

# **NFPA's Survey and How It Relates to NFIRS**

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# To Be Covered

- What is NFPA's survey?
- What does it do that NFIRS doesn't?
- What does NFIRS do that the survey doesn't?
- How are national estimates calculated for specific fire problems?
- Upcoming changes to the survey
- Common questions
- A bit about NFPA statistics

# What is the NFPA Survey?

- Based on a statistical sample
  - All local departments protecting populations of at least 50,000
  - Random sample, stratified by population, of small and medium communities
- Collects fire department experience data for past year
- Summary data only

# Survey Contents

- Fire department characteristics
- Responses by broad incident type
  - Greater detail on false alarms
- Fires, civilian deaths and injuries, direct property damage by broad incident type
  - Structure fires by broad property type
- Firefighter injuries by duty
  - Firefighter fireground injuries by cause
- Fire department vehicle accidents
- Major fires



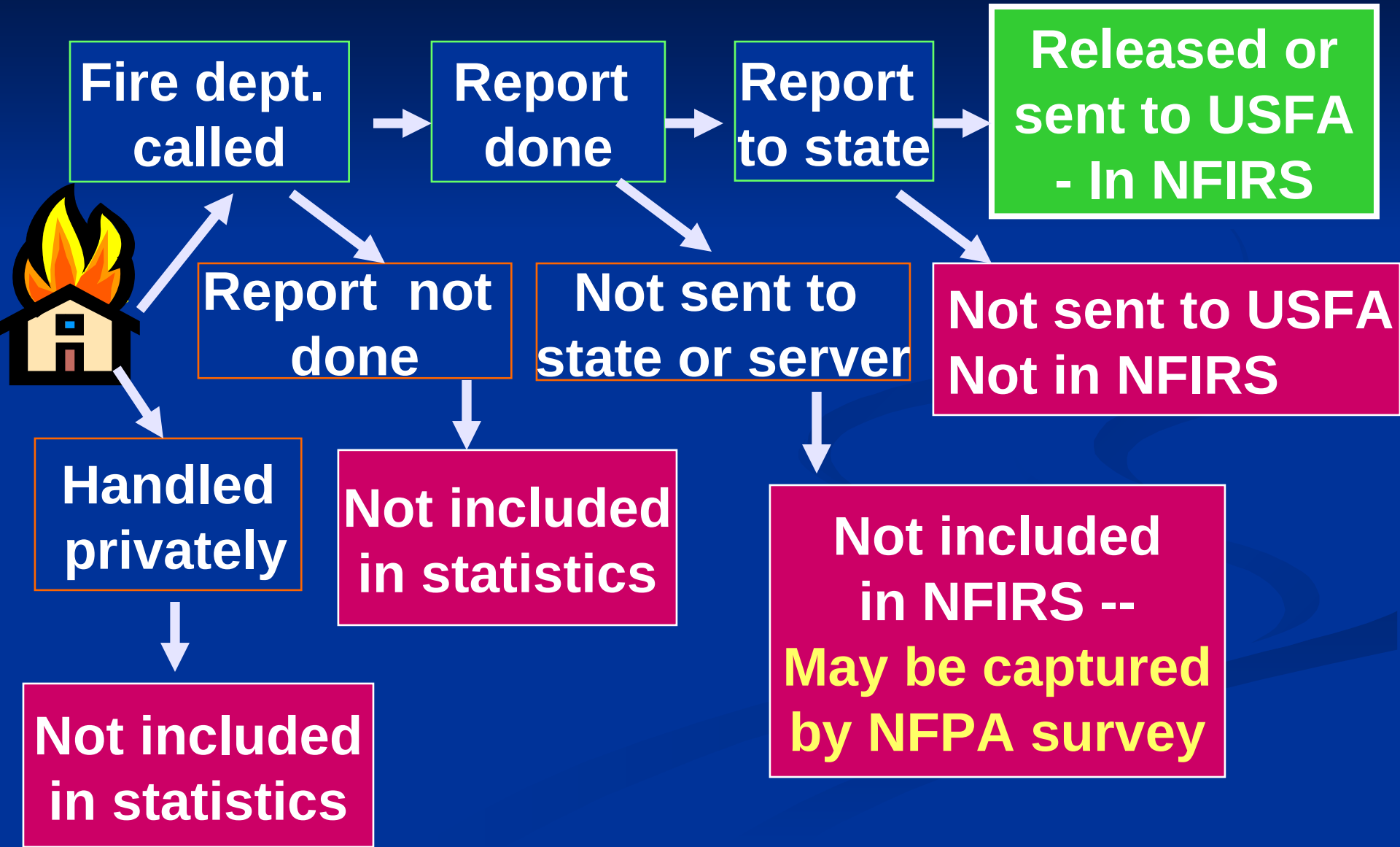
# What Does the Survey Do that NFIRS Doesn't?

