



State of Montana
Department of Justice
Criminal Investigation
Fire Prevention and Investigation



Dawn

Sally

Jerry

Pat

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Allen

**State Fire Marshal's Report
2008 - 2009 - 2010**



**Montana Division of Criminal Investigation
Investigations Bureau**



Administrator
Mike Batista



Investigations Bureau Chief
John Strandell



State Fire Marshal
Allen Lorenz

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2008 – 2009 – 2010

From the office of the State Fire Marshal

I would like to express my appreciation to everyone for supporting the State Fire Marshal's Office over the years. This report contains 2008, 2009 and 2010 data.

The following pages contain information about the fires in Montana as reported to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). To the fire departments that report on this system, I thank you for your participation. If your fire department does not use this system, I strongly urge you to do so. The number of agencies that report determines the dollar amount for grants available within the state.

Areas of growth within the state are still facing challenges of protecting new subdivisions, providing adequate water supplies, acquiring additional fire safety equipment and recruiting fire department members. Areas with declining population are still facing money shortages, dwindling numbers of fire personnel and safety problems inherent with the increase in the number of vacant buildings. Recruitment and retention are a big concern throughout the fire service.

In February of 2010, Montana adopted the 2009 edition of the International Fire Code as the official fire code for the State.

This report just touches the surface of what we do within the Fire Marshal's Office.

I hope you find some of the data useful, and I hope some of it alarms you. Fire deaths in residential occupancies can be reduced if we all do our part to make our state a safer place to live.

It is my hope that we as a fire service in this state will find common goals and work together to attain them.

Allen Lorenz
Montana State Fire Marshal



Montana State Deputy Fire Marshals and their areas



Dawn Drollinger
406.257.2584

Flathead, Granite, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Sanders and Ravalli Counties



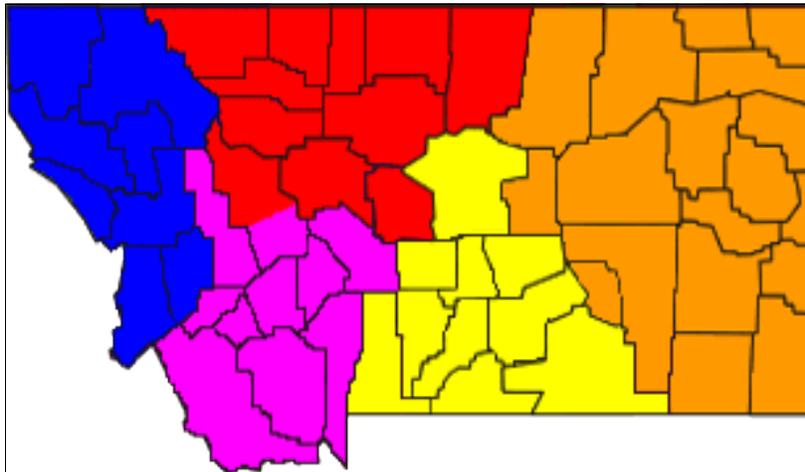
Dick Swingley
406.791.2710

Blaine, Cascade, Chouteau, Glacier, Hill, Judith Gap, Lewis & Clark, Liberty, Pondera, Teton and Toole Counties.



Jerry Smith
406.232.9765

Carter, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, McCone, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Treasure, Valley and Wibaux Counties.



Pat Clinch
406.444.1919

Beaverhead, Broadwater, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, Madison, Meagher, Powell and Silver Bow Counties

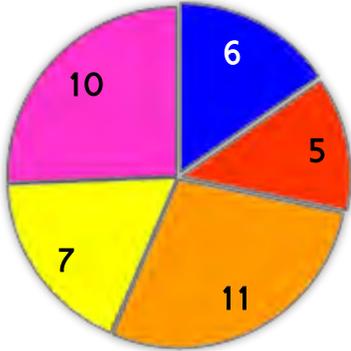
Big Horn, Carbon, Fergus, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Park, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Wheatland and Yellowstone Counties.



Sally McKenna
406.896.4388

Fires investigated by Deputy State Fire Marshals in the areas for the years 2008, 2009, 2010.

