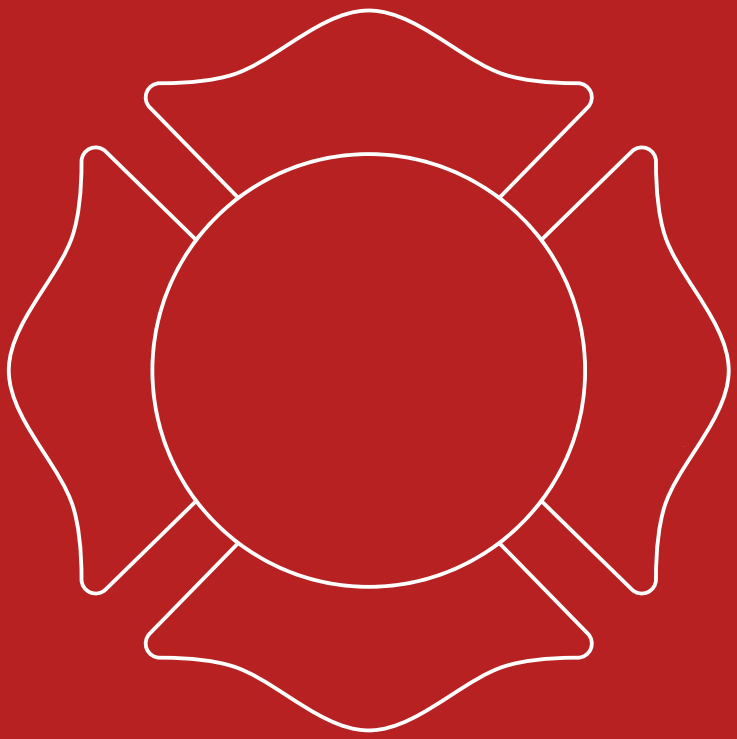
10,237,656
TOTAL INCIDENTS

699,063
ACRES BURNED

134,925
PERSONNEL FIRE/
SMOKE EXPOSURES

FIRE SERVICE INDEX



EIGHTH EDITION
2026

eso®

INSIGHTS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR
FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Introduction

NFIRS is retired. After nearly 50 years as the national standard for fire incident reporting, the legacy system has given way to the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), now the sole reporting platform for the fire service.

The data in this report spans the final full calendar year of incident reporting under NFIRS. This eighth edition of the ESO Fire Service Index examines more than 10.2 million incidents from 3,805 departments, the largest dataset in the report's history. Six measures cover the operational fundamentals that have defined these reports from the beginning: how departments allocate resources across incident types, how they respond to structure fires and outdoor fires, how quickly the first apparatus reaches the scene, how consistently personnel document decontamination after exposure, and for the first time, what the data shows about electric vehicle and e-bike fires.

What follows is both a snapshot and a baseline. Each measure presents aggregate national patterns against which departments can compare their own data. Each also marks the last time those patterns will be drawn from a data standard designed in 1976.

A different conversation comes next. NERIS gives departments the ability to document what NFIRS never could: the number of people rescued, the specific actions personnel took in responding to an incident, the subtypes of structures involved, and the resources that were deployed. For the first time, the fire service will have data infrastructure that matches the complexity of its work.

This report is informative and directional. The dataset represents agencies using ESO Fire RMS and is not comprehensive of all departments nationally. Every agency serves a different community with different resources, geography, and constraints. Use these measures to ask questions of your own data, identify where local patterns diverge from national trends, and build the reporting practices that will carry into the NERIS era.

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DATASET

The 2026 ESO Fire Service Index uses data compiled from 3,805 participating agencies using ESO Fire RMS, representing 10,237,656 incidents from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2025. The dataset expanded from the previous edition, which drew from 2,739 agencies and 7.9 million incidents.

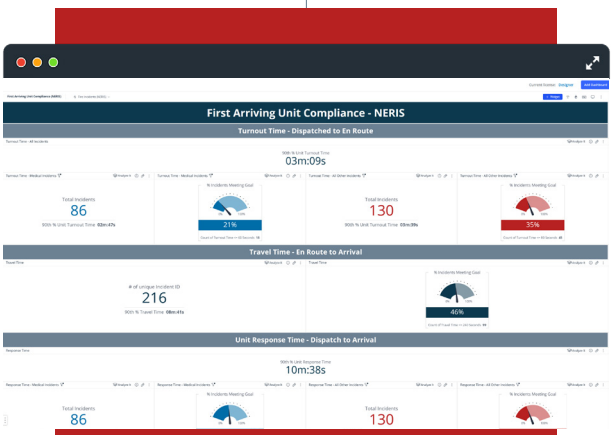
10,237,656
Total incidents

699,063
Acres burned

134,925
Personnel fire/smoke exposures

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

The Fire Service Index offers an aggregate look at data from across the United States, allowing departments to see how they compare in specific operational areas. Population size, geography, staffing model, and call volume all affect performance relative to national figures. Use this report as a starting point.



QUERY YOUR OWN DATA

This report's measures can be run against your agency's data using **ESO Insights**, which includes a library of preset queries built from the same operational definitions, inclusion criteria, and performance thresholds used in this analysis.

READ MORE

THE SIX MEASURES

This edition examines six measures across five returning topics and one new addition. Each measure presents a key finding, supporting data, contextual analysis, and a recommended action for department leaders.

1. Incident types

EMS calls continue to dominate total call volume, and the gap between reported and actual EMS activity may be wider than the data shows.

2. Structure fires

Residential properties dominate structure fire volume, and automatic extinguishing system presence has not moved.

3. Outdoor fires

Wildland fire activity no longer follows a seasonal pattern, and most outdoor fires have no documented cause.

4. First apparatus times

Median response times cluster near NFPA benchmarks, but the 90th percentile reflects the realities of distance, staffing, and geography that shape responses across different communities.

5. Decontamination

Documentation rates are improving in a workforce still navigating a cultural shift around exposure reporting.

6. Electric vehicle fires NEW!

A small number of identified incidents suggests a reporting gap.

Incident types

KEY FINDING

EMS calls account for two-thirds of all fire department responses, while fire-specific incidents (Series 100) make up 3% of total volume. Despite a substantial expansion of the dataset from the previous edition, the distribution across incident types is unchanged.

