



FIRE FIGHTER FATALITY INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION PROGRAM (FFFIPP)

What is the FFFIPP?

The FFFIPP is a public health program that conducts independent investigations of select career and volunteer firefighter medical and traumatic injury line-of-duty deaths.

We do not:

- determine fault or place blame on fire departments or firefighters
- enforce compliance with State or Federal job safety and health standards

What is the goal of the FFFIPP?

Our goal is to prevent firefighter deaths.

To do this, we work to:

- identify and define the characteristics of firefighter line-of-duty deaths
- recommend ways to prevent deaths and injuries
- share prevention strategies with the fire service

What types of line-of-duty deaths does the FFFIPP investigate?

- **Medical.*** Medical deaths are caused by stress/overexertion or exposures. Our investigations assess personal and workplace factors. Personal factors include individual risk factors for heart disease. Workplace factors include firefighter physical demands and exposure to hazardous chemicals as well as fire department heart screenings and fitness and wellness programs.
- **Trauma.*** Trauma deaths are caused by a number of events, including motor vehicle crashes, struck-by objects, structural collapses, caught or trapped, falls, burns, and electrocution. Our investigations examine the site of the incident and gather information from personnel on the scene at the time of the incident.

Each year about

80-90

firefighters die in the line-of-duty*

Since 1998 FFFIPP has investigated

- 700+ firefighter line-of-duty deaths
- About 40% of all firefighter deaths

Reports include:

- A summary of the fire event
- Factors that contributed to the death
- Recommendations to prevent similar deaths

View our reports:

 www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/investigations/completedinvestigations/

Search reports by state, fatality type, or keyword



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

*U.S. Fire Administration [2019]. Firefighter fatalities in the United States in 2018. https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/firefighter_fatalities_2018.pdf



How does the FFFIPP conduct investigations?

To conduct an investigation we need cooperation from departments and firefighters.



Receive firefighter fatality notification

Notification often comes from:

- the United States Fire Administration (USFA)
- fire department representatives
- the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)
- state fire marshal's offices
- media coverage



Decide to investigate

We use a decision flow chart to prioritize investigations. If requested by the fire department, we work with them to arrange an investigation. We also consider our ongoing investigation workload.

We do not conduct investigations of non-fatal or near-miss events.



Conduct a site visit to gather information

An investigator contacts the fire department to enlist their cooperation and schedule a visit. A fire department's decision to participate is voluntary. We visit the incident site and gather information, review relevant records, and interview fire department personnel and firefighters who were on the scene at the time of the incident. We may also call on other agencies and partners to provide support as necessary.



Prepare a report

Investigators analyze the collected information, then prepare a report. The report is shared with the fire department, the union (if present), a subject matter expert from the fire service for trauma investigations, and family for medical investigations. Subject matter expert review helps us make sure the report is accurate.

Reports do not include personal or employer information.



Share the report

Once the report is reviewed by the fire department, union, and family as a courtesy, it is posted to the NIOSH website so others can use it for prevention activities, training, and education purposes.

Who are the FFFIPP investigators?

Our investigators are safety professionals, engineers, medical officers, and industrial hygienists with training and experience in fireground and non-fireground hazards. Many of our investigators have experience working in the fire service in firefighter and fire officer roles.




What else does the FFFIPP do to keep firefighters safe on the job?

Our investigators participate on a number of National Fire Protection Association and other consensus standard setting committees. This allows us to directly share key findings with organizations that can influence change to improve firefighter safety and health.

Want more information?

Visit the NIOSH FFFIPP website:

www.cdc.gov/niosh/fire/

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Find NIOSH products and get answers to workplace safety and health questions:
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) | TTY: 1-888-232-6348
CDC/NIOSH INFO: cdc.gov/info | cdc.gov/niosh
Monthly NIOSH eNews: cdc.gov/niosh/eNews

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