

## U.S. Home Structure Fires Fact Sheet

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 366,600 home structure<sup>1</sup> fires per year during 2007-2011. These fires caused an annual average of

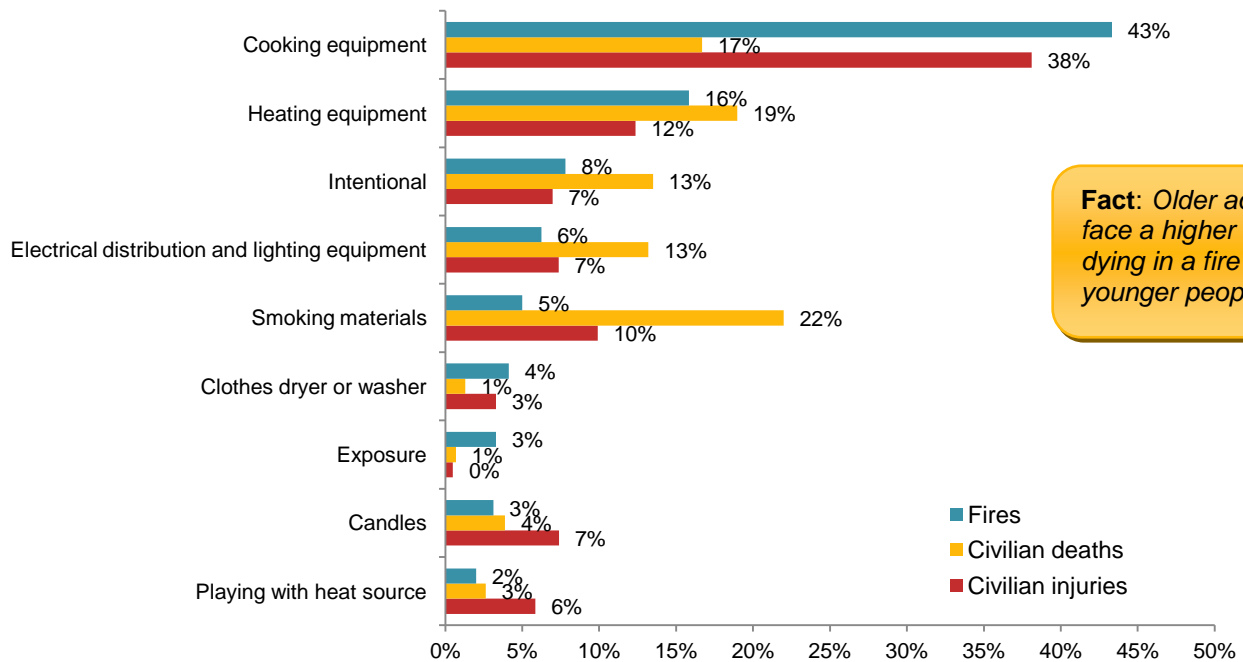
- 2,570 civilian fire deaths,
  - 13,210 civilian fire injuries, and
  - \$7.2 billion in direct damage.
- 92% of all structure fire deaths resulted from home fires.
  - On average, seven people died in U.S. home fires per day.

### Causes and Circumstances of Home Fires

Cooking equipment was the leading cause of home structure fires and home fire injuries.

Smoking was the leading cause of civilian home fire deaths. Heating equipment was the second most common cause of home fire fatalities.

**Leading Causes of Home Structure Fires: 2007-2011**



**Fact:** Older adults face a higher risk of dying in a fire than younger people.

Almost all homes have at least one smoke alarm, but three out of five home fire deaths in 2007-2011 resulted from fires in homes in which no smoke alarm was present (37%) or at least one was present but none operated (23%).

