



RESEARCH



Fatal Firefighter Injuries in the US in 2025

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Fatal firefighter injuries in 2025

Since 1977, NFPA has collected information on annual on-duty firefighter fatalities and published reports on key findings. Historically, firefighter fatalities included in the NFPA study have been those due to 1) traumatic injury or 2) sudden cardiac incidents, strokes, aneurysms, or medical conditions while the victim was on duty. Fatalities due to heart attacks, strokes, aneurysms, or other medical conditions were not included in the study unless the victim made a specific medical complaint while still on duty. Beginning in 2022, inclusion criteria were expanded to include fatal heart attacks, strokes, aneurysms, or other medical conditions that occurred *within* 24 hours of duty, irrespective of any documented on-duty physical complaint by the victim.

Under these expanded inclusion criteria, NFPA identified 83 firefighter fatalities in 2025 resulting from traumatic injuries, heart attacks, or other medical conditions, a substantial increase over the 69 firefighter fatalities recorded in 2024.¹ Municipal firefighters accounted for 79 of these deaths, including 45 volunteer firefighters and 34 career firefighters, with four wildland firefighters accounting for the remaining fatalities.

Table A shows that 65 of the firefighter fatalities in 2025 were on-duty fatalities consistent with historical inclusion criteria, and 18 of the fatalities occurred within 24 hours of duty.

Table A. Firefighter fatalities in 2025: On duty and within 24 hours

Firefighter type	On duty	24 hours	Total
Municipal	61	18	79
Career	32	2	34
Volunteer*	29*	16**	45
Non-municipal	4	0	4
Total	65	18	83

*Includes one on-call firefighter. **Includes two on-call firefighters.

The *on-duty* firefighters who were fatally injured included 32 career firefighters, 29 volunteer firefighters, and 4 non-municipal firefighters. The non-municipal firefighters included two federal wildland contract firefighters, one state forestry supervisor, and one seasonal state wildland firefighter. The fatalities *within 24 hours of duty* included 14 volunteer firefighters, two on-call firefighters, and two career firefighters. For the purposes of this analysis, municipal on-call firefighters have been included in the volunteer firefighter category.

Background

Several types of firefighters are eligible for inclusion in this study. These firefighters include career and volunteer municipal firefighters; seasonal, full-time, and contract employees of state and federal agencies tasked with fire suppression responsibilities, prison inmates who serve on firefighting crews, industrial firefighters, military personnel performing assigned fire suppression activities, and civilian firefighters working at military installations.

NFPA's on duty designation is meant to distinguish its inclusion criteria from line of duty deaths, which encompass fatalities due to both injury and chronic disease, such as cancer. Fatalities are

¹ Following the receipt of additional information, seven fatalities were added to the fatality count of 62 fatal firefighter injuries in 2024 reported in last year's annual report.

included according to the year of injury rather than the year of death. When deaths occur from an injury sustained in a prior year, they are added to the annual fatality count for the original year of injury. Fatal injuries may occur during a variety of duties, including:

- At the scene of an alarm (fire, emergency medical, or other responses)
- During transport to or from a call
- While participating in other department duties (such as training, maintenance, public education, investigations, etc.)
- While on call or standby for assignment

The addition of firefighter fatalities that occurred within 24 hours of duty to this report is consistent with the eligibility for federal death benefits under the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act of 2003 (deaths within 24 hours of non-routine, strenuous, or stressful physical activity while on duty). However, the expansion of inclusion criteria has increased the annual number of firefighter fatalities in the study by over 17 percent in each year of their inclusion. To maintain consistency with historical data, the recently added fatalities within 24 hours of duty are generally disaggregated from the traditional on-duty fatalities in the report's analysis.

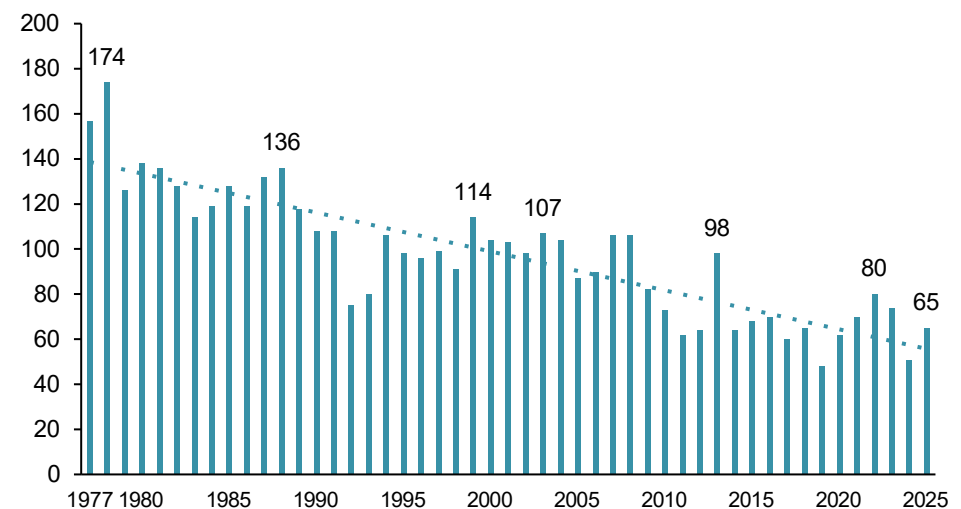
This annual study includes fatal firefighter injuries that occurred in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Readers should be aware that there are other firefighter fatality data collection efforts with inclusion criteria that differ from those used by NFPA. Readers are cautioned to be attentive to these criteria when seeking information on firefighter fatalities.