- Projections are possible because of the statistical sample
  - Same rules throughout the country
  - In NFIRS, different states have different reporting requirements
- Previous year's analysis is complete by late summer or early fall

# What Does NFIRS Do that the Survey Doesn't?

- Lots!
  - More detail
  - Incident based system can answer more questions
  - Can compare different jurisdictions if they follow the same reporting policies and practices

# How a Fire Gets Counted



# What Do the Survey and NFIRS Have in Common?

- Both use NFIRS codes
- Fire departments fill out both
- Data quality can be an issue
  - NFPA follows up on vehicle fire deaths





# How Are National Estimates Calculated?



- NFIRS provides the details, but not the whole universe of reported fires
- NFPA survey is sample-based, so projections can be made about total
  - Lacks detail
- Combine the two to develop scaling ratios



# National Estimates Calculations

Projected totals from NFPA survey  

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NFIRS totals

- Different scaling ratios for
  - Residential structures, non-residential structures, vehicles, and outside and other
  - Fires, deaths, injuries, and property damage



# Upcoming Changes to Survey

- CPSC wanted survey information on confined fires
- 2007 survey asks about the number of
  - Confined and non-confined
  - Residential and all structure fires
- Mutual aid is restricted to mutual aid given
- Some departments will not be able to answer these questions the first year

# Common Questions about the Survey



# Why didn't we get one this year?

- Random sample for smaller departments
- Can only accept surveys from departments in the sample
- Sample varies by year
  - Department is likely to be in sample in some future years

# Can I get a copy of the survey?

- Blank copies
  - Yes
- For your own fire department
  - Yes, if we have it
- For other fire departments
  - No

# Can I get fire statistics by state?



- For unintentional injury fire deaths
  - Yes
  - Death certificate data used, *not* NFPA survey
- For fires
  - No
  - Inconsistent reporting practices
  - NFPA survey is a *national* sample

# Is an incident counted twice if it is in NFIRS and the survey?



- No
  - Survey projections are calculated independently of NFIRS
  - If all incidents captured in the survey were in NFIRS, the scaling ratio should be 1



# What happens when a major fire



## is in the survey but not

### NEIRS?

- Incident will usually be included in the general scaling ratios
  - September 11 and some wildland fires were not
- Details of fire will not be in NFIRS
  - Station Nightclub fire increased the non-residential fire death ratio



# Why don't you adjust estimates when you know about a fire not in NEIRS?

- National estimates are projections
- Inclusion or exclusion of serious fires will make big difference when scaled up
- We footnote rather than adjust
- Adjustments will always be incomplete

# NFPA Statistics

- CD of our reports in packet
  - Also brief statistical fact sheets
- Sign up for quarterly CDs and/or e-mailed reports
- Reports are copyrighted
  - Links are welcome
  - We will send reports to fire service for free

# More on NFPA Statistics

- NFIRS used in almost all
  - Thank you for making it possible
- With lead time, we can do custom work
  - Fee may be waived if it contributes to NFPA's mission
- Help us get the statistics to people who provide the data

# In Summary

- NFPA survey and NFIRS are complementary
- Both are used for national estimates
- Thank you for helping us understand the fire problem