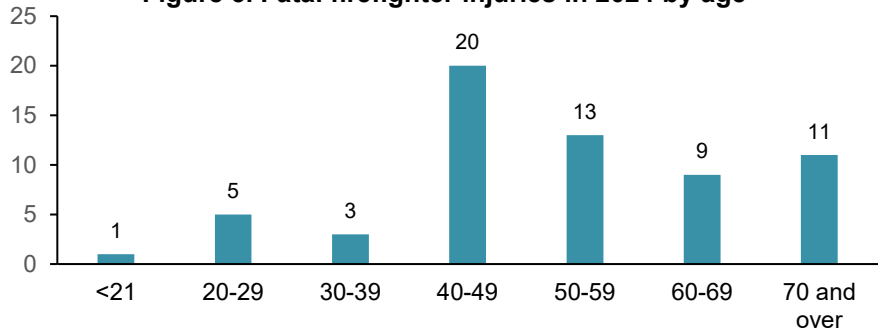


Age and gender

All but one of the fatally injured firefighters in 2024 were male. The lone female firefighter was a firefighting pilot who was killed in a crash while fighting a wildfire.

Figure 3 shows the number of firefighter deaths in 2024 by age group. The fatality victims ranged from 18 to 87 years of age. As the figure indicates, firefighters aged 40 to 49 experienced the highest number of fatal injuries, accounting for nearly one-third of the total (20 deaths), while 13 of the firefighter fatalities were aged 50 to 59 years. Eleven of the firefighter fatalities were 70 years of age or older. Ten firefighters in the 70 years or older age group were volunteers and one was a non-municipal contract firefighter. A comparison of career and volunteer firefighter deaths by age is available in the accompanying tables at the end of this report.

Figure 3. Fatal firefighter injuries in 2024 by age

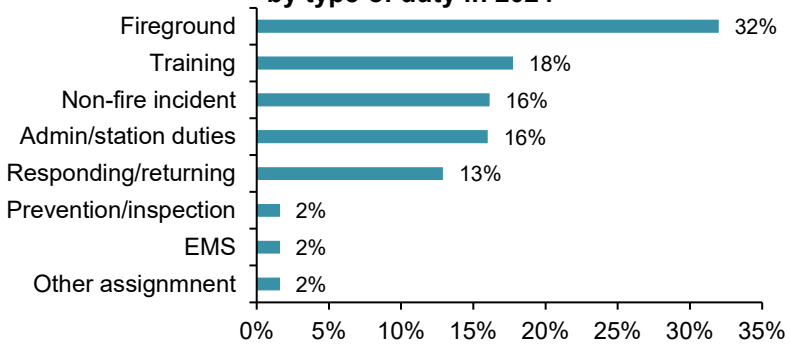


Type of duty

Firefighters engage in a variety of activities that place them at risk of injury or fatal medical events, including activities on the fireground, operating at non-fire emergencies, responding to or returning from fires and emergency calls, training activities, emergency medical response calls, normal station duties, maintenance activities, and other on-duty activities.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the 2024 deaths by the type of duty being performed at the time of injury for all fatalities. For deaths that occurred within 24 hours of duty, the type of duty is based on the last activity before going off duty.

Figure 4. Fatal firefighter injuries by type of duty in 2024



As indicated in Figure 4, fireground duties accounted for the largest share of deaths (32 percent), followed by training duties (18 percent), non-fire incident duties (16 percent), administrative or station duties (16 percent), and responding to or returning from incident duties (13 percent). Smaller shares of fatalities occurred while firefighters were engaged in prevention or inspection, emergency medical service, or other duties, each of which accounted for 2 percent of the total.

Table B shows the fatalities by the type of duty being performed separated by those reported for on-duty fatalities and those within 24 hours of duty. The type of duty for fatalities within 24 hours reflects the last duty performed before going off duty.

For the fatalities within 24 hours of duty, duties at non-fire incidents were the most frequent duty performed before going off duty, accounting for 5 of the 11 deaths (45 percent). Fireground duties preceded three of the off-duty deaths (27 percent), with training duties preceding two deaths (18 percent), and EMS duties preceding one death (9 percent).