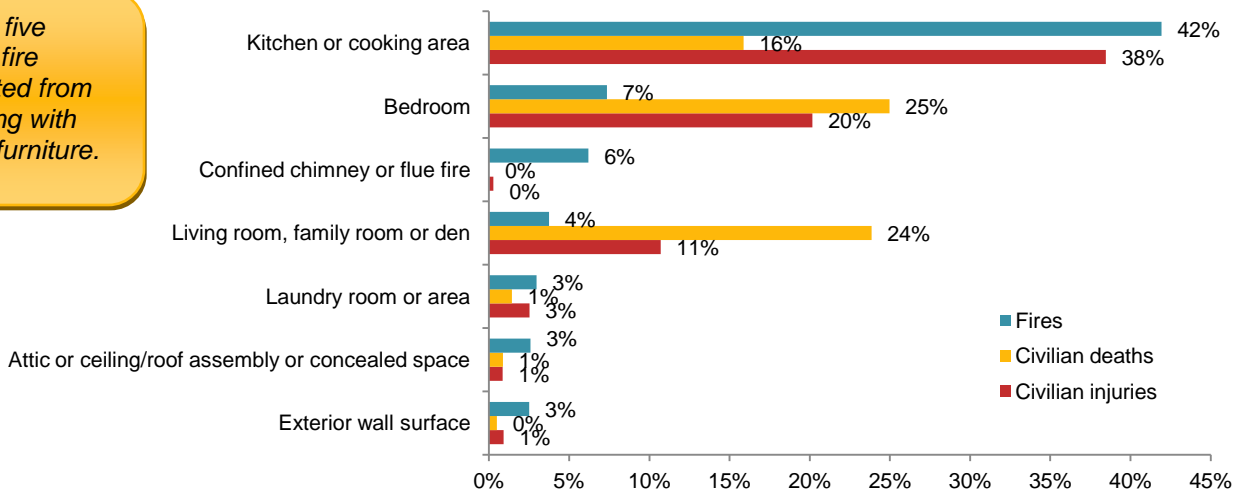
<sup>1</sup>Homes include one- or two-family homes, manufactured homes, as well as apartments or other multi-family housing. In general, any fire that occurs in or in a structure is considered a structure fire, even if the fire was limited to contents and the building itself was not damaged. Estimates were derived from USFA's National Fire Incident Reporting System and NFPA's annual fire department experience survey.

## Where do home fires start?

- Two of every five (42%) reported home structure fires started in the kitchen. These fires caused more than one-third (38%) of civilian home fire injuries.
  - In addition, 16% of home fire deaths also resulted from kitchen fires.
- Only 7% of reported home fires started in the bedroom, but these fires caused one-quarter (25%) of home fire deaths and one in five (20%) home fire injuries.
- Just 4% of home fires started in the living room, family room, or den but these incidents caused one-quarter (24%) of home fire deaths and 11% of the home fire injuries.
- Fires confined to chimneys or flues accounted for 6% of all reported home fires. These fires caused very few casualties.

**Leading Areas of Origin in Home Structure Fires: 2007-2011**

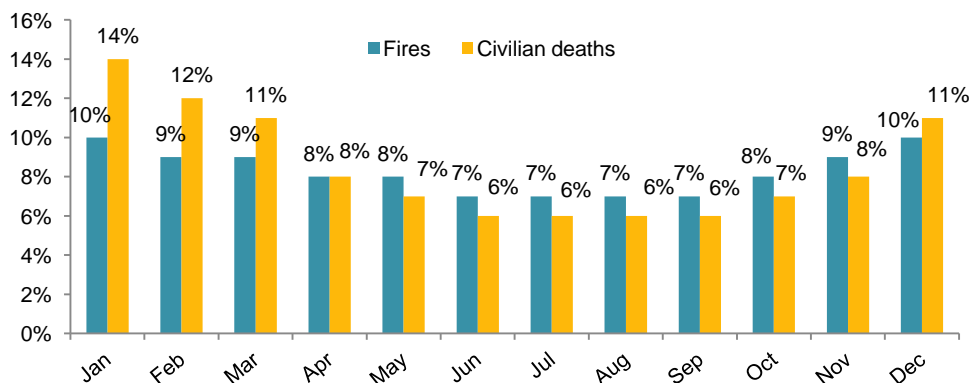
**Fact:** One in five (18%) home fire deaths resulted from fires beginning with upholstered furniture.



## Home fires and home fire deaths peak in the cooler months. Patterns for time of day are different for fires than for deaths.

- Home structure fires peaked around the dinner hours between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m.
- Only one in five (20%) reported home structure fires occurred between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. These fires caused half of all home fire deaths.

**Home Structure Fires by Month: 2007-2011**



Source, *Home Structure Fires*, Marty Ahrens, April 2013.

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