Of incidents are EMS-related

3%
Of all incidents are fire-specific

341K
Fire incidents (Series 100)

CONTEXT

Adding more than 1,000 agencies and 2.3 million incidents to this year's dataset did not shift the incident distribution. Rescue and EMS incidents (Series 300) account for 66% of call volume. Good intent calls, service calls, and false alarms collectively represent another 27%. Fire-specific responses (Series 100) represent 3% of all calls.

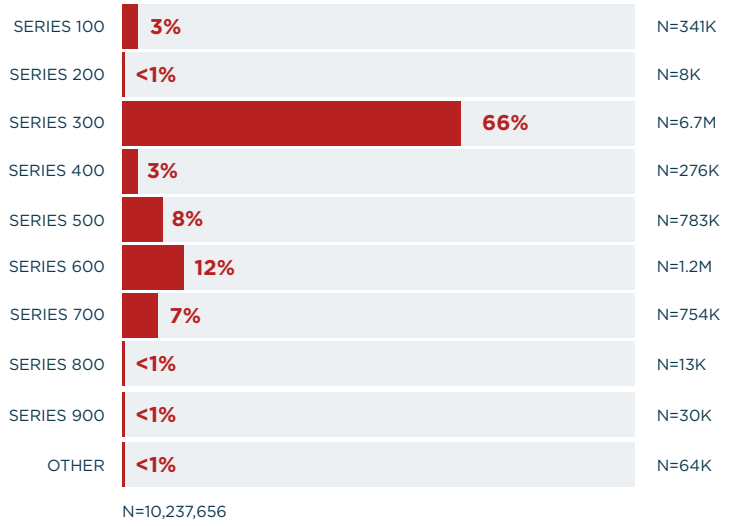
The 66% EMS figure likely understates actual EMS activity. As departments have transitioned reporting systems, some have stopped creating separate incident reports for EMS runs within their fire records management platforms. A portion of EMS volume never shows up in the incident count; future editions built on NERIS data should produce a more complete picture.

The dataset also includes 594K aid-given and 370K aid-received responses, reflecting the mutual and automatic aid activity that defines how departments actually operate across jurisdictional lines.

FIGURE M1-1

Counts of incidents by incident type

Series 300 (Rescue and EMS) accounts for roughly 7 million responses. Good intent calls, service calls, and false alarms each range from 750K to 1 million. Fire-specific incidents total 341K.



Incident type groups

SERIES 100: Fire

SERIES 200: Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (No Fire)

SERIES 300: Rescue & EMS Incident

SERIES 400: Hazardous Condition (No Fire)

SERIES 500: Service Call

SERIES 600: Good Intent Call

SERIES 700: False Alarm and False Call

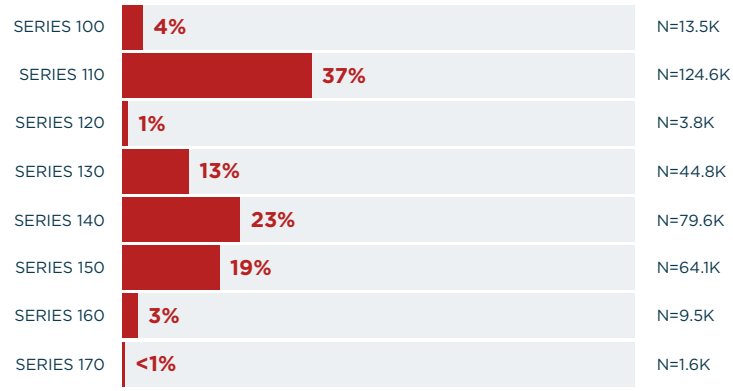
SERIES 800: Severe Weather and Natural Disaster

SERIES 900: Special Incident Type

FIGURE M1-2

Counts of fire incidents by type Series 100 only

Structure fires account for 37% of all fire-specific responses. Natural vegetation fires and outside rubbish fires together make up another 42%. Vehicle fires round out the top four.



Incident type groups

SERIES 100: Fire, Other

SERIES 110: Structure Fire

SERIES 120: Fire in Mobile Property Used as a Fixed Structure

SERIES 130: Mobile Property (Vehicle) Fire

SERIES 140: Natural Vegetation Fire

SERIES 150: Outside Rubbish Fire

SERIES 160: Special Outside Fire

SERIES 170: Cultivated Vegetation, Crop Fire

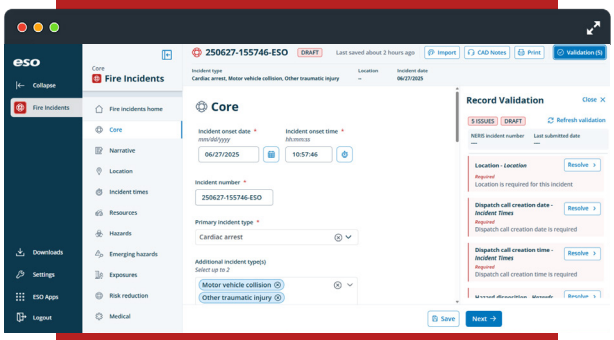
RECOMMENDED ACTION

Department budgets, staffing models, and training programs should reflect primary incident types in their communities.

For most departments in this dataset, that means two-thirds or more of responses are EMS. Departments that have not recently audited their call volume by incident type should run that analysis and bring it into budget discussions, strategic plans, and conversations with elected officials. Data on personnel on scene at working fires, time to control incidents, and incident type distribution should also drive training decisions – ensuring responders are prepared for both high-frequency calls and low-frequency, high-risk events.

Departments should also audit whether their current reporting practices capture the full scope of their operations.

If EMS runs are not generating separate incident reports in the fire records management system, the true impact of call volume on staffing and resource needs goes undocumented. That undercount affects grant eligibility and resource allocation. Beyond accuracy, tracking incident type distribution over a three- to five-year span can surface shifts in response patterns and evolving community needs. With NERIS adoption underway, now is the right time to establish reporting habits that carry forward into the new system.