When restricted to *on-duty* fatal injuries, the share of fireground duties increases slightly to 33 percent of the fatalities and administrative or station duties to 20 percent. Injuries sustained at non-fire incidents and while responding to or returning from incidents each drop to 12 percent of the on-duty total.

Fireground duties. The 20 fireground deaths in 2024 represent a substantial decrease from the 32 fireground fatalities in 2023. Of the 17 on-duty fatal firefighter injuries:

- Four firefighters experienced fatal heart attacks— three at the scene of residential structure fires and one at the scene of a brush fire. Three other firefighters died as a result of unspecified medical conditions at the scene of residential structure fires and one at the scene of a wildfire.
- Three firefighters suffered fatal injuries while engaged in interior structure firefighting.
- Three firefighters were killed in vehicle collisions at wildfires — two airplane crashes and one utility train vehicle rollover.
- Two firefighters were killed by explosions while battling vehicle fires.
- One firefighter was killed when struck by a hose coupling at a residential fire.

Table B. Fatal firefighter injuries by type of duty in 2024: On duty and within 24 hours

Type of duty	On duty		Within 24 hours		Total	
Fireground	17	(33%)	3	(27%)	20	(32%)
Admin/station duties	10	(20%)	0	(0%)	10	(16%)
Training	9	(18%)	2	(18%)	11	(18%)
Non-fire incident	6	(12%)	5	(45%)	11	(18%)
Responding/returning	6	(12%)	0	(0%)	6	(10%)
Prevention/inspection	1	(2%)	0	(0%)	1	(2%)
EMS	1	(2%)	1	(9%)	2	(3%)
Other duties	1	(2%)	0	(0%)	1	(2%)
Total	51	(100%)	11	(100%)	62	(100%)

Administrative or station duties. Heart attacks accounted for eight of the 10 deaths while firefighters were engaged in administrative or normal station duties. One firefighter died as a result of an aortic aneurysm and one firefighter was killed when struck by a vehicle while crossing the street to attend a meeting.

Training duties. Six of the nine on-duty training fatalities were due to heart attacks and two were due to heat exhaustion. The remaining on-duty training fatality was due to a pulmonary embolism following a knee injury sustained during training.

Non-fire duties. Of the six on-duty victims:

- One firefighter was killed by a second landslide while rescuing victims at a landslide scene.
- One firefighter was killed when a tree fell on the cab of his apparatus while at the scene of downed powerlines.
- One firefighter was electrocuted when a utility pole snapped and brought down electrical wires at a motor vehicle accident scene.
- One firefighter was fatally injured when struck by an automobile while directing traffic at a crash scene.
- One firefighter was killed by an explosion after responding to a residential gas leak.
- One firefighter drowned during a swift water rescue operation.

Responding/returning duties. Two firefighters had heart attacks or unspecified medical events while responding to calls. Of the remaining four victims:

- Two firefighters were killed when a tree fell on their cab while they responded to a house fire during a hurricane.
- One firefighter was killed when an apparatus collided with a vehicle during a service call.
- One firefighter was killed when the apparatus he was operating left the roadway and crashed.

Emergency medical service duties. One firefighter/emergency medical technician was fatally shot while responding to a domestic violence call.

Inspection/Investigation. One firefighter suffered a fatal heart attack while investigating a fire.

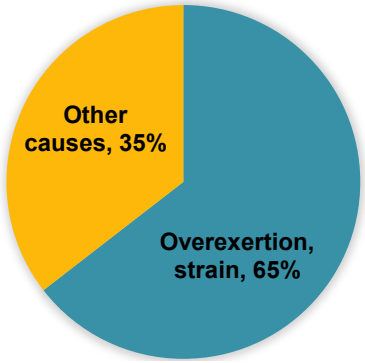
Other duties. One firefighter was killed in a crash when an apparatus left the roadway and crashed while escorting a funeral procession.

Cause of injury

The term *cause* refers to the action, lack of action, or circumstances that resulted directly in the fatal injury.