Fatal firefighter injuries by year: 1977–2025

Fatal injury trends over time offer some clues as to the effectiveness of injury prevention efforts. As shown in Figure 1 (which excludes the recently added fatalities within 24 hours of duty to maintain

historic consistency), fatal firefighter injuries have followed a clear downward trend over the course of the NFPA study since its inception in 1977. Although there are year-to-year fluctuations in the fatality total, the ten-year average for each decade is lower than the one that precedes it. The chart shows that fatalities rose between 2020 and 2023 following a historical low of 48 fatalities in 2019, but lower fatality totals in 2024 and 2025 are generally in line with the overall trend pattern.

Figure 1. On-duty fatal firefighter injuries: 1977–2025



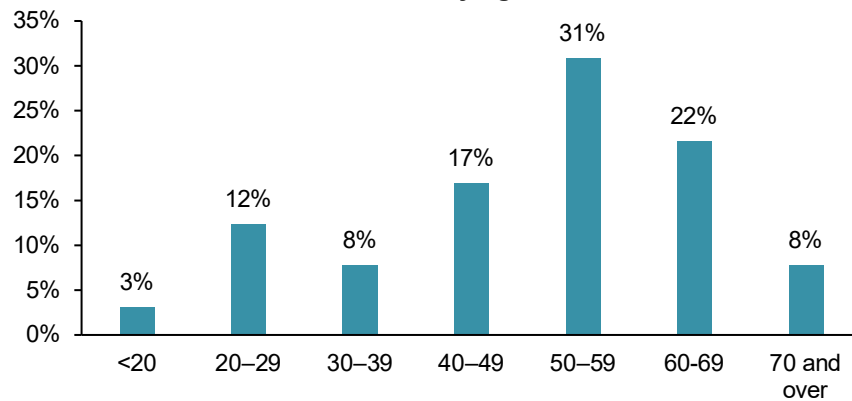
Fatal on-duty firefighter injuries in 2025

The vast majority of on-duty fatal injuries were experienced by male firefighters (92 percent of the total, 60 deaths). The five fatally injured female firefighters in 2025 represented an increase over the single female firefighter fatally injured in 2024.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of on-duty fatal injuries in 2025 by age group. The highest shares of injuries were among firefighters who were 50 to 59 years old (31 percent, 20 deaths), 60 to 69 years old

(22 percent, 14 deaths), and 40 to 49 years old (17 percent, 11 deaths). Five firefighters were 70 years of age or older (8 percent of the total), including four volunteer municipal firefighters and one wildland contract firefighter. Eight firefighters were 20 to 29 years old (12 percent of the total), and another five firefighters were 30 to 39 years of age. Two firefighters (3 percent of the total) were less than 20 years of age.

Figure 2. On-duty fatal firefighter injuries in 2025 by age



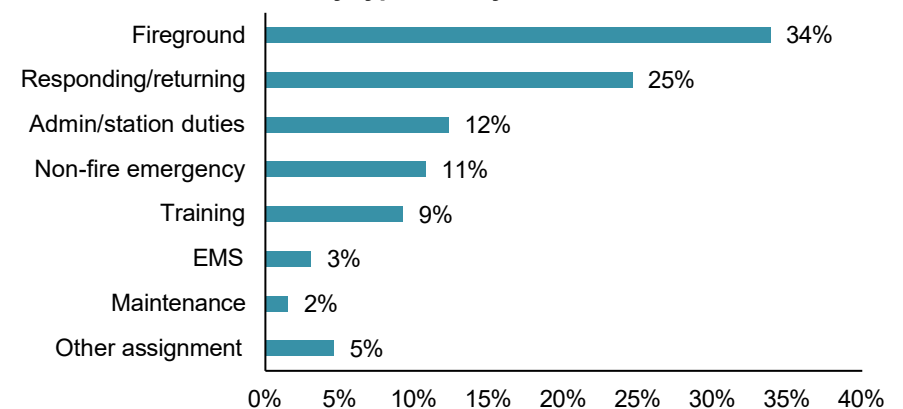
Type of duty

Firefighters engage in a variety of activities that place them at risk of injury or fatal medical events, including activities on the fireground, operating at non-fire emergencies, responding to or returning from fires and emergency calls, training activities, emergency medical response calls, normal station duties, maintenance activities, and other on-duty activities.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of the 2025 deaths by the type of duty that was being performed at the time of injury for all on-duty fatalities. As indicated, just over one-third of the fatal injuries (22 deaths) were associated with operations at the fireground, while one-quarter of fatal

injuries (16 deaths) occurred while responding to or returning from calls. Administrative or station duties (12 percent of the total, 8 deaths), non-fire emergency incidents (11 percent, 7 deaths), and training activities (9 percent, 6 deaths) also accounted for sizeable shares of the fatal injuries, followed by emergency medical service activities (3 percent, 2 deaths) and maintenance activities (one death). Five firefighters died while engaged in other assignments.