ESO IN ACTION

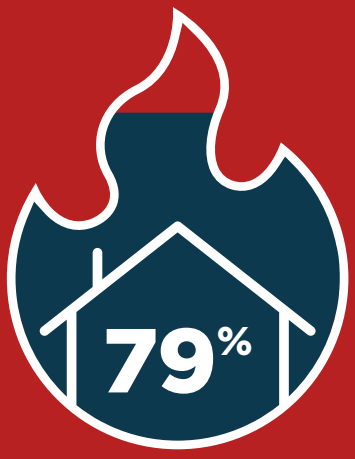
ESO Fire RMS captures incident type, including NFIRS series classification, working fire status, and mutual aid disposition. Departments using ESO can filter their own incident data by type and time period, then compare their distribution against the national patterns in this report.

READ MORE

Structure fires

KEY FINDING

Residential properties account for 79% of structure fire responses. Automatic extinguishing systems are present in only 7% of structure fire incidents, unchanged from the previous edition.



Of structure fire responses were to residential properties

34,381
Structure fire incidents (Incident Type Code 111)

61%
Classified as working fires

+4%
Increase in working fire share from previous edition

CONTEXT

A higher proportion of structure fire responses required more and longer commitments of firefighting resources this year, with working fires rising from 57% in the previous edition to 61%. Residential properties account for 79% of those incidents, consistent with prior editions.

Among residential structure fires, one- or two-family dwellings account for 77%, followed by multifamily dwellings at 16%. While two-family and multifamily dwellings make up a substantial percentage of residential fires, single-family homes remain the primary concern for community fire safety and prevention efforts.

Automatic extinguishing systems are documented as present in 7% of structure fire incidents, with 82% reporting none, and 11% classified as undetermined. These figures are unchanged from the previous edition. Residential fire sprinkler systems remain one of the most effective tools for reducing life safety risk in the property types where fire departments most frequently respond, and the data underscores the need for a stronger push for their adoption across both single-family and multifamily housing.

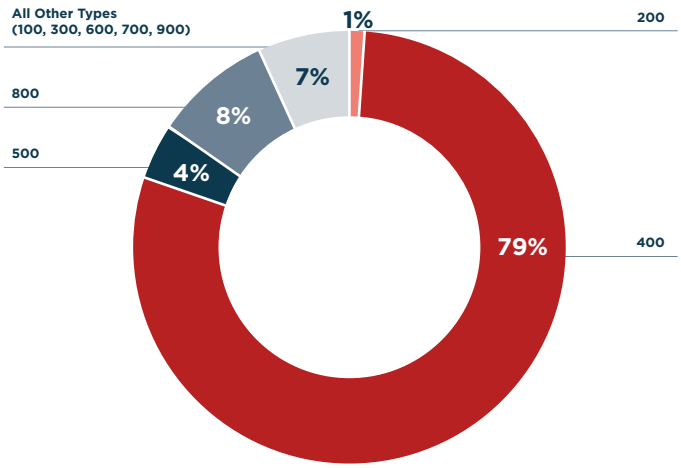
Among residential structure fires, the median property loss is $30,000, with the 90th percentile reaching $200,000. Median estimated contents loss is $10,000, rising to $75,000 at the 90th percentile.

Property loss estimation has known limitations. On-scene figures are produced by responding personnel in the field, and they do not consistently align with insurance-verified data. NERIS addresses this by replacing field estimates with insurance-sourced loss figures, which will change how this data appears in future editions.

FIGURE M2-1

Structure fire incidents by property use category

Residential properties (Category 400) account for 79% of structure fire incidents, followed by storage properties (Category 800) at 8% and commercial properties (Category 500) at 4%.



Property use codes

- **100:** Assembly
- **200:** Educational
- **300:** Healthcare, Detention, Correction
- **400:** Residential
- **500:** Mercantile, Business
- **600:** Industrial, Utility, Defense, Agriculture, Mining
- **700:** Manufacturing, Processing
- **800:** Storage
- **900:** Outside or Special Property

Residential use codes

- **400:** Residential, Other
- **419:** 1 or 2 Family Dwelling
- **429:** Multifamily Dwelling
- **439:** Boarding/Rooming House, Residential Hotels
- **449:** Hotel/Motel, Commercial

FIGURE M2-2

Residential structure fire property loss distribution

Median property loss of $30,000 reflects a wide range, with the 90th percentile at $200,000. Total documented property value across residential structure fires is $6 billion, with $2 billion in losses.

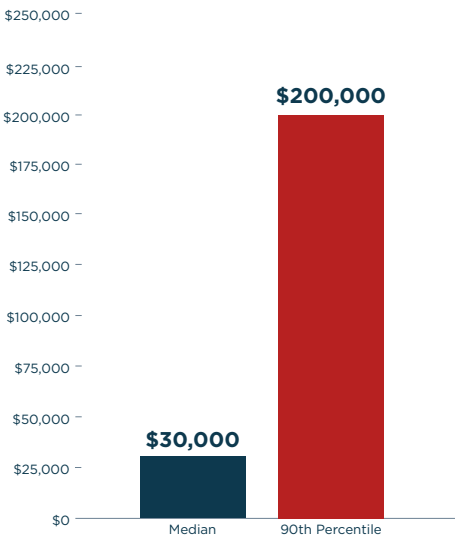
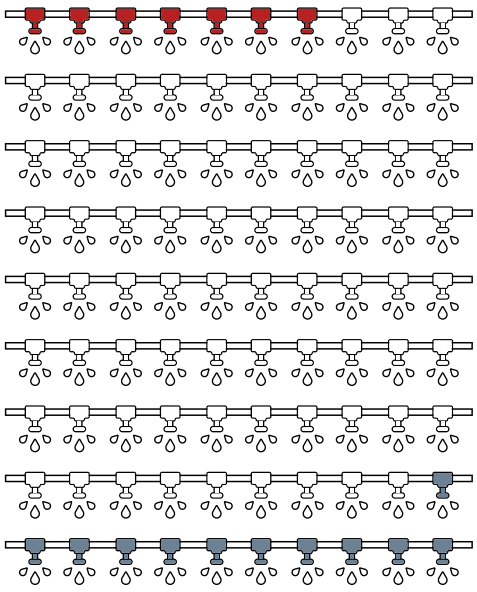


FIGURE M2-3

Working fire status and extinguishing system presence

Working fires represent 61% of incidents. Automatic extinguishing systems are present in 7%, absent in 82%, and undetermined in 11%.



