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National Fire Incident Reporting System Tips for Completing 5.0 Modules

Below is a list of helpful tips for completing the required National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) 5.0 modules. If additional assistance is required, you may contact the Bureau of Fire Services by telephone at 517-241-0691 or by e-mail [at NFIRS@michigan.gov](mailto:NFIRS@michigan.gov). You may also refer to the frequently asked questions page available on our website.

NFIRS 5.0 MODULES:

NFIRS Version 5.0 consists of 11 modules. The first 5 modules are considered to be “required” modules. **The first module, or the Basic Module, shall be completed for every incident.** The remaining required modules (2-5) are completed as warranted by the incident type and occurrences at the incident. Additional modules may also be used as appropriate to describe the incident.

- **Basic Module (NFIRS-1):** This module captures general information on every incident (or emergency call) to which the department responds. Dates and times are required to be entered in this module. Be sure to include the exact month, day, year and time of day when the alarm was received by the fire department. **Note:** The 24-hour clock should be used (0000-2359). Time entered as 0000 signifies the start of a new day.

The resources section in the Basic Module refers to the total number of fire department personnel and apparatus (suppression, EMS, other) that responded to the incident. This includes all fire and EMS personnel assigned to the incident whether they arrived at the scene or were canceled before arrival. Note: this field should not be used to identify the number assigned to a particular apparatus.

- **Fire Module (NFIRS-2):** This module is used to describe each fire incident to which the department responds. The Fire Module is always required for Incident Types 110-112, 120-138 and 161-164 with no exceptions. It is optional for Incident Types 113-118 and 150-155 and never allowed for Incident Types 200-911. For wildland fire incidents, the Wildland Module can be used instead of the Fire Module.
- **Structure Fire Module (NFIRS-3):** This module is used to describe each structure fire to which the department responds and is used in conjunction with the Fire Module. The Structure Fire Module is always required for Incident Types 111-112 and 120-123, is optional for Incident Types 113-118 and never allowed for Incident Types 130-173.

Structure Module block I4 – main floor size is a required field. Enter the size of the main floor of the building involved either by indicating the total square feet (in the first blank) or by entering the length and width in feet (in the second blank). Only the structure type element is required on the Structure Module for code 112, the rest of the module is optional.

- **Civilian Fire Causality Module (NFIRS-4):** This module is used to report injuries or deaths to civilians or other emergency personnel (e.g., police officers, non-fire department/EMS personnel) that are related to a fire incident. It is used in conjunction with the Fire Module and, if applicable, the Structure Fire Module. Non-fire related injuries or deaths to civilians can be reported on the EMS Module.
- **Fire Service Casualty Module (NFIRS-5):** This module is used to report injuries and deaths of firefighters. It can also be used to report the exposure of a firefighter to chemicals or biological agents at an incident which do not result in any symptoms at that time but may manifest themselves at a later date. This module can also be used in conjunction with any of the other modules.

The following modules (NFIRS 6 – 11) are optional, but it is highly encouraged that your department or municipalities utilize them as use of these modules will provide valuable data to better describe your incidents and demonstrate the fire problem to local, county, state and federal agencies.

- **EMS Module (NFIRS-6):** This module is completed by fire departments that provide emergency medical services and is used to report all medical incidents where the department provided the primary patient care. This includes incidents where there were civilian fire-related casualties and a Civilian Fire Casualty Module was completed and/or firefighter fire-related casualties and a Fire Service Casualty Module was completed. Note: This module does not serve as a patient care record but it can be used in conjunction with the local requirements for patient care.

The EMS module may only be used for the following incident types: 100-243, 311, 321323, 351-381, 400-431, 451 and 900.

Hazardous Material Module (NFIRS-7): This module is completed to report spills or releases of 55 gallons or more of hazardous materials. It is also completed when special HazMat actions are taken, including when hazmat resources were dispatched or should have used for assessing, mitigating or managing the situation. As appropriate, the module is used in conjunction with the Fire Module or other modules to provide detailed information about incidents involving hazardous materials.

The Hazardous Material module may only be used for the following incident types: 100-243, 321-323, 371, 400-431, 451 and 900.

- **Wildland Fire Module (NFIRS-8):** This module is completed to report incidents that involve wildland or vegetation fires and is used in lieu of the Fire Module for wildland fire incidents. If the Wildland Module is not used in place of the Fire Module, the Fire Module must be completed for Incident Types 140-143, 160 and 170-173. The Wildland Module is also optional for Incident Types 561, 631 and 632. However, the Wildland Module is never allowed for the following Incident Types: 100-138, 150-155, 161-164, 200-555, 571-621 and 641-911.