Figure 3. On-duty fatal firefighter injuries by type of duty in 2025



Fireground duties. The 22 on-duty fireground deaths in 2025 represent an increase over the 17 on-duty fireground fatalities in 2024. Of the 22 on-duty fatal firefighter injuries:

- 11 firefighters died as a result of heart attacks at fire incidents, including six career firefighters, 3 volunteer firefighters, and 2 wildland firefighters.
- Two career firefighters were fatally injured when they were shot at the scene of a brush fire. A third firefighter suffered critical injuries in the incident.

- Two career firefighters were fatally injured when they were crushed by collapsing or falling structural elements.
- One volunteer firefighter was fatally injured when struck by a piece of equipment, and one wildland firefighter suffered fatal injuries when struck by a falling tree.
- Three volunteer firefighters died as a result of fall injuries.
- One career firefighter died as a result of being caught or trapped while trying to rescue a fellow firefighter inside a warehouse fire, and a second succumbed to smoke inhalation while searching for victims at a residential fire.

Responding/returning duties. Sixteen firefighters died from injuries or heart attacks while responding to or returning from calls, a substantial increase over the 6 such fatalities in 2024. The victims included three career firefighters and 13 volunteer firefighters.

- Seven firefighters suffered fatal injuries when their vehicles left the road. Three of the incidents involved personal vehicles and four involved fire department vehicles. In one of the incidents, the victim's vehicle was swept off the roadway by floodwater, and at least two other incidents occurred during inclement weather.
- Three firefighters died as a result of collisions with other vehicles, including one two-fatality incident involving an ambulance. The victim of the second fatal crash was a volunteer firefighter responding in a personal vehicle.
- Two volunteer firefighters died in separate single-vehicle crashes while responding to emergency calls.
- Three volunteer firefighters suffered fatal heart attacks while responding to fire calls; two of these occurred at the station while preparing to respond, and the third while en route to a fire.
- One firefighter sustained fatal injuries from a tornado while responding to a fire.

Non-fire emergency duties. Seven firefighters died from injuries or medical events in the course of non-fire emergency duties.

- Two firefighters were struck by vehicles while at the scene of emergency incidents.
- One firefighter was electrocuted at the scene of a motor vehicle incident when electrical wires became entangled with an apparatus.
- One firefighter suffered a heart attack while serving on a rescue crew for an injured hiker.
- One firefighter was fatally shot by a homeowner while seeking to assist passengers of a disabled vehicle.
- One firefighter died as a result of an unspecified medical condition after stopping to help a disabled vehicle.
- One firefighter suffered a stroke after responding to a motor vehicle incident.

Training duties. Six firefighters died as a result of or while engaged in on-duty training activities.

- Two career firefighters and one volunteer firefighter suffered fatal heart attacks, and one career firefighter recruit died due to an unspecified cause.
- One state forestry supervisor became ill while leading a training exercise and suffered a fatal heart attack later in the day.
- One volunteer firefighter suffered fatal traumatic injuries in a vehicle crash during a training exercise.

Emergency medical service duties. Three firefighters died as a result of activities during emergency medical service duties. These included:

- One career firefighter/EMT was fatally stabbed by a patient during transport to the hospital.
- One volunteer firefighter was fatally injured when his vehicle left the roadway while responding to an emergency call.

- One career firefighter/EMT suffered a fatal heart attack while transporting a patient to the hospital.

Administrative or station duties. Eight firefighters died as a result of injuries or medical conditions while engaged in normal station duties.

- A volunteer firefighter died as a result of complications from an injury sustained in a fall at the fire station.
- Five career firefighters suffered fatal heart attacks, and one career firefighter died as a result of an unspecified medical condition while on duty at the station or headquarters.
- One career firefighter became ill while at the station and succumbed the following day due to an unspecified medical cause.

Other or unclassified duties. Three firefighters died while performing other duties.

- A volunteer firefighter was struck by a vehicle while providing standby at a drag race.
- A career firefighter suffered a fatal heart attack after going home due to feeling ill.
- One firefighter was fatally injured in a motor vehicle incident while returning home from classroom training.

Firefighter activity

The largest share of firefighter fatalities (13 fatalities, 20 percent of the total) occurred while victims were engaged in station activities, followed by fatalities while riding in a vehicle (11 fatalities, 17 percent), and fatalities while driving or operating a vehicle (10 fatalities, 15 percent). Six of the driving/operating deaths involved private vehicles. Ten deaths (15 percent) occurred while firefighters were engaged in miscellaneous incident activities at the emergency scene, and nine deaths (14 percent) occurred while firefighters were engaged in extinguishment or suppression support activities. Six fatalities occurred during rescue or

medical care activities. These results are shown in Table B.