Total Structure Fire Incidents: 34,381

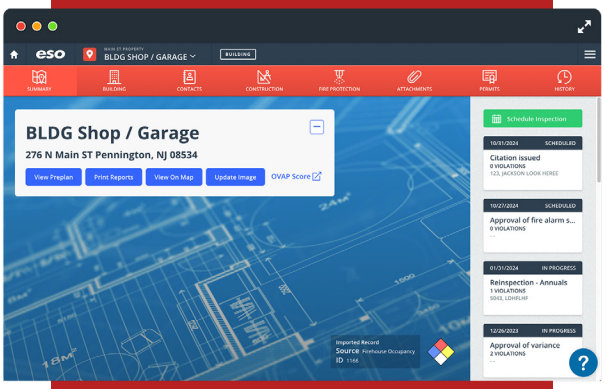
61%
Working fires

Automatic extinguishing systems

7% Present

82% Absent

11% Undetermined



ESO IN ACTION

Departments using **ESO Fire RMS** can track residential fire volume, working fire percentages, and property loss trends over time alongside the national figures in this report. Working fire status, property use classification, and property loss data are captured at the point of documentation.

READ MORE

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Departments that track their own sprinkler presence data can identify which property types and geographic areas have the largest gaps in suppression coverage.

That analysis supports targeted community risk reduction, from public education to code adoption advocacy. Sprinklers in multi-family environments are supported by most modern codes and should be supported by fire inspection practices and plan review at construction. Residential fire sprinkler codes are more difficult for adoption, but departments that bring building officials, developers, and community leaders to the table to negotiate cost-effective fire safety improvements see stronger outcomes than those relying on code mandates alone.

The property loss estimation challenge is well documented. As NERIS replaces the field estimation model with insurance-sourced data, departments should prepare for a shift in how loss figures appear in their records and educate their elected officials and governance groups about how this transition will impact future property loss data. This shift also presents an opportunity to reframe the conversation around the value fire departments protect in their communities rather than focusing solely on losses.

Outdoor fires

KEY FINDING

Outdoor fires peaked in March, with wildland fires accounting for 81K incidents and nearly 697,000 acres burned. Wildland fire activity is distributed across all 12 months.

72%
Of outdoor fires have no cause recorded

148,084
Outdoor fire incidents

696,842
Wildland acres burned

CONTEXT

The wildland fire count rose 48% from the previous edition, but total acreage dropped from 1.78 million to under 700,000. Count and acreage tell different stories depending on whether a given year's fires are numerous but contained or fewer but catastrophic.

Monthly data reinforces what departments across the country are experiencing: Wildland fire is a year-round operational reality. March and July produced the expected peaks, but December still recorded 3.7K wildland fire incidents. Wildland fire activity increasingly affects departments beyond traditionally high-risk regions. That shift affects not only local preparedness but mutual aid demand on metropolitan departments called to support wildland operations outside their jurisdiction.

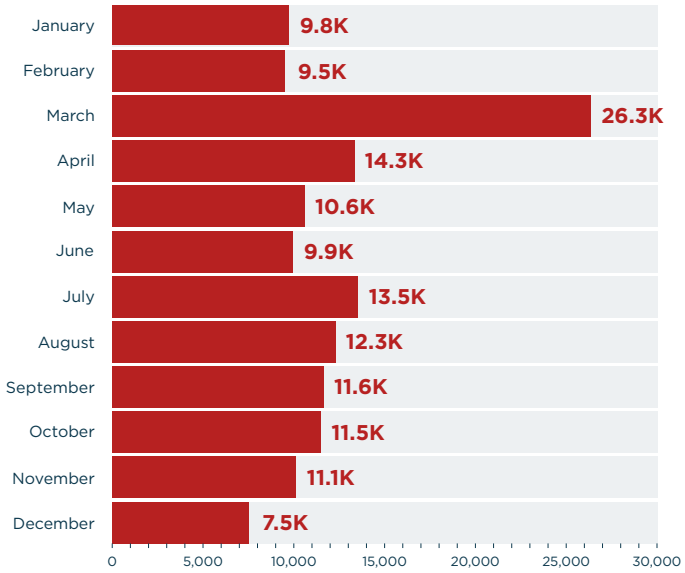
The documentation gap for cause reporting limits what this data can tell us about prevention – and about the effectiveness of the risk reduction strategies described above. Among the outdoor fires with a documented cause, open or outdoor fires, debris and vegetation burns, and equipment are the most common categories. Wildland fires show a similar pattern, with 51% having no cause recorded. Until that gap closes, this data cannot support the prevention work it should be informing.

Nationally, the National Interagency Fire Center reported 64,897 wildfires burning 8.9 million acres in 2024, both above the 10-year average.[1] The ESO dataset does not represent the full national picture but provides a consistent reference for departments tracking their own exposure over time.

FIGURE M3-1

Outdoor fire incidents by month

March accounts for the highest volume at over 26K. July produces a secondary peak at 13.54K. December records the lowest at 7.52K.

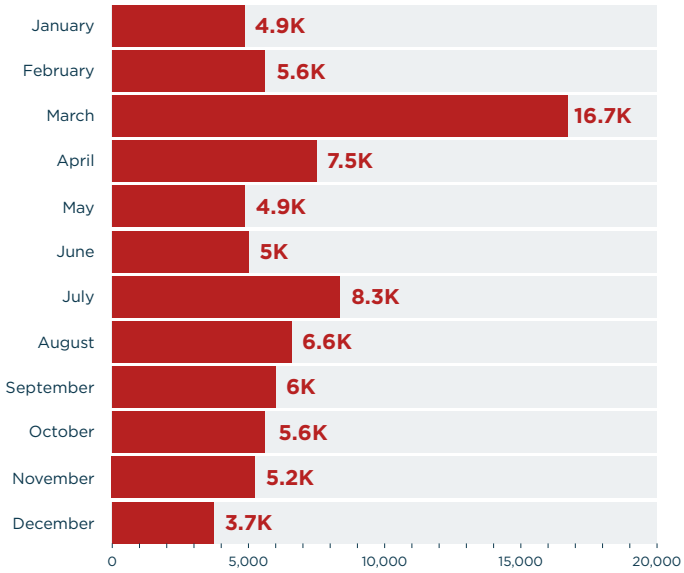


Total Outdoor Fire Incidents: 148,084

FIGURE M3-2

Wildland fire incidents by month

Wildland fires follow the same seasonal pattern, with March at 16.68K and July at 8.3K. Activity persists through winter, with December at 3.7K incidents.

