

DATA REQUEST

Reported below is data requested regarding homeless-related fires. The bulleted information represents a summary of the methodology and limitations of the reported numbers. *Please note the information below is a summary of data derived from fire reports, some which may not be finalized.* Data could change as new information is discovered.

- Incidents reported below were identified through an option in the PF&R Incident System (data entry reporting module). Officers completing incident reports as of February 8th, 2016 are able to select an option that flags the incident as relating to a homeless or transient person.
 - There is no reliable way to identify incidents associated with homeless/transient persons prior to February 8th, 2016.
- Identification of a homeless/transient related incident not exclusively indicative of a “homeless camp”.
- Incidents in which the reported situation found was categorized as ‘Fire/Explosion’ by NFIRS classification system were included in the report below.
 - “The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) is a reporting standard that fire departments use to uniformly report on the full range of their activities, from fire to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to equipment involved in the response.” (<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/data/nfirs/>).
 - Illegal burns and controlled burns are not classified as ‘Fire/Explosion’. NFIRS considers them a service call and good intent call, respectively.

Table 1 reports the number and percent of fires occurring in each of the months, for the time period of February 8th – April 26th, 2016. The average number of days between fires will help to standardize the numbers since February represents only the last 22 days of the month and April the first 26.

Table 1. Number and percent of fires by month and average number of days between fires.

Month	Number	Percent	Average Number of Days Between Fires
February	15	39.5	1.5
March	12	31.6	2.6
April	11	29.0	2.4
Total	38	100.0	2.1

Table 2 represents the number of fires occurring in each station’s Fire Management Area (FMA). Portland Fire & Rescue has 30 active fire stations, covering 31 FMA’s with more than 160 miles. A map of the FMAs can be found at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/fire/article/104015>.

Table 2. Number and percent of fires by FMA.

Station's Fire Management Area	Number	Percent
1	9	23.7
21	7	18.4
3	3	7.9
4	3	7.9
13	3	7.9
7	2	5.3
8	2	5.3
9	2	5.3
26	2	5.3
29	2	5.3
11	1	2.6
18	1	2.6
25	1	2.6
Total	38	100.0

Of the 38 reported fires, 23 fires had information regarding the monetary value and loss of property (Table 3). Each fire can have up to four categories of property being described. Properties can include any number of categories, or no categories. A total of 28 records were found to create the values listed below.

Table 3. Category of property, and estimated value, lost, and saved.

Description	Number of Records Contributing	Estimated Value (\$)	Estimated Saved (\$)	Estimated Loss (\$)
BUILDING	4	4,683,030	4,680,530	2,500
CONTENTS	5	2,501,600	2,501,200	400
MOBILE PROPERTY AND CONTENTS	3	6,000	0	6,000
OTHER	16	3,450	25	3,425
Total	28	7,194,080	7,181,755	12,325

As discussed above, the initial situation found (from NFIRS) was used to determine the subclass of fires (Table 4). NFIRS also provides a hierarchy of property type. These categories are summarized in Table 5.

Table 4. Number and percent of initial situation found and sub-class for fires.

NFIRS Classifications			
Initial Situation Found Sub-Class	Initial Situation Found	Number	Percent
MOBILE PROPERTY (VEHICLE) FIRE	PASSENGER VEHICLE FIRE	3	7.9
NATURAL VEGETATION FIRE	BRUSH, OR BRUSH AND GRASS MIXTURE FIRE	2	5.3
	GRASS FIRE	1	2.6
	VEGETATION FIRE, OTHER	2	5.3
OUTSIDE RUBBISH FIRE	DUMPSTER OR OTHER OUTSIDE TRASH RECEPTACLE FIRE	1	2.6
	OUTSIDE RUBBISH, TRASH OR WASTE FIRE	12	31.6
SPECIAL OUTSIDE FIRE	OUTSIDE FIRE, OTHER (MAY HAVE VALUE AND LOSS).	13	34.2
STRUCTURE FIRE	BUILDING FIRE	2	5.3
	CHIMNEY OR FLUE FIRE, CONFINED TO CHIMNEY OR FLUE	1	2.6
	STRUCTURE FIRE, OTHER	1	2.6
Total		38	100.0

Table 5. Number and percent of property description and sub-class for fires.

Main Class of Property Description	Sub-Class of Property Description	Number	Percent
ASSEMBLY PROPERTY	FIXED USE AMUSEMENT, RECREATION PLACES	1	2.6
BASIC INDUSTRY, UTILITY, DEFENSE, AGRICULTURE	FORESTS, HUNTING, FISHING	1	2.6
MERCANTILE, BUSINESS PROPERTY	HOUSEHOLD GOODS SALES, REPAIRS	1	2.6
	RECREATION, HOBBY, HOME REPAIR, PERSONAL SVCES	1	2.6
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY	APARTMENTS, TENEMENTS, FLATS	2	5.3
	ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY DWELLING	2	5.3
SPECIAL PROPERTY	OUTDOOR PROPERTIES	5	13.2
	ROAD, PARKING PROPERTY	17	44.7
	SPECIAL PROPERTIES, UNCLASSIFIED	6	15.8
STORAGE PROPERTY	WATER AREAS	1	2.6
	VEHICLE STORAGE	1	2.6
Total		38	100.0

The following table reports the cause of fire. I chose to use the method employed by the Oregon Office of the State Fire Marshal's office (and fire departments nationwide) to classify each fire with a cause. This method is traditionally used to discuss structure fires but we lend this method to non-structure fires when others are not available. The method is a Cause of Fire Hierarchy, used by NFIRS and developed in coordination with FEMA and the NFPA. An explanation of the hierarchy can be found at https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfirs/nfirs_data_analysis_guidelines_issues.pdf.

Reading the table from left to right, causes range from most general to the most specific.

NFIRS Cause of Fire Hierarchy			
Most General Cause	Cause	Most Specific Cause	Number
Equipment	Equipment Misoperation, Failure	Equipment Failure, Malfunction	1
	Heating	Heating	1
Firesetting	Intentional	Intentional	9
Flame, Heat	Open Flame	Matches, Candles	2
	Other Heat	Other Hot Object	1
		Other Open Flame, Spark	7
	Smoking	Smoking	3
Unknown	Other Unintentional, Careless	Heat Source or Product Misuse	1
	Unknown	Trash, Rubbish	2
		Unknown	11
Total			38