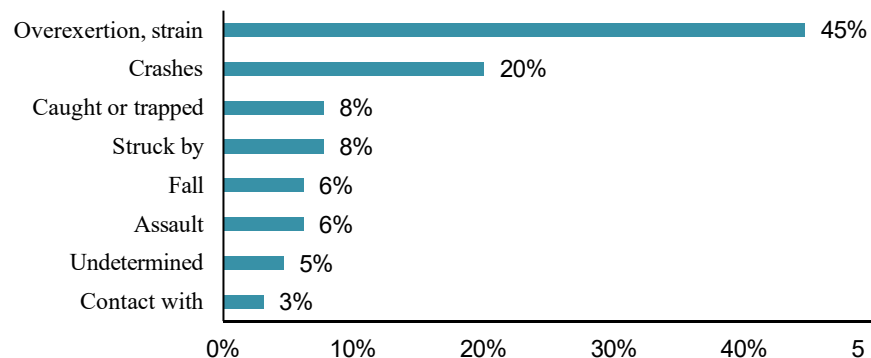
Table B. On-duty fatal firefighter injuries by activity in 2025

Activity	On-Duty Fatalities	
Station activity	13	20%
Riding in vehicle	11	17%
In apparatus	6	9%
Riding other emergency vehicle	2	3%
Riding non-emergency vehicle	2	3%
Driving, operating vehicle	10	15%
Driving private vehicle	6	9%
Driving fire dept. apparatus	3	5%
Miscellaneous incident scene activity	10	15%
Extinguishment, suppression support	9	14%
Rescue, medical care	6	9%
Other or undetermined activity	6	9%

Cause of injury

Over two in five of the on-duty firefighter fatality deaths were caused by overexertion or strain injuries (45 percent, 29 deaths), and one-fifth (20 percent, 13 deaths) were caused by crashes. The cause of injury, as used here, refers to the action or circumstances that led directly to the injury. As shown in Figure 4, other injury causes included caught or trapped and struck by incidents, which each accounted for eight percent of the fatal injuries (5 deaths in each case), and falls and assaults, each of which caused six percent of the fatal injuries (4 deaths in each case). Two fatal injuries had a contact-related cause, and three had an undetermined cause.

Figure 4. On-duty fatal firefighter injuries by cause of injury in 2025



Overexertion or strain. All but four of the 29 fatalities caused by overexertion or strain were determined to be due to heart attacks. Two of the remaining fatalities were due to unspecified medical causes; one had an undetermined cause, and one was a stroke. The victims included 26 municipal firefighters (16 career firefighters, 9 volunteer firefighters, and one on-call firefighter) and three wildland firefighters.

Crashes. All of the firefighters who were fatally injured in crashes were municipal firefighters (10 volunteer firefighters and 3 career firefighters). Three crashes involved collisions with other vehicles, three involved collisions with stationary objects, and four collisions had limited information. Of the remaining incidents, two firefighters were fatally injured when their vehicles overturned with no collision, and one firefighter was fatally injured when he was ejected after his vehicle left the road.

Caught or trapped incidents. Five firefighters were fatally injured when they were caught or trapped in some way during emergency response. All of the victims were career firefighters. Two were injured by structural collapses, two were lost inside buildings, and one was in a vehicle that was swept off the roadway by floodwater.

Struck by incidents. Five firefighters were fatally injured in struck by incidents. Three firefighters were fatally injured when struck by non-fire department vehicles, one was struck by a falling tree, and one was struck by a piece of detached apparatus.

Falls or slips. Four firefighters were fatally injured by falls or slips. Three of these firefighters died as a result of complications from injuries sustained by slips or falls at ground level, and one was fatally injured in a fall from the top of a fire department vehicle.

Assaults. Four firefighters were fatally injured in assault incidents, two of whom were killed by a gunman during emergency response in a single incident. A third firefighter was fatally stabbed by a patient during emergency transport, and the fourth was fatally shot by a nearby resident while assisting motorists.

Other causes. One firefighter was electrocuted when a downed wire came in contact with his vehicle, one was fatally injured during extreme weather, and three suffered undetermined medical emergencies while on duty.

Nature of injury

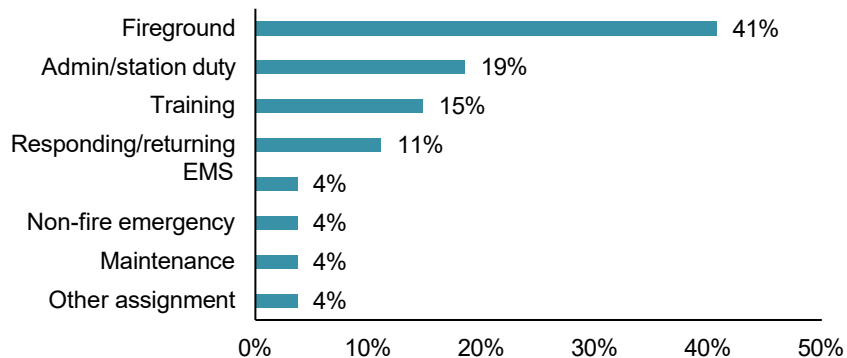
The *nature* of fatal injuries sustained by firefighters while on duty refers to the medical cause of death, which is distinct from the cause of injury. As is historically the case, heart attacks were responsible for the largest share of on-duty deaths in 2025 (27 fatalities, 42 percent of the total), followed by trauma or crushing injuries (23 fatalities, 35 percent). Four deaths were caused by either strokes or embolisms or undetermined medical causes, and the remaining fatal injuries resulted from a variety of causes, as indicated in Table C.