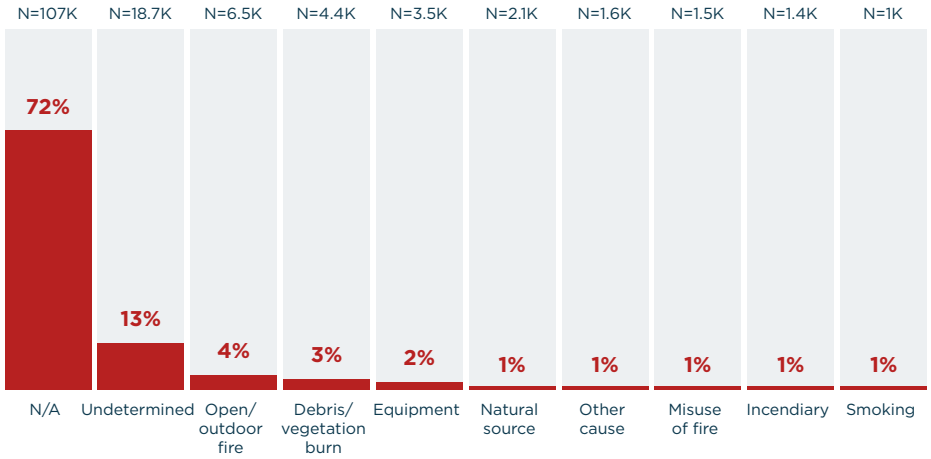


Total Wildfire Incidents: 80,641

FIGURE M3-3

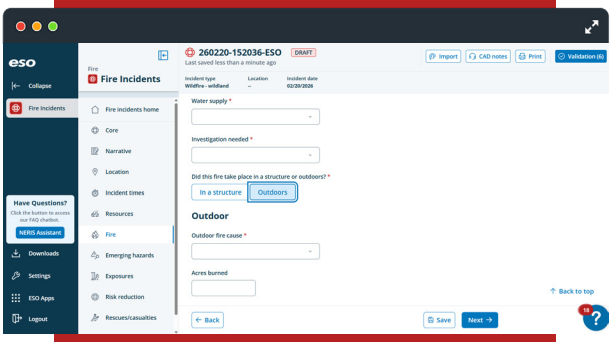
Outdoor fire causes

72% of outdoor fires have no documented cause. 13% are undetermined. Among documented causes, open/outdoor fires, debris burns, and equipment are most common.



Incident Type Codes

- **561:** Unauthorized Burning
- **142:** Brush Fire
- **143:** Grass Fire
- **631:** Authorized Controlled Burning
- **140:** Natural Vegetation Fire – Other
- **141:** Forest, Woods, or Wildland Fire
- **160:** Special Outside Fire – Other
- **632:** Prescribed Fire
- **171:** Cultivated Grain or Crop Fire
- **170:** Cultivated Vegetation, Crop Fire – Other
- **173:** Cultivated Trees or Nursery Stock Fire
- **172:** Cultivated Orchard or Vineyard Fire



ESO IN ACTION

Outdoor fire incident type, acreage burned, and fire cause are captured in **ESO Fire RMS**. Departments can compare their wildland fire exposure by month against this report's seasonal patterns to inform resource planning and mutual aid preparedness.

READ MORE

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Wildland fire is no longer a regional or seasonal issue.

Departments across the country are responding to vegetation fires in every month of the year. Those that have not assessed their wildland fire exposure should review their monthly incident history and geography to understand where and when they need wildland-capable resources. Metropolitan departments should assess both their local wildland fire exposure and their readiness to provide mutual aid for wildland operations outside their jurisdiction. That starts with equipping and training personnel for wildland environments, where structural PPE and tactics do not apply.

Community risk reduction starts with preparation.

Adoption of the wildland urban interface fire code for new construction addresses known vulnerabilities at low cost, from ember-resistant eave vents to fire-resistant landscaping setbacks. For existing neighborhoods, community fuel reduction programs and coordination with homeowners' associations can reduce wildland fire risk. Departments that bring building officials, developers, and community leaders into the planning process will find more traction than those relying on code mandates alone.

First apparatus times

KEY FINDING

Median fire turnout time is 71 seconds, within the NFPA 1710 standard. Median fire travel time is 25 seconds over the 4-minute NFPA benchmark. Working fires show longer turnout times than nonworking fires.

6:59
Median fire response time

6:17
Median EMS response time

1:16
Median turnout for working fires

CONTEXT

The spread between median and 90th percentile tells the fuller story. Fire response time at the median is just under 7 minutes but extends to more than 17 minutes at the 90th percentile. For EMS, the gap is narrower: from 6 minutes to 12 minutes. That range reflects the operating environments in this dataset, from career departments in urban areas to volunteer departments covering rural geographies.

New to this year's report is a cross-reference of turnout times with working fire status. Working fires show a median turnout of 76 seconds, compared to 69 for nonworking fires. At the 90th percentile, working fire turnout reaches 5 minutes versus about 3 and a half minutes for nonworking fires.

NFPA 1710 establishes benchmarks for career departments: 80 seconds for fire turnout, 60 seconds for EMS turnout, and 240 seconds for travel. The national median turnout in this dataset falls within the standard. Median travel time exceeds it by 25 seconds.