Overexertion or strain injuries are regularly the leading cause of firefighter fatalities in this study. In 2024, overexertion or strain injuries were the cause of 40 fatal firefighter injuries (65 percent), as indicated in Figure 5. This share of the injury total is unusually high due to the inclusion of 11 fatalities within 24 hours of duty that were not previously included in the study.

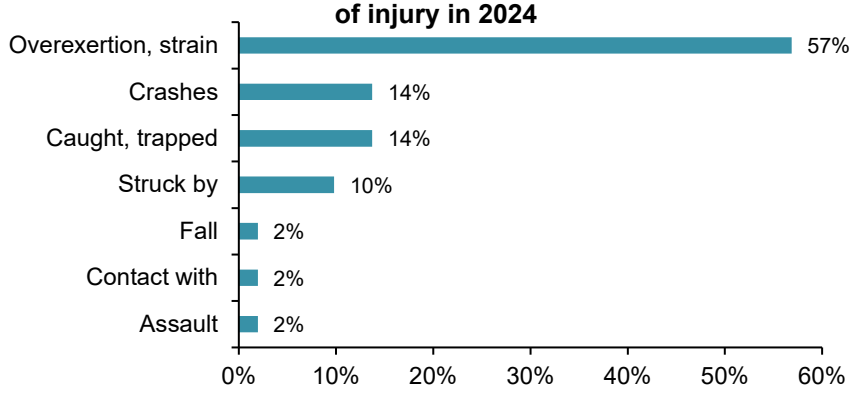
Figure 5. Fatal firefighter injuries by cause of injury in 2024



Because fatalities within 24 hours of duty are discussed in a separate section, Figure 6 shows the cause of injury for *on-duty* fatal firefighter injuries only.

As indicated, overexertion and stress continued to account for the largest share of deaths in 2024 even without the fatalities within 24 hours, causing 57 percent of the deaths. Vehicle crashes and being caught or trapped each caused 14 percent of the deaths, and struck-by incidents caused another 10 percent of the deaths. Of the remaining fatalities, one death was caused by a fall, one by contact with electricity, and one by an assault, each of which accounted for two percent of the on-duty fatality total.

Figure 6. *On-duty* fatal firefighter injuries by cause of injury in 2024



Overexertion or strain. All but nine of the 29 on-duty overexertion or strain injuries were fatal heart attacks. Of the nine non-cardiac deaths, four of the deaths caused by overexertion or strain were categorized as being caused by unspecified medical conditions, two were heat strokes, one was a pulmonary embolism, one was an aortic aneurysm, and one was a drowning.

Crashes. Seven on-duty fatal firefighter injuries were caused by vehicle crashes. Four crashes involved fire department apparatuses: in three of these incidents, an apparatus left the road with no collision, and the fourth involved an apparatus collision with a non-fire department vehicle. The three remaining crashes occurred at wildfire scenes. Two of the incidents claimed the lives of pilots in aircraft crashes and one claimed the life of a firefighter whose utility vehicle rolled over on a steep incline at a wildfire scene.

Caught or trapped incidents. Seven firefighters died in incidents in which they were caught or trapped in some way. Three of these fatalities were the result of explosions, two involved structural collapses at structure fires, one was caused by rapid fire progress, and one was caused by a cave-in at an outdoor rescue effort.

Struck-by incidents. Five firefighters died in struck-by incidents. Two firefighters were fatally injured when struck by non-fire vehicles and three were killed when their vehicles were struck by falling trees, with two of the fatalities occurring in the same incident.

Other causes. Of the three remaining on-duty fatalities, one firefighter was fatally injured in a fall at a structure fire, one was electrocuted after coming in contact with downed electrical wires, and one was fatally shot while responding to a domestic violence call.

Nature of injury

The term *nature of injury* refers to the medical process by which death occurred and is often referred to as the *cause of death* on autopsy reports and death certificates. Table C shows the distribution of deaths by the nature of the fatal injury or illness for all the fatalities and those that occurred on duty.