Table C. *On-duty* fatal firefighter injuries by nature of injury in 2025

Nature of injury	On-duty fatalities	
Sudden cardiac death	27	(42%)
Trauma/crushing	23	(35%)
Gunshot	3	(5%)
Stroke or blood clot/embolism	2	(3%)
Asphyxiation/smoke inhalation	2	(3%)
Positional or mechanical asphyxiation	1	(2%)
Drowning	1	(2%)
Fracture	1	(2%)
Electrocution	1	(2%)
Unspecified medical cause	2	(3%)
Undetermined or not reported	2	(3%)

Municipal firefighters accounted for 24 of the heart attack victims (16 career firefighters and 8 volunteer firefighters) and 22 of the trauma/crushing victims (16 volunteer and 6 career). Figure 5 shows the distribution of fatal heart attacks and trauma/crushing injuries by type of duty.

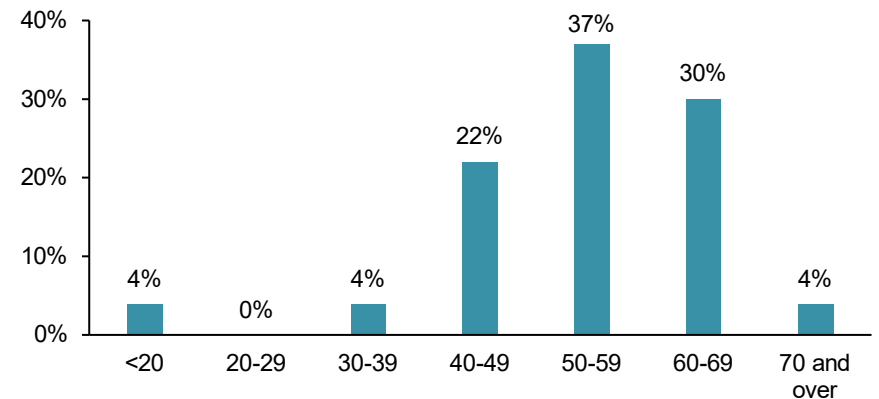
Figure 5. *On-duty* fatal heart attacks and trauma/crushing injuries by type of duty in 2025



As the figure indicates, the largest share of on-duty heart attacks (11 fatalities, 41 percent of the heart attack total) occurred while firefighters were engaged in fireground operations, followed by administrative/station duties, which accounted for five heart attacks (19 percent of the total) and training duties (4 deaths, 15 percent). Fatal trauma or crushing injuries (12 fatalities, 52 percent of the trauma/injury total) were most often experienced while firefighters were engaged in responding to or returning from emergencies.

Age is a well-established risk factor for heart attacks, with the risk increasing at approximately 45 years of age. Figure 6 below shows the distribution of on-duty heart attacks by age. As the figure indicates, 70 percent of on-duty heart attacks were experienced by firefighters over the age of 50, while half of them were 60 years of age or older.

Figure 6. *On-duty* fatal heart attacks by age in 2025



Non-municipal firefighters

Four non-municipal firefighters were fatally injured in 2025, down from six non-municipal firefighter fatal injuries in 2024. Two of the victims were federal wildland contract firefighters, one was a state forestry supervisor, and one was a seasonal state wildland firefighter.

- Both of the federal contract firefighters died as a result of heart attacks at the scene of wildfires. One of the victims was engaged in suppression activities, and the second was performing hazard tree removal.
- The state forestry supervisor died as a result of a heart attack within 24 hours of leading a training exercise.
- The seasonal state forestry firefighter was fatally injured when struck by a falling tree while working a prescribed fire in a national forest.

Multiple-fatality incidents

There were two multiple-fatality incidents in 2025, each of which claimed the lives of two firefighters. All of the victims were municipal career firefighters. In one incident, two firefighters were returning to the station when they were fatally injured in a crash with another vehicle. In the second incident, two firefighters were fatally shot by a gunman while responding to a grassfire.

Fatalities *within 24 hours of duty*

As indicated earlier, prior to 2022, NFPA's annual firefighter fatality study excluded most fatal heart attacks, strokes, aneurysms, or other medical conditions that occurred while the victim was off duty. These fatalities were only counted if the firefighter made a specific physical complaint while on duty.² Since 2022, these fatalities have

been included in the study when they occurred within 24 hours of duty irrespective of any documented physical complaint.

While these new fatalities presume that work activities contributed to the fatal event, they are analyzed separately here because they differ in important ways from on-duty injuries. Deaths that occur within 24 hours of duty are overwhelmingly due to heart attacks or medical conditions and are most often experienced by volunteer firefighters and firefighters in older age groups. In addition, deaths that occur when the victim is off duty cannot be readily associated with a specific type of duty or work activity, absent a specific on-duty injury.