GLOSSARY

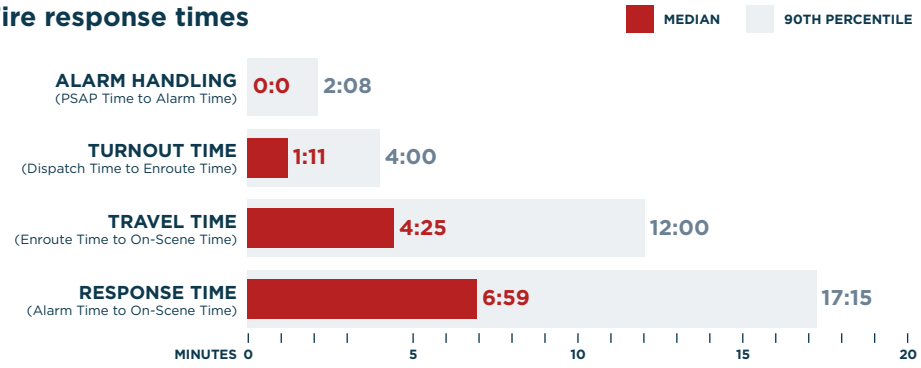
Alarm handling: Public safety answering point (PSAP) time to alarm time.
Turnout time: Dispatch time to enroute time.
Travel time: Enroute time to on-scene time.
Response time: Alarm time to on-scene time.

FIGURE M4-1

First apparatus times

Fire incidents show longer median times across all segments: 1:11 vs. 1:06 for turnout, 4:25 vs. 4:06 for travel, and 6:59 vs. 6:17 for total response. The 90th percentile response time for fire is 17:15, more than double the median.

Fire response times



EMS response times

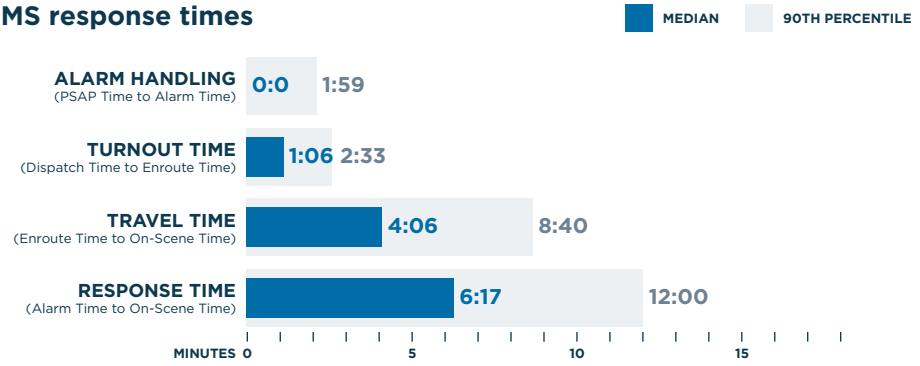
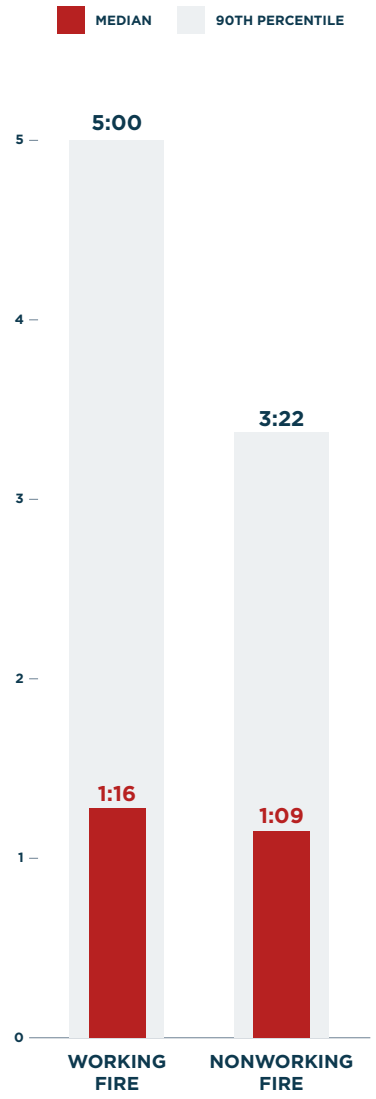


FIGURE M4-2

Fire turnout times by working fire status

Working fires produce a median turnout of 1:16 vs. 1:09 for nonworking. The gap widens at the 90th percentile: 5:00 vs. 3:22.



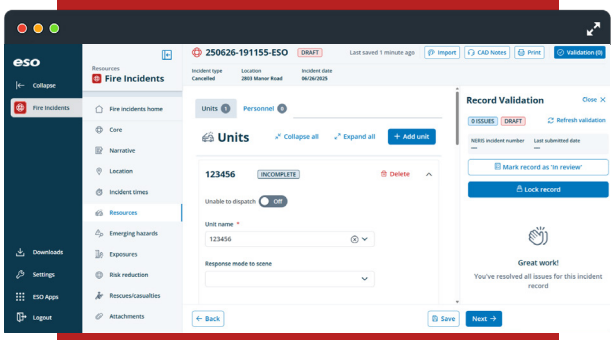
RECOMMENDED ACTION

Benchmark your first apparatus turnout times against the NFPA 1710 standard of 80 seconds for fire responses and identify which stations consistently fall outside the threshold.

Station-level analysis often reveals patterns that department-wide averages obscure.

The working fire turnout data introduces a new comparison point. Departments that can isolate their own working fire turnout times should examine whether confirmed working fires produce longer turnout and whether that additional time affects outcomes.

Departments reviewing their working fire turnout times should also consider how their dispatch process affects this data. Working fire dispatches involve multiple steps before units are moving – initial tone, announcements for multiple units, radio channel assignments, and more personnel getting on the apparatus – all of which add time to the clock before turnout technically begins. When measuring turnout, departments should consider whether they're starting the clock at the initial tone or at the end of the full dispatch notification. This distinction becomes especially meaningful when multiple agencies are being dispatched simultaneously and the notification sequence takes longer.



ESO IN ACTION

Each segment of the response timeline – alarm handling, turnout, and travel – is timestamped at the apparatus level in **ESO Fire RMS**, giving departments the ability to isolate performance by station, shift, and incident type.

READ MORE

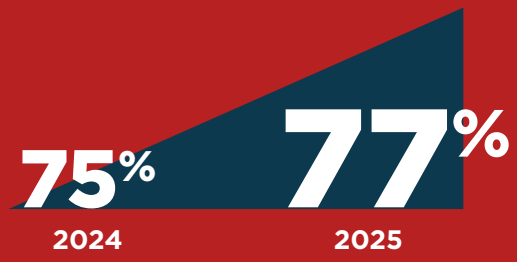
Decontamination

KEY FINDING

Among incidents with documented fire or smoke exposure, 77% have at least one decontamination procedure documented, up from 75% in the previous edition. ESO's decontamination module tracks four procedure categories informed by the Lavender Ribbon Report's on-scene best practices:

1. Wet brush gear with soap
2. used wet wipes
3. cleaned neck, face, arms, and exposed areas
4. place bagged gear outside of cab

Documentation of all four occurred 651 times.