Table C. Fatal firefighter injuries in 2024 by nature of injury

Nature of injury	All fatalities		On-duty fatalities	
Sudden cardiac death	30	(48%)	20	(39%)
Trauma/crushing	18	(29%)	18	(35%)
Unspecified medical	6	(10%)	5	(10%)
Aneurysm or embolism	2	(3%)	2	(4%)
Heat stroke	2	(3%)	2	(4%)
Burns	1	(2%)	1	(2%)
Gunshot	1	(2%)	1	(2%)
Electrocution	1	(2%)	1	(2%)
Drowning	1	(2%)	1	(2%)
Total	62	(100%)	51	(100%)

As Table C indicates, heart attacks were the leading medical cause of fatal firefighter injuries in 2024, accounting for 30 deaths — nearly one-half of the fatality total — with 20 of the deaths occurring while firefighters were on duty and 10 deaths occurring within 24 hours of duty. Sudden cardiac

death fatalities are discussed in greater detail in a separate section later in this report.

Trauma injuries accounted for 29 percent of the firefighter fatalities, but this share rises to 35 percent for those fatalities that occurred while on duty. One in 10 firefighter fatalities were due to unspecified medical symptoms, and smaller shares of injuries were due to aneurysms or embolisms, heat stroke, burns, gunshot wounds, electrocution, and drowning.

Sudden cardiac deaths

Sudden cardiac deaths have regularly been the leading cause of death in the firefighter fatality study. As already indicated, 20 firefighters experienced fatal heart attacks while on duty, and 10 deaths occurred within 24 hours of duty. The 20 on-duty sudden cardiac deaths represented two-fifths (39 percent) of the 51 historically consistent on-duty fatalities.

Table D shows the distribution of sudden cardiac deaths by firefighter type. Career firefighters accounted for 11 of the *on-duty* sudden cardiac deaths, while volunteer firefighters accounted for the majority of sudden cardiac deaths *within 24 hours* of duty. Three non-municipal firefighters experienced fatal cardiac events while on duty — two state forestry firefighters and one industrial firefighter.

Table D. Sudden cardiac deaths by firefighter type

Firefighter type	On-duty	24 hours
Municipal	17	10
Career	11	3
Volunteer	6	7
Non-municipal	3	0
Total	20	10

Table E shows the distribution of sudden cardiac deaths by age and firefighter type for *municipal firefighters* only, separated by those that occurred on duty and those that occurred within 24 hours of duty.

Table E. Municipal firefighter sudden cardiac deaths by firefighter type and age

	On duty		Within 24 hours		
Age	Career	Volunteer	Career	Volunteer	Total
< 40 years	1	0	0	0	1
40–49	4	4	2	0	10
50–59	3	0	0	2	5
60–64	3	0	1	1	5
70 and older	0	2	0	4	6
Total	11	6	3	7	27

As indicated, only one of the fatally injured firefighters (a career firefighter) was under 40 years of age. In addition:

- Ten firefighters were between the ages of 45 and 49 — two volunteer and four career firefighters.
- Three career and two volunteer firefighters were between 50 and 59 years old.
- Four career firefighters and one volunteer firefighter were between the ages of 60 and 64 years of age.
- All of the firefighters aged 70 and older were volunteer firefighters.

Of the three non-municipal firefighters not shown in Table E, two were aged 50 to 59 and one was 40 to 49 years of age.

As indicated in Table F, volunteer firefighters accounted for the majority of the sudden cardiac deaths within 24 hours of duty in each of the three years that these fatalities have been included in the study. The age discrepancy between career and volunteer firefighters is likely to be a substantial factor in these distributions, as career firefighters typically retire by their early 60s. It should also be noted that career firefighters have access to immediate medical attention in the firehouse after returning from calls, while volunteer firefighters are more likely to return home or to their places of regular employment where such assistance is not available.

Table F. Municipal firefighter sudden cardiac deaths within 24 hours of duty: 2022–2024

Year	Total	Career	Volunteer
2022	16	4	12
2023	15	4	11
2024	10	3	7

Non-municipal firefighters

Six non-municipal firefighters were fatally injured in 2024. One of the victims was an industrial firefighter, one was a federal wildland firefighter, two were state forestry firefighters, and two were state contract firefighters.