- **Apparatus or Resources Module (NFIRS-9):** This is a department-use module which is completed to report data specific to each piece of apparatus that responds to an incident. It includes information that can be used to calculate response time and time out of service, number of personnel and actions taken. The Apparatus or Resources Module however is not to be used if the Personnel Module is used.

- **Personnel Module (NFIRS-10):** This is also a department-use module which is completed to report the same information as on the Apparatus or Resources Module however it also provides for tracking the personnel associated with each apparatus. This module is not to be used if the Apparatus or Resources Module is used.

- **Arson Module (NFIRS-11):** This module is completed to report additional information on fires that have been coded by the department as “intentionally set.” The Arson Module shall be used for Incident Types 100-173.
 - Juvenile Set-fires: The Arson Module may also be used to document juvenile-set fires, whether determined to be intentional, unintentional or under investigation. This information will permit analysis of juvenile fire-setting trends, including intervention strategies and recidivism.

The Arson Module can be used to identify characteristics of persons under the age of 18 involved in fire-setting. This module can be used if the cause of ignition (E1 on the Fire Module) is intentional (code 1) and the Arson Module is completed or if the cause of ignition is unintentional (code 2).

INCIDENT TYPES:

The incident type is the actual situation that emergency personnel find when they arrive on the scene, which may not be the same as the incident type that was initially dispatched. If a more serious condition developed after the fire department’s arrival, that incident should also be reported. As a general rule use the lowest numbered series that applies to the incident. The Fire Other - 100 category should only be used if no other incident type describes the situation.

If the call your department is responding to is cancelled while enroute, please enter the cancelled response as Incident Type 611. The time cleared should be entered as the arrival time and the action taken shall be entered as Cancelled Enroute – 93.

If your fire department has no activity for a particular month it is important that you fill out the “No Activity” section of the NFIRS report. This response will indicate your department is actively participating in the NFIRS 5.0 system as mandated by [Public Act \(PA\) 207 of 1941, the Fire Prevention Code](#). The incident date should indicate the last day of the month in which your department had no activity.

A list of specific incident types is also available in the NFIRS Quick Reference Guide. Please refer to the fire codes for incidents involving fire and hazardous materials and/or fire and EMS.

- **Aid Given/Received:** Fire departments are to track their own fire service casualties separately.
 - **Aid Given:** Information in the Basic Module through block G1 must be completed by the department giving aid. If a fire service casualty also occurs, the H1 Casualties block in the Basic Module shall be completed. The remainder of the Basic Module and any other modules associated with the incident may be optionally completed but are not required.
 - **Aid Received:** The department receiving aid is responsible for tracking and entering all of the civilian casualty information for the incident.
 - **Incident Type 571 - Stand By:** If Incident Type 571 is used and if was given/received, codes 3-5 shall be used. Information on the Basic Module through block D shall be completed by the department giving aid. The rest of the Basic Module and the other modules as applicable are optional.

If any other incident type is used other than 571 and aid is given/received, codes 35 and the fire department identification number (FDID) in block D shall be entered. The Basic Module through block G1 (resources) shall also be entered.

- **Chimney Fire:** A fire in and confined to a chimney or flue should be coded as Incident Type 114. If the fire extends beyond the chimney it should be coded as Incident Type 111 or 112. The Fire Module shall be completed for incidents involving both contained and non-contained fires (Incident Types 113-118) if there are injuries, deaths or property loss associated with the incident.
- **Civilian Fire Casualty:** A fire casualty is defined as person who is injured or killed as a result of a fire. This includes injuries or deaths from natural or accidental causes sustained while the individual was involved in activities such as fire control, rescue or while escaping from the dangers of the fire. All civilian fire casualties are required to be reported to the State Fire Marshal by using the NFIRS-4 Civilian Fire Casualty Module, Incident Types 100-199. When a victim dies after the original incident report has been

filed with the state, a change transaction must be submitted to change the injury to a death. All other civilian casualties may be reported by using the EMS Module however this is not mandatory.

Note: If a civilian is injured in a non-fire incident such as a demonstration or training fire, a NFIRS report is not required. However, an amendment to the [PA 207 of 1941](#) requires that the chief of a fire department in charge of a demonstration or training fire immediately notify the State Fire Marshal of the death or injury of a civilian which results from a non-fire incident.