Documented at least one decon step

28,876
Incidents with fire/ smoke exposure

651
Documentations of all four best practices

CONTEXT

Cancer is the leading cause of line-of-duty death in the fire service. The Lavender Ribbon Report, published by the IAFC and NVFC, outlines 11 best practices for prevention, with on-scene decontamination after fire or smoke exposure among the most frequently cited.[2]

Across 28,876 incidents with documented exposure, 134,925 individual personnel exposures were recorded – roughly 4.7 per incident. Full compliance with all four recommended decontamination steps occurred 651 times, or about 2% of exposure incidents.

The two-percentage-point improvement from 75% in 2024 to 77% in 2025 represents progress in a workforce navigating a cultural shift around exposure documentation. The number of agencies that have enabled ESO's decontamination validation rule – which prompts personnel to complete the decontamination field before closing an exposure incident – grew from 501 to 690, a sign that departments are building documentation into their workflows rather than relying on individual compliance alone. For many fire service professionals, concerns that documenting exposures could affect future employment, insurance eligibility, or disability claims have historically discouraged reporting. The evidence points in the opposite direction: consistent exposure documentation builds the longitudinal record that supports those same claims. The connection between fireground exposure and long-term health outcomes has become too well-established to ignore, and documenting decontamination is one of the most direct steps personnel can take to protect themselves.

When exposure documentation is measured as a percentage of total working fires, the trend moves in the opposite direction: from 13% of working fires with documented exposure in 2023 to 16% in 2024 and 19% in 2025. That increase may reflect a genuine rise in exposure incidents, but it is also consistent with improved documentation practices – capturing exposure that previously went unreported.

FIGURE M5-2

Documented fire/smoke exposure as a percentage of total working fires over time

The share of working fires with documented exposure dropped from 15% in 2021 to 13% in 2023 before rising to 19% in 2025.

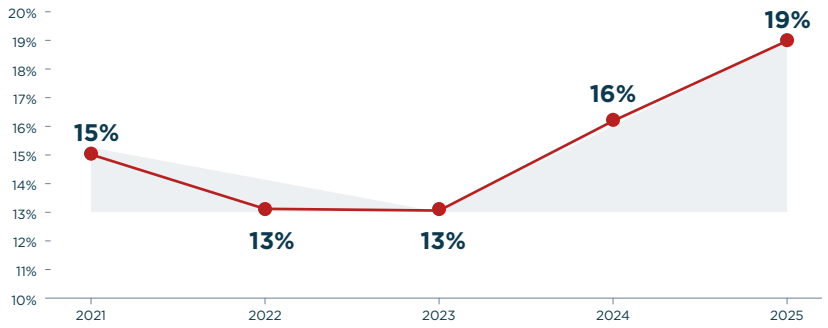


FIGURE M5-1

Decontamination documentation rate

77% of exposure incidents include at least one decontamination procedure. 23% show no documentation.

77%
1+ decontamination procedure documented

23%
Show no documentation

FIGURE M5-3

Personnel exposures to fire and smoke

134,925
Individual personnel exposures across

28,876
Incidents

4.7
Exposures per incident

FIGURE M5-4

Complete decontamination documentation

All four recommended steps were documented together 651 times. Full protocol compliance remains rare relative to total exposure incidents.

651
Documentations of all four best practices on scene

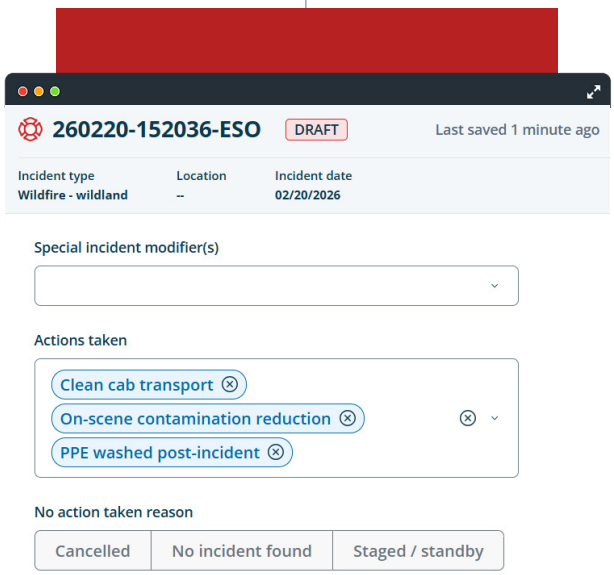
FIGURE M5-5

Number of agencies with decontamination validation rule turned on

690 agencies have enabled ESO's decontamination validation rule, up from 501 in the previous edition.

690
2026

501
2025



ESO IN ACTION

ESO Fire RMS includes a decontamination documentation module that tracks individual exposure events and specific decon steps performed. Through **Peak Benchmarking**, departments can compare their documentation rates against the national median and the top 10% of agency performance.

READ MORE

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Review your department's decontamination documentation rate against the 77% national figure and set a target for improvement.

Enabling ESO's validation rule for decontamination documentation prompts personnel to complete the field before closing an exposure incident.

The Lavender Ribbon Report provides the framework. For decontamination specifically: gross decon of PPE with soapy water and a brush while still on scene, dry brushing gear to remove particulates, wiping exposed skin on the neck, face, arms, and any other exposed areas, and bagging contaminated gear in sealed containers. Implementation cost per station is approximately $150.

Electric vehicle fires

KEY FINDING

This is the first time the Fire Service Index has examined EV fires as a standalone measure. Nineteen electric vehicle and e-bike fire incidents were identified across 10 different incident type classifications.

10
Different incident type classifications used

CONTEXT

EV incidents span classifications including “lithium battery vehicle,” “electric vehicle fire,” “hybrid vehicle fire,” and “rental scooters and bikes.” All confirmed fire incidents were Series 130.