- The two state contract firefighters were pilots who died as a result of aircraft crashes while fighting wildfires.
- One of the state forestry firefighters suffered a fatal heart attack while working with a hand crew at a wildfire and the second suffered a fatal heart attack while participating in a fitness activity.
- The federal forest service firefighter died as a result of heat stroke while participating in a fitness activity.
- The industrial firefighter suffered a heart attack after teaching a class.

Multiple-fatality incidents

There was one multiple-fatality incident in 2024, down from four multiple-fatality incidents in 2023. The lone multiple-fatality incident in 2024 occurred when a tree fell on the cabin of an apparatus responding to a structure fire during a hurricane, claiming the lives of two volunteer firefighters. This is only the third time since 2000 that the study has recorded one or no multiple-fatality incidents. There were no multiple-fatality incidents in 2019 and a single multiple-fatality incident in 2017.

Fatalities within 24 hours

As previously noted, in 2024, 11 firefighters died of heart attacks or medical conditions within 24 hours of duty, i.e., fatalities not included in this study prior to 2022. Ten of these deaths were sudden cardiac events and one was due to an undetermined medical condition.

Municipal firefighters accounted for all of the fatalities within 24 hours of duty. Eight of the firefighters (73 percent) were volunteer firefighters and three were career firefighters (27 percent), a distribution consistent with the results in 2022 and 2023.

- Two volunteer firefighters experienced fatal heart attacks at home after training activities the previous day.
- One volunteer firefighter experienced a fatal heart attack at home after responding to multiple alarms the previous day.
- One volunteer firefighter died as a result of unspecified medical symptoms after responding to multiple emergency calls the previous day.
- One volunteer firefighter had a fatal heart attack after responding to a motor vehicle incident, one after cutting fallen trees on a roadway, one after responding to a structure fire, and one was found at home when there was no word from him since his last call.
- One career firefighter had a heart attack at home after responding to a residential alarm.
- One career firefighter was found deceased at home from a fatal heart attack after failing to show up for duty.
- One career firefighter suffered a fatal heart attack after responding to an emergency medical call the previous day.

There is a noticeable age disparity between the volunteer and career firefighters who died within 24 hours of duty. The volunteer firefighters who died averaged 69 years of age while the career firefighters averaged 48 years of age.

- All of the volunteer firefighters were over 50 years of age, and five of the victims were aged 70 or older, including one firefighter over 80 years of age.
- Of the career firefighters, one was over 60 years of age and the remaining victims were in their 40s.

Long-term effects of working as a firefighter

This study focuses on firefighter deaths resulting from traumatic injuries, heart attacks, and medical conditions, such as strokes or aneurysms, provided they occur within 24 hours of duty. NFPA recognizes that working as a firefighter can also lead to chronic illnesses, such as cancer or heart disease, that arise from occupational factors and can prove fatal.

Suicide: Recognition of the importance of behavioral health programs and peer support for firefighters has become widespread in recent years. As with heart disease and cancer, this is a problem that follows firefighters after their careers end, whether in retirement or after some other form of separation from the fire service.

According to the Firefighter Behavioral Health Alliance (FBHA), 110 firefighters, 17 EMTs, and four dispatchers died by suicide in 2024. These numbers might change as new reports are validated by the FBHA.

Workshops and other resources for prevention assistance are available through FBHA and other behavioral health initiatives.

Cancer: Cancer is well-recognized as a significant risk in the fire service. At its 2025 memorial ceremonies, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation added the names of 17 firefighters who succumbed to cancer in 2024 to the Fallen Firefighter Memorial.