As previously noted, in 2025, 18 firefighters died due to heart attacks within 24 hours of duty, i.e., fatalities not included in this study prior to 2022. These fatalities comprise 22 percent of the 2025 fatality total. Municipal firefighters accounted for all of the fatalities within 24 hours of duty, including 14 volunteer firefighters, two on-call firefighters, and two career firefighters.

Of the volunteer and on-call firefighters:

- Four volunteers had heart attacks within 24 hours of responding to medical calls.
- Two volunteers had heart attacks within 24 hours of training duties.
- Two volunteers had heart attacks within 24 hours of responding to grass fires.
- Two volunteers had heart attacks within 24 hours of responding to motor vehicle incidents.
- One volunteer had a heart attack within 24 hours of responding to two emergency calls.
- One volunteer had a heart attack within 24 hours of responding to a structure collapse.

²This was not the case with on-duty traumatic injuries that later resulted in death, which were always included in the study.

- One volunteer had a heart attack within 24 hours of responding to a false alarm.
- One volunteer had a heart attack within 24 hours of responding to an alarm.
- One on-call firefighter had a heart attack within 24 hours of forced entry training.
- One on-call firefighter had a heart attack within 24 hours of responding to two emergency calls.

Of the career firefighters:

- One had a heart attack the evening after responding to multiple calls.
- One had a heart attack after a 48-hour shift that included strenuous physical activity.

Age of victims

As indicated in Table D, seven firefighters who died as a result of heart attacks within 24 hours of duty were 40 to 49 years of age, all of whom were volunteers or on-call firefighters. Volunteer firefighters also accounted for all of the heart attack victims who were 60 years of age or older. One volunteer firefighter and one career firefighter who suffered heart attacks were under 40 years of age. This was also the case for those in the 50-to-59-year age group.

Table D. Sudden cardiac deaths within 24 hours of duty by firefighter type and age

Age	Career	Volunteer	Total
< 40 years	1	1	2
40–49	0	7	7
50–59	1	1	2
60–69	0	5	5
70 and older	0	2	2
Total	2	16	18

Other concerns: Behavioral health and suicide

Suicide: Firefighters are exposed to a wide variety of physical and emotional stressors in the course of their work, from exposure to the suffering of victims or colleagues to sleep disruption, long work hours, and burnout.

Recognition of the importance of behavioral health programs and peer support for firefighters has become widespread in recent years. As with heart disease and cancer, this is a problem that follows firefighters after their careers end, whether in retirement or some other form of separation from the fire service.

According to the [Firefighter Behavioral Health Alliance \(FBHA\)](#), 87 firefighters died by suicide in 2025, as of mid-April 2026. (This number might change as new reports are validated by the FBHA.) The victims included 69 career firefighters, 16 volunteer firefighters, and two wildland firefighters, suggesting that access to behavioral health intervention is an important concern across the fire service. The Behavioral Health Alliance also confirmed 11 emergency medical service workers and two dispatchers died by suicide in 2025.

Cancer: Occupational exposure as a firefighter has been determined to be a cause of mesothelioma and bladder cancer by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, with limited evidence for prostate, colon, and testicular cancers, as well as melanoma and non-Hodgkin lymphoma. At its 2026 memorial ceremonies, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation added the names of 16 firefighters who succumbed to cancer in 2025 to the Fallen Firefighter Memorial, along with 53 firefighters who died from cancer in previous years.

Conclusion

Although the 65 fatal *on-duty* firefighter injuries in 2025 represented an increase over the 2024 total, they were nonetheless generally consistent with the overall downward trend in annual fatalities over the course of this research effort. However, any fatality is a tragedy, and the most recent data direct attention to several areas of ongoing concern.

Two-thirds of the on-duty firefighter fatalities in 2025 were collectively caused by overexertion or strain injuries (45 percent) and crashes (20 percent) — both of which are regularly the leading injury causes — suggesting the need for additional attention to prevention efforts in these areas.

Year in and year out, heart attacks have been a leading medical cause of on-duty firefighter deaths, and they accounted for all but one of the overexertion or strain fatalities in 2025. The study's inclusion of heart attacks or medical deaths within 24 hours of duty since 2022 has brought the problem of firefighter cardiac health into even sharper relief, adding 18 firefighter deaths to the fatality count (22 percent of the total) in 2025. These fatalities would have gone undocumented prior to 2022.

While age is a non-modifiable risk factor for cardiac health, diet, physical conditioning, sleep, and hydration are critical components of cardiac care and represent areas where firefighters can lower the risk of heart attack. Annual physicals with cardio screenings are another important tool for reducing sudden cardiac deaths among firefighters and may be particularly important as a health check with older firefighters.

Crashes have long received attention as a significant cause of fatal firefighter injuries. Ten of the 13 crash fatalities in 2025 were volunteer firefighters, with six of the victims responding to incidents in privately owned vehicles. An investigation by the National

Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) into [one of these incidents](#) noted that many crash-related deaths and serious injuries of volunteer firefighters have involved privately owned vehicles. The investigation report cited driver error, excessive speed, lack of seatbelt use, inclement weather, and vehicle rollovers as factors that are commonly associated with fatal crashes.