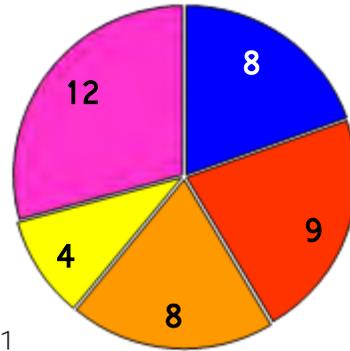
2008



Total 39

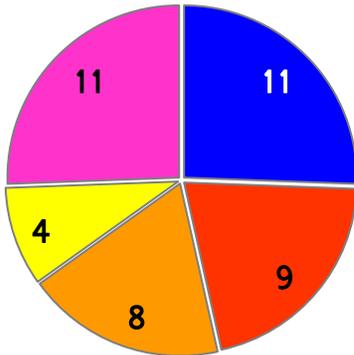
The charts are set up showing the areas by color where the reported fires were located. See page 2 for color locations of these areas.

2009



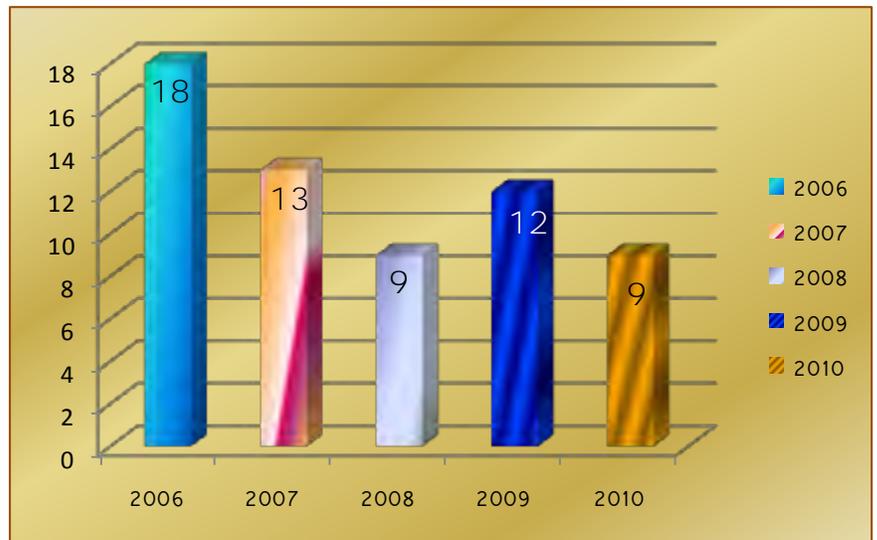
Total 41

2010

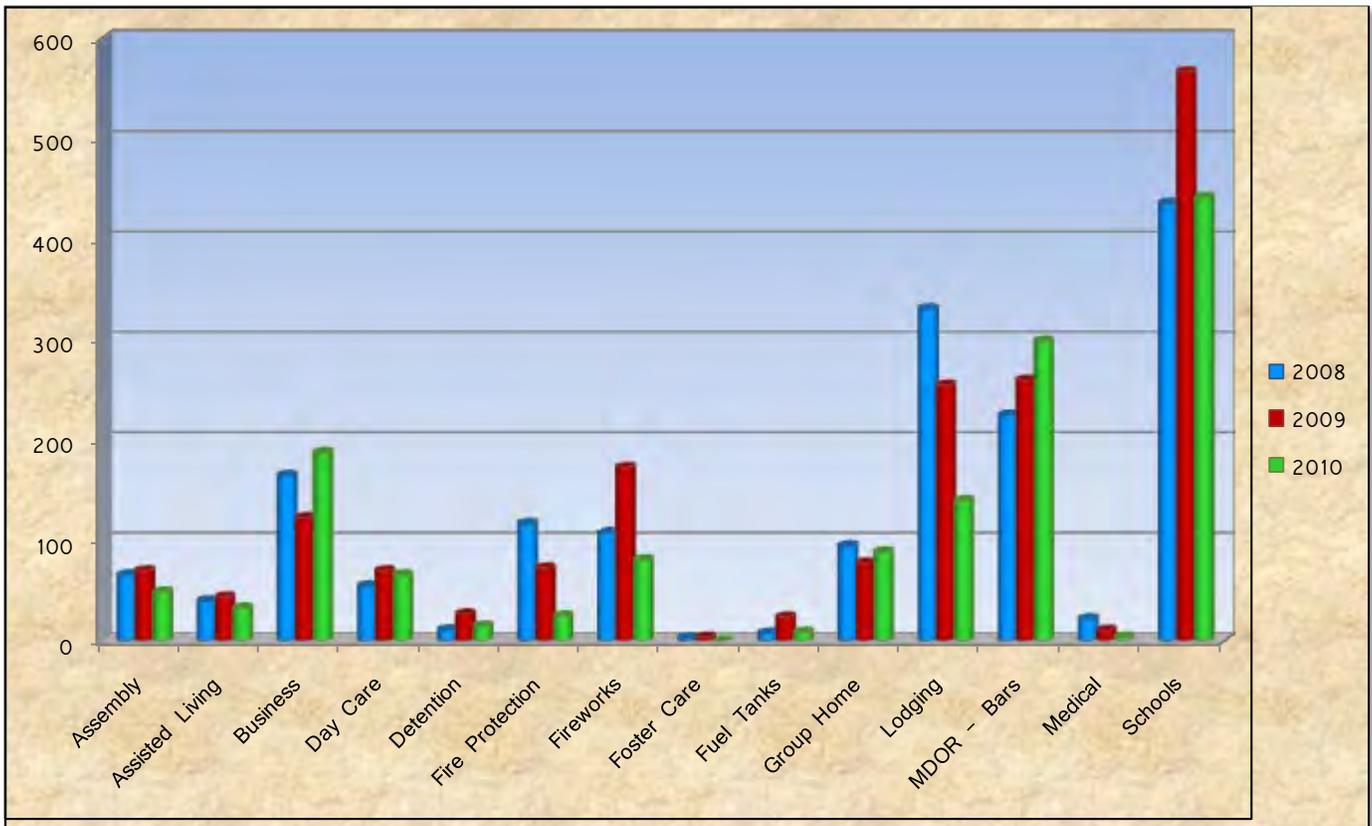


Total 43

State fire deaths for the past five years.



State Inspections for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010



The Deputy State Fire Marshals conduct life safety fire inspections in occupancies such as schools, day care centers, bars, restaurants, foster care homes, group homes, detention centers and assisted living facilities. Among the items that the deputies are looking at are: making sure the occupants can safely exit the building in case of a fire, ensuring the fire department can safely access the building and enter to fight the fire, and keeping combustibles away from items that can start fires. Many of the inspections are performed to allow businesses to receive licenses from other state departments.

Most of the career fire departments have their own fire prevention programs and perform their own fire inspections after their program has been approved by the FPIS.

Commonly found fire code violations include blocked exits, missing or inoperable exit lights, use of extension cords for permanent wiring, fire extinguishers needing service or no extinguishers at all, lack of fire drills and combustible items near boilers, furnaces or water heaters.

N F I R S

National Fire Incident Reporting System