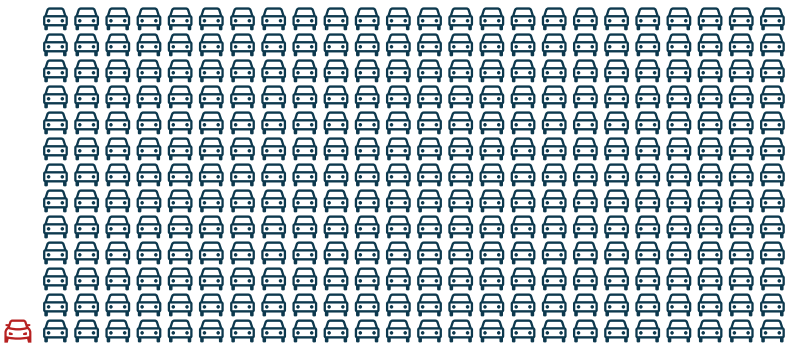
The count of 19 almost certainly understates actual EV-related fires. There is no dedicated NFIRS code for electric vehicle fires. Departments must select from classifications that may not capture the EV distinction, or the incident lands in general vehicle fires (Series 130), which contains 44,836 incidents.

The value of this measure is what 19 incidents reveal about the state of EV fire reporting. NERIS introduces the Electrical System Storage (ESS) category, which provides a standardized classification for the first time. As departments adopt that standard, future editions of this report will show whether the low count reflected a reporting gap or a genuine baseline.

FIGURE M6-1

EV fires vs. Traditional vehicle fires

The dataset contains 19 identified EV/e-bike fire incidents within a Series 130 vehicle fire total of 44,836.



19
Identified EV/e-bike fire incidents

44,817
Traditional vehicle fires

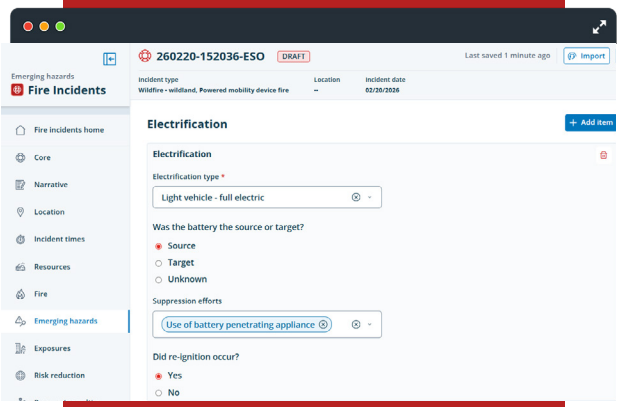
RECOMMENDED ACTION

Departments responding to EV, e-bike, or lithium battery fires should examine how those incidents are classified in their records management system.

If EV fires are coded under general vehicle fires, the department cannot track EV-specific trends. Establishing a local custom incident type now creates a data trail that will be valuable until the department transitions to NERIS which provides a standardized classification.

NERIS has provided tracking for energy storage systems, electric vehicles, or products operated by lithium battery products.

This system should be used to track these types of fires, provide information on incident frequency, and to support ongoing research into ways to suppress these fires along with related environment and contamination issues.



ESO IN ACTION

ESO Fire RMS captures custom incident type classifications that departments define locally. As NERIS adoption expands and the ESS classification becomes available, ESO will provide the standardized code for consistent EV fire tracking.

READ MORE

Conclusion

The 2026 Fire Service Index covers familiar ground in a year of significant change. The measures describe an operational reality consistent across editions: Fire departments are primarily EMS response organizations by volume, structure fires are concentrated in residential properties, response times cluster near NFPA benchmarks, and decontamination documentation is improving but incomplete.

NFIRS has been decommissioned, and the next edition of this report will draw from a fundamentally different data environment, with new incident type classifications, insurance-sourced property loss data, and operational detail that NFIRS was never designed to capture.

Know your data. Use the findings to inform budget conversations, training priorities, and community risk reduction. The departments that build strong data practices today will be best positioned to take advantage of what NERIS makes possible tomorrow.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2026 ESO Fire Service Index was produced by the ESO Research and Performance Improvement team. The authors thank the thousands of fire departments that contribute to the ESO Data Collaborative and the fire service professionals whose documentation makes this analysis possible.

References

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2 Lavender ribbon report. National Volunteer Fire Council. (2018). https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Lavender-Ribbon-Report-Final.pdf. Accessed March 2026.

METHODOLOGY

The 2026 ESO Fire Service Index uses data compiled from 3,805 participating agencies using ESO Fire RMS, representing 10,237,656 incidents from calendar year 2025. Data was extracted from the ESO Data Collaborative. All data is retrospective. Peak Benchmarking methodology was applied to the decontamination measure. NFPA 1710 benchmarks are referenced for first apparatus times.

This report is a descriptive analysis. It does not establish causation and should not be interpreted as a performance evaluation of any individual department. Findings are intended to support department-level benchmarking and operational improvement.

LIMITATIONS

This Index is retrospective and examines aggregate data from calendar year 2025. There are no universal rules designed around these trends. The purpose is to be informative and directional, not to serve as a scientific study. The dataset represents agencies using ESO Fire RMS and may not be representative of all departments nationally. Incident reporting practices vary by agency, and some data fields have significant rates of missing values. Property loss estimates are based on on-scene assessments. The EV fire measure is limited by the absence of a standardized NFIRS code. We hope this Index serves as a body of literature that adds to the discussion around best practices to improve community health and safety.

ABOUT ESO

ESO's mission is to improve community health and safety outcomes through the power of data. Founded and led by emergency responders and medical professionals since 2004, ESO advances the industry by combining deep domain expertise with innovative technology, impactful research, and the industry's largest integrated emergency outcome data asset. The company delivers the world's most trusted and connected emergency ecosystem – an open, interoperable platform that unites emergency medical response, fire, hospital, and government stakeholders across the full emergency continuum through real-time data exchange and embedded intelligence in frontline workflows. ESO's solutions deliver actionable insights to decision-makers, enable smarter coordination across the emergency continuum and uphold the highest standards of data security and patient privacy. The company helps customers around the world deliver measurable improvements in clinical, operational, and financial outcomes with dedicated teams in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Denmark, Czech Republic, India, and Costa Rica. For more information, visit www.eso.com.