Resources for first responder highway safety are available from the [National Volunteer Fire Council](#), the [United States Fire Administration](#), the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#), and the [International Association of Firefighters](#).

Other causes of firefighter fatalities in 2025 — including assaults, caught or trapped incidents, and asphyxiations — illustrate the complex range of hazards faced by firefighters in their work. While firefighters have limited control over some of the hazards to which they are exposed, adherence to safety and health protocols and training requirements can help reduce the risk of injury. Institutional support for injury research and intervention programs should be a priority to ensure ongoing progress in injury prevention.

Notes

For this report, the term *volunteer* refers to any firefighter whose principal occupation is not that of a full-time, paid member of a fire department. The term *career* refers to any firefighter whose occupation is that of a full-time, paid fire department member. The categories for cause of injury and nature of injury are based on the 1981 edition of NFPA 901, *Uniform Coding for Fire Protection*.

Select 2025 firefighter fatal injury narratives

Firefighters ambushed by gunman at intentionally set outdoor fire

Shortly after 1:00 p.m., an engine company returning from a neighboring fire station observed smoke in the area of a nearby recreational mountain and responded to investigate. Two brush trucks and battalion chiefs from the departments that cover that area were dispatched to the scene. Upon arrival, crews confirmed a working wildfire further to the north, with bystanders reporting approximately one acre burning.

The first-arriving battalion chief assumed command and requested a second alarm. The members of the first engine company parked their apparatus in an upper parking lot, which was established as the command post, and proceeded up the mountain with the brush trucks.

Crews were unable to reach the incident commander via radio a short time later. When a third battalion chief arrived on scene, he discovered that the two battalion chiefs and a firefighter had been shot. The arriving chief immediately activated the Active Shooter Protocol and notified all responding units of the situation. Additional fire units, along with EMS, were requested and responded, along with a division chief who assumed unified command of the incident with members of law enforcement.

Law enforcement arrived promptly and assisted firefighters in evacuating members of the public from the area. Tragically, both battalion chiefs sustained fatal gunshot wounds. The third firefighter suffered serious injuries and was transported to a nearby hospital, where they were expected to recover.

Investigators later determined that the fire had been intentionally set as part of an ambush targeting first responders. The suspected

shooter was located later that evening with a self-inflicted gunshot wound and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Firefighter killed in commercial building collapse

At approximately 9:39 p.m., firefighters were dispatched following a report of a commercial building fire. The first-arriving company confirmed a working fire with heavy smoke and flames visible upon arrival. The incident commander (IC) arrived shortly thereafter and reported a large commercial structure consisting of multiple units, some of which were reported to be vacant. A second alarm was immediately requested.

The fire involved two wood-frame additions that were attached to a larger four-story brick structure. The wood-frame additions had previously been flagged as vacant due to documented structural hazards and were designated as “Do Not Enter” for fire response purposes. The IC announced defensive operations only.

Companies were assigned to open up the building for access, protect exposures, and evacuate the attached four-story structure. An officer and firefighter deployed a hose line to the front of the structure and were operating in that area when reports were received of a collapse in the rear of the building. This initial collapse resulted in a progressive collapse of additional portions of the structure, including a large section of the front façade and parapet wall in the front of the building.

During the collapse, the officer was struck in the head, and the firefighter was trapped by debris as both members were walking away from the structure. Mayday transmissions were made, and all available resources were directed to the collapse area. Extrication tools were used to free the trapped firefighter, who was immediately transported to the hospital, where he was pronounced deceased.

The firefighter's cause of death was determined to be traumatic asphyxiation. Wind-driven fire conditions were identified as a contributing factor to the rapid fire spread and subsequent structural collapse. The cause of the fire was determined to be arson, and one individual was subsequently charged with numerous crimes.

Assistant chief electrocuted at motor vehicle accident scene

Units responded to a reported motor vehicle accident involving a pickup truck that had struck a utility pole and a guardrail. An assistant chief responded to the incident while operating a pumper apparatus.

Upon arrival, the assistant chief began repositioning the apparatus to avoid low-hanging utility wires in the roadway. During this maneuver, the apparatus inadvertently contacted an energized, low-hanging electrical wire and became entangled.

Upon exiting the apparatus, the assistant chief was electrocuted. Personnel on scene immediately initiated emergency medical care, including defibrillation efforts. Despite these lifesaving measures, the assistant chief succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced deceased.

Firefighter ejected from tanker while responding to grass fire

At approximately 7:00 p.m., the fire department was dispatched to a large grass fire.

While en route, a responding tanker apparatus left the roadway for undetermined reasons and overturned. During the rollover, the firefighter was ejected from the vehicle and was pronounced deceased at the scene.

The driver of the tanker was the sole occupant of the apparatus and was not wearing a seat belt at the time of the crash. The incident remains under investigation.

Fire lieutenant suffers from fatal medical emergency while operating at commercial structure fire

A fire lieutenant was operating at a three-story commercial building fire when he suffered a sudden medical emergency.