The State Fire Marshal's Office continues to manage the NFIRS for the State of Montana. Currently we have 210 agencies utilizing the NFIRS system which is about half of the agencies in the state.

To process your NFIRS submittals, reset your password or answer any questions you may have concerning the program, you can e-mail us at DOJNFIRS@mt.gov or call the Deputy Fire Marshal in your area. To find which Deputy Fire Marshal is in your area, along with their phone number, please refer to **page 2** of this report.

We do recommend that departments log into the NFIRS system at least on a monthly basis even if they do not have any incidents to report. This will avoid having your account defaulting to an INACTIVE status. Once logged in you may check a box marked "no activity" and log out. This will keep your account active.

Top ten NFIRS incident reporting departments for 2008 thru 2010

Department	2008	2009	2010
Billings Fire Department	10,526	9,597	10,238
Great Falls Fire Department	5,475	5,839	5,988
Missoula City	5,823	6,211	4,325
Helena Fire Department	3,276	2,876	3,250
Kalispell	3,227	3,019	2,492
Butte	2,876	3,029	
Missoula Rural Fire	2,223	1,967	2,087
Whitefish Fire Department	409	1,533	1,464
Anaconda Fire Department	875	943	955
Lockwood Rural Fire	606	450	606

NOTE- The reporting incidents for different stations may include EMS, non-fire and non-EMS., some departments report only fires.

NFIRS and why it's so valuable to report to the system

All agencies reporting to the NFIRS program are eligible for grants. You can receive gear for operations and safety equipment, personal protective equipment, training and fire trucks for your departments.

You can go online to see a list of what other agencies have received.