- **Clothes Dryer Fire:** While a clothes dryer fire may occur in a mobile property used as a structure (i.e. manufactured housing or a dryer fire on a ship), all clothes dryer fires are considered to be building fires. On the Basic Module, the dollar loss would account for the contents only. A Fire Module shall also be completed. The section concerning the equipment involved in ignition (including the make and model of the dryer) should be coded as Incident Type 811.
- **Clandestine Drug Lab Fire:** This shall be entered as a combination of property use (Basic Module, block J) and on-site materials (Fire Module, block C). For example, a clandestine drug lab in a single family home would be coded as the following:

Single Family Home:

Basic Module: Block J – 419 (1 or 2 family dwelling)

Fire Module: Section B1 – 1 Unit

On-site Materials:

Fire Module: Block C – 545 (Illegal Drugs). Check Box 2 for processing or manufacturing

Note: If reportable quantities of hazardous materials are present, then a Hazardous Materials Module should also be completed. A hazardous materials incident not involving a fire would not capture the property details, specifically the on-site materials which are collected in the Fire Module. The combination of property use (Basic Module, block J) and Hazmat ID (NFIRS-7, block B) may identify a clandestine drug lab.

- **Estimated Dollar Amount:** The estimated dollar amount of losses and values field (G2) is required to be filled out for all fires as it helps to illustrate the magnitude of the fire problem in Michigan and identifies the incidents where monetary loss is high. This figure is a rough estimate of the total loss to the structure and contents in terms of the cost of replacement in like kind and quantity. It should include contents damaged by fire, smoke, water and overhaul. Note: The estimated dollar amount is optional for all non-fires.

- **Fire Exposure:** A fire exposure is limited to fire incidents where there is actual flame damage. If the adjacent property is damaged due to water, heat, smoke or fire control, include the damage in the main report. The owner/occupant information can be captured in the remarks section or the supplemental report (NFIRS Form 1S). Multiple persons and entities involved can also be documented on this report. The number of buildings involved should be documented in section B2 of the Fire Module.

The exposure number is a sequential number assigned to each exposure fire resulting from the original fire. For example, the original fire would be entered as exposure number 000. The exposure first fire would be entered as 001. The next exposure fire would be entered as 002 and so on.

A Basic Module shall be completed for each fire exposure. Be sure to mark the exposure fire block for cause of ignition for each exposure fire and then skip to Section G.

- **Incident Location:** Specify where the incident occurred in the Basic Module, Field B. When directions or intersection is selected, one street name should be entered in the street or highway field and another in the cross street or directions field. Note: If this procedure is not followed, the incident will be invalid.
- **Grass Fire:**
 - **Small Grass Fire:** Abbreviated reporting for a small grass fire was a feature of the NFIRS 5.0 system that ***did not*** make it into the final release version. The incident type for a small grass fire was dropped during the process of bringing NFIRS 5.0 codes more in-line with the existing NFPA 901 coding scheme. Therefore, a fire module always needs to be completed for a grass fire.
 - **Multiple Grass Fires/Single Cause:** Multiple grass fires set by a single cause that occurs within the same jurisdiction and property use should be coded as one fire with multiple ignitions. Should the fires continue to the next fire district the neighboring district should make out a similar report and list all fires within the same property use as a single fire.
- **Mulch Fire:** A mulch fire should be captured as Incident Type 142 – Brush or brush and grass mixture. Included are ground fuels lying on or immediately above the ground such as roots, dead leaves, fine dead wood and downed logs. The item first ignited would be 72 – light vegetation, not crop, including grass, leaves, needles, chaff, mulch and compost.

- **Safe Delivery Act:** When a fire department takes in an abandoned baby and NFIRS 5.0 is the only tracking system, the incident should be coded as Incident Type 551 and the action taken as 70.
- **Training Fire:** An approved training fire should be coded as Incident Type 632 – Prescribed Fire. Included are fires ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives and have a written, approved prescribed fire plan prior to ignition. Note: A training fire should not be classified as a hostile fire (100-199).
- **Vehicle Fire:** A vehicle involved in a fire is always considered a piece of equipment. If a vehicle is located in or on a building or other structure it would be coded as a vehicle fire unless the structure becomes involved. If the structure becomes involved it would then be coded as a structure fire. Once the incident is coded as a structure fire, the vehicle would be considered contents. Clarify in the remarks section the vehicles involved. If the vehicle was involved in ignition note the make and model of the vehicle in the mobile property section.

If a vehicle parked in a parking ramp catches fire and two other vehicles with separate individual owners catch fire from the first vehicle, treat each of the two other vehicles as a separate exposure. If, instead, a fleet of vehicles is involved and they all have the same corporate owner then they may all be treated as a single exposure.