Table 1. Comparison of career and volunteer firefighter fatal injuries: 2024*

	Career firefighters		Volunteer firefighters	
	Number of deaths	Percent of deaths	Number of deaths	Percent of deaths
Type of duty				
Operating at fireground	9	31%	8	30%
Responding to or returning from alarms	3	10%	3	11%
Operating at non-fire emergencies	3	10%	8	30%
Training	5	17%	3	11%
Normal station activity	7	24%	3	11%
Inspection, investigation	1	3%	0	0%
Emergency medical service	1	3%	1	4%
Other on-duty activity	0	0%	1	4%
Total	29	100%	27	100%

Table 1. Comparison of career and volunteer firefighter fatal injuries: 2024* (Continued)

	Career firefighters		Volunteer firefighters	
	Number of deaths	Percent of deaths	Number of deaths	Percent of deaths
Cause of fatal injury				
Overexertion or strain	20	69%	16	59%
On duty	*17*	*59%*	*8*	*30%*
Within 24 hours	*3*	*10%*	*8*	*30%*
Caught or trapped	6	21%	1	4%
Struck by falling object	0	0%	3	11%
Struck by vehicle	0	0%	2	7%
Motor vehicle crash	1	3%	0	0%
Fall	1	3%	0	0%
Overturned or left road, no collision	0	0%	4	15%
Assault	1	3%	0	0%
Contact with electricity	0	0%	1	4%
Total	29	100%	27	100%
Nature of fatal injury				
Sudden cardiac death	14	48%	13	48%
On duty	*11*	*38%*	*6*	*22%*
Within 24 hours	*3*	*10%*	*7*	*26%*
Internal trauma/crushing	7	38%	9	33%
Burns	1	3%	0	0%
Gunshot	1	3%	0	0%
Aneurysm or embolism	2	7%	0	0%
Unspecified medical symptoms	2	7%	4	15%
On duty	*2*	*7%*	*3*	*11%*
Within 24 hours	*0*	*0%*	*1*	*4%*
Drowning	1	3%	0	0%
Heat stroke	1	3%	0	0%
Electrical shock	0	0%	1	4%
Total	29	100%	27	100%
Rank				
Firefighter	14	48%	14	52%
Company officer	6	21%	7	26%
Chief officer	8	28%	6	22%
Fire investigator	1	3%	0	0%
Total	29	100%	27	100%

Table 1. Comparison of career and volunteer firefighter fatal injuries: 2024* (Continued)

	Career firefighters		Volunteer firefighters	
	Number of deaths	Percent of deaths	Number of deaths	Percent of deaths
Years of service				
5 or fewer	5	17%	6	22%
6 to 10	3	10%	3	11%
11 to 15	2	7%	3	11%
16 to 20	8	28%	3	11%
21 to 25	3	10%	0	0%
26 to 30	4	14%	2	7%
31 to 35	3	10%	2	7%
36 to 40	1	3%	1	4%
41 to 45	0	0%	1	4%
46 to 50	0	0%	3	11%
More than 50	0	0%	3	11%
Total	29	100%	27	100%
Ages of firefighters — All deaths				
20 and under	0	0%	1	4%
21 to 25	0	0%	1	4%
26 to 30	3	10%	0	0%
31 to 35	3	10%	0	0%
36 to 40	2	7%	1	4%
41 to 45	9	28%	1	4%
46 to 50	1	3%	4	15%
51 to 55	5	17%	3	11%
56 to 60	4	14%	1	4%
61 to 65	2	7%	1	4%
66 to 70	0	0%	5	19%
71 to 75	0	0%	6	22%
Over 75	0	0%	3	11%
Total	29	100%	27	100%

*The data in this table includes municipal firefighters only and is comprised of deaths while firefighters were on duty and those within 24 hours of duty. Volunteer fatalities include one paid part-time firefighter.

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Select 2024 firefighter fatal injury narratives

Battalion chief killed in truck fire explosion

Just before 9:30 am, an engine company and battalion chief were dispatched to a reported tractor-trailer fire on a two-lane state highway. As further information was relayed to the responding companies, the battalion chief requested an additional apparatus. The battalion chief was first on scene and reported a refrigerated tractor-trailer truck with heavy fire involvement between the cab of the truck and the trailer. The battalion chief positioned his vehicle at the rear of the truck to block traffic and protect the engaged crews, then assumed command of the incident and began his initial size-up of the scene.