Some examples that are currently on the books for 2010 are:

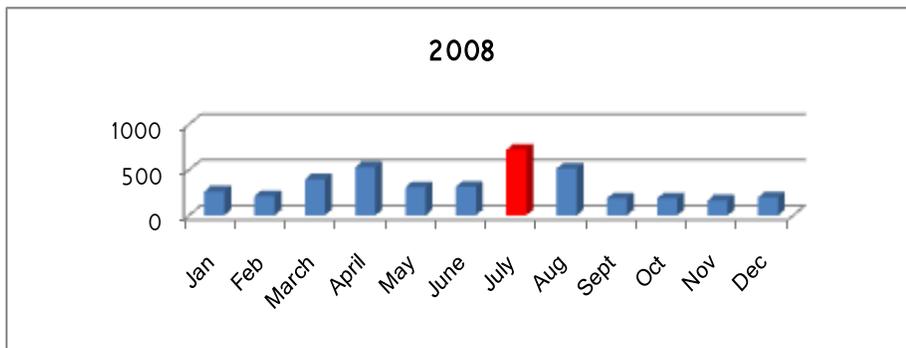
- Fisher River Valley Volunteer Fire Company—Libby MT—Vehicle \$267,900
- Great Falls Fire Rescue—Great Falls, MT—Vehicle \$720,000
- Lewistown Fire Department—Lewistown, MT—Personal Protective Equipment \$36,428
- Town of Hingham—Hingham, MT—Vehicle \$149,150

Getting started

To insure your agency is eligible for fire grants, start reporting all fires into the NFIRS.

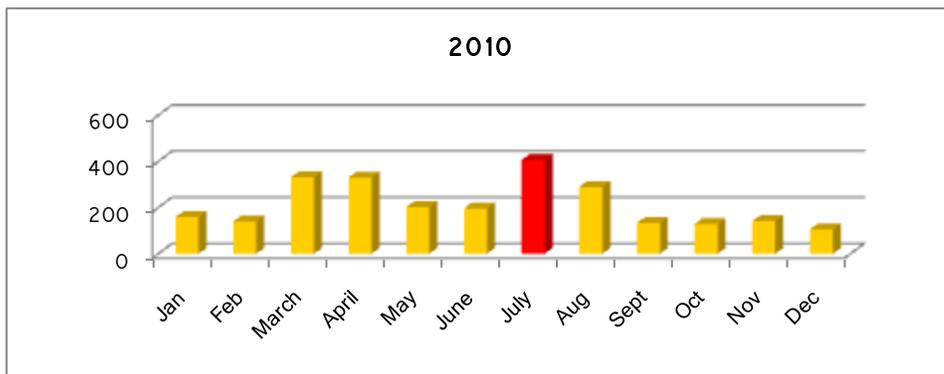
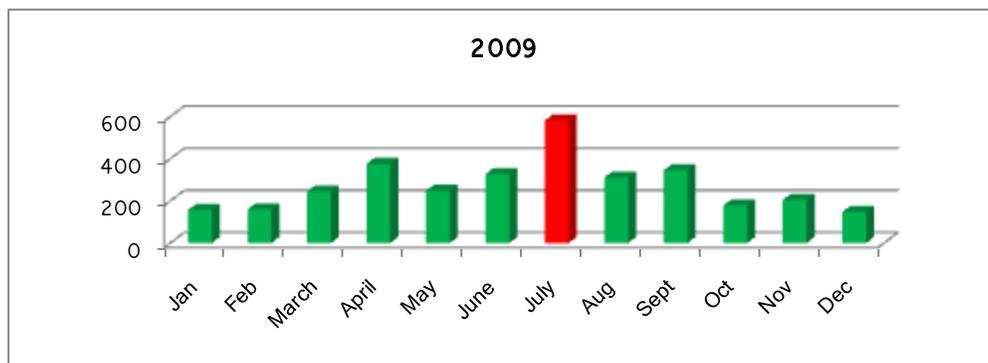
- In order to report your fires to the NFIRS system you will need a computer and someone willing to enter the information. If no computers are available at your fire department, a suggestion from the Fire Marshal is to go to the school and see if they have a computer to borrow or to the local library or possibly your local courthouse.
- Research information on grants— to go to the Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program, click here; <http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/>. You can also call them at 1-866-274-0960 or email at firegrants@dhs.gov. Another site to go to is <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/fireservice/grants>

Fire incidents across the state reported to NFIRS for the years 2008, 2009, 2010



Fires incidents that were reported to the NFIRS program continue to show a very obvious increase each July.

Keep in mind that the fire incidents shown here only represent around 50 percent of the fire agencies in the state.



Fire Calls Surrounding July 4th

In breaking down further the fire incident calls in July, the data consistently shows that the 4th of July with the celebration of fireworks is a definite concern with fire calls.