During fireground operations, the lieutenant was ascending an aerial ladder when he experienced a sudden medical event, causing him to fall backward on the ladder. Firefighters immediately assisted in removing him from the aerial device and initiated emergency medical care on scene.

The lieutenant was transported to the nearest trauma center, where he was hospitalized. Despite treatment, he passed away several days later as a result of the medical emergency and associated injuries.

Following his death, the lieutenant and his family continued to save lives through the donation of his organs.

Wildland firefighter was fatally injured by falling tree during prescribed burn

A seasonal wildland firefighter was fatally injured while operating at a prescribed burn assignment. During suppression operations, a large tree unexpectedly fell, striking the firefighter.

Firefighters operating nearby immediately initiated emergency medical care and requested advanced medical resources. The injured firefighter was air-lifted to a regional trauma center but succumbed to the injuries the same day.

The incident occurred during active prescribed fire operations. The circumstances surrounding the tree failure and operational conditions are under investigation.

Firefighter dies after experiencing medical emergency following structure fire response

At approximately 2:00 a.m., fire crews responded to a reported residential structure fire. Firefighters operated on scene for several hours before bringing the fire under control and clearing the scene approximately three hours later.

After returning to the fire station, personnel were cleaning apparatus and equipment and placing units back into service when a firefighter suddenly experienced a medical emergency. Fellow firefighters immediately initiated medical care, and the firefighter was transported to a local hospital.

Despite the efforts of firefighters and medical professionals, the firefighter passed away a short time later. The cause of death remains under investigation.

Acknowledgments

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Table 1. Fatal Firefighter Injuries in the US: 1977–2025

Year	On duty	Within 24 Hours	Total
1977	157	N/A	157
1978	174	N/A	174
1979	126	N/A	126
1980	138	N/A	138
1981	136	N/A	136
1982	128	N/A	128
1983	114	N/A	114
1984	119	N/A	119
1985	128	N/A	128
1986	119	N/A	119
1987	132	N/A	132
1988	136	N/A	136
1989	118	N/A	118
1990	108	N/A	108
1991	108	N/A	108
1992	75	N/A	75
1993	80	N/A	80
1994	106	N/A	106
1995	98	N/A	98
1996	96	N/A	96
1997	99	N/A	99
1998	91	N/A	91
1999	114	N/A	114
2000	104	N/A	104
2001	103	N/A	103

Year	On duty	Within 24 Hours	Total
2002	98	N/A	98
2003	107	N/A	107
2004	104	N/A	104
2005	87	N/A	87
2006	90	N/A	90
2007	106	N/A	106
2008	106	N/A	106
2009	82	N/A	82
2010	73	N/A	73
2011	62	N/A	62
2012	64	N/A	64
2013	98	N/A	98
2014	64	N/A	64
2015	68	N/A	68
2016	70	N/A	70
2017	60	N/A	60
2018	65	N/A	65
2019	48	N/A	48
2020	62	N/A	62
2021	70	N/A	70
2022	80	16	96
2023	74	16	90
2024	53	16	69
2025	65	18	83

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 2. *On-Duty* Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States by Type of Duty: 2025

Type of Duty	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
Operating at fireground	12	38%	7	24%
Responding to or returning from alarms	3	9%	13	45%
Operating at non-fire emergencies	2	6%	5	17%
Training	3	9%	2	7%
Normal station activity	7	22%	1	3%
Emergency medical service	2	6%	0	0%
Other on-duty activity	2	6%	1	3%
Maintenance	1	3%	0	0%
Totals	32	100%	29	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 3. *On-Duty* Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States by Cause of Injury: 2025

Cause of Fatal Injury	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
Overexertion/stress/other related medical	10	36%	10	34%
Struck by vehicle	1	4%	2	0%
Struck by object	0	0%	1	0%
Motor vehicle crash	3	11%	8	28%
Fell	0	0%	4	14%
Overturned, no collision	0	0%	2	0%
Assault	28	100%	0	0%
Lost inside building	1	4%	0	0%
Trapped under water	2	7%	0	0%
Trapped by roof collapse	2	7%	0	0%
Trapped by wall collapse	2	7%	0	0%
Contact with electricity	0	0%	1	3%
Undetermined	0	0%	0	0%
Extreme weather	0	0%	1	3%
Totals	32	100%	29	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 4. *On-Duty* Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States by Nature of Injury: 2025

Nature of fatal injury	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
Sudden cardiac death	16	50%	8	28%
Internal trauma/crushing	6	19%	16	55%
Asphyxia, including smoke inhalation	2	6%	0	0%
Mechanical asphyxiation	1	3%	0	0%
Electrical shock	0	0%	1	3%
Stroke or embolism	0	0%	2	7%
Gunshot, projectile wound	3	9%	0	0%
Fracture	0	0%	1	3%
Drowning	1	3%	0	0%
Unspecified medical symptoms	1	3%	0	0%
Undetermined	2	6%	0	0%
Totals	32	100%	29	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 5. *On-Duty* Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States by Rank of Firefighter: 2025

Rank	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
Firefighter	20	63%	14	48%
Company officer	6	19%	7	24%
Chief officer	6	19%	8	28%
Totals	32	100%	29	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 6. *On-Duty* Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States by