The engine company arrived immediately after the battalion chief and had water on the fire within one minute of arrival. Approximately five minutes into the incident, the battalion chief was attempting to determine the truck's cargo when a sudden violent explosion occurred as he approached the rear of the trailer to open the doors. The fire chief, who arrived on scene with the first engine, called for a personnel accountability report (PAR) but received no response from the battalion chief. He then located the injured and unresponsive battalion chief at the rear of the trailer and immediately requested medical assistance.

It was then determined the battalion chief was deceased on scene. According to the medical examiner, the battalion chief was killed instantly from blunt force, blast, and thermal injuries.

The cause of the explosion remains under investigation.

Assistant chief killed during tropical storm response

While responding to multiple weather-related calls during a severe tropical storm, a 69-year-old assistant chief responded to the scene of a downed power line on fire with multiple fallen trees in the area. After mitigating the incident, the chief was clearing the scene and about to respond to additional weather-related emergencies when a large tree fell on his department pickup truck. The chief was killed instantly due to blunt force trauma and severe head injuries.

One firefighter killed and multiple firefighters injured during propane gas explosion

Shortly after 7:30 pm, a 911 call center received a call reporting an outdoor odor of gas. One engine company and a truck company that was in the area were initially dispatched to the scene.

Upon investigation, it was determined that a 500-gallon underground propane tank was leaking. Additional units, including a battalion chief and hazardous materials unit, were requested to assist in the response. While conducting subsequent air monitoring and evacuation of all occupants from the involved structure, units reported a catastrophic explosion.

Multiple maydays were transmitted from inside the basement of the structure. Numerous firefighters were rescued from inside the structure and transported to area hospitals with serious injuries.

A 45-year-old firefighter operating in the area of the front door was subsequently located and determined to have been killed instantly. Preliminary findings show the uncontained propane may have migrated into the structure and been ignited by an unknown ignition source.

The incident remains under investigation.

Firefighter recruit dies while training

A 26-year-old firefighter recruit succumbed to heat-related illness during the second day of a 14-week training academy.

The academy was being conducted in the summer months and temperatures were reported to be around 95 degrees (F). The recruits had just finished a 45-minute break, which included mandatory fluid intake. The next evolution involved getting acclimated to fire gear by

dressing in full turnout gear, including boots, pants, coats, and helmets.

Recruits were instructed to walk around the training grounds. During the evolution, the firefighter began exhibiting symptoms of heat-related illness and was found to have an elevated temperature on exam. He was immediately evaluated and transported to the hospital where he succumbed to his illness.

Fire captain killed in single apparatus crash

After clearing the scene of a residential structure fire in the early morning hours, a 70-year-old fire captain and a chief operating a separate vehicle stopped to refill their booster tanks at a nearby hydrant. The captain briefly assisted the chief after topping off his truck, then proceeded to return to the station. The chief followed the same route back to the station after filling his own tank.

About a mile into his drive, he encountered the captain's apparatus, which was off the road and down a ravine. The truck was upright and facing backward, with its hose and equipment spread about the scene.

The chief climbed down the ravine and located the captain unresponsive, lying on the ground outside of the apparatus. Despite any efforts to assist, the captain was determined to be deceased at the scene. The incident remains under investigation.

Assistant chief killed and two firefighters injured after vehicle runs over hose

Two firefighters were injured and an assistant chief was killed while setting up a water supply at a residential structure fire.

The assistant chief and the two firefighters were in the area of a charged 5-inch supply line when a vehicle ran over the hose, causing a coupling to fail. All three members were thrown to the ground when the coupling failed.

The two firefighters sustained serious injuries and were transported to area hospitals where they recovered. The assistant chief received serious head injuries and was immediately airlifted to a trauma center where he succumbed to those injuries three days later.

Notes

For this report, the term *volunteer* refers to any firefighter whose principal occupation is not that of a full-time, paid member of a fire department. The term *career* refers to any firefighter whose occupation is that of a full-time, paid fire department member. The categories for cause of injury and nature of injury are based on the 1981 edition of NFPA 901*, Uniform Coding for Fire Protection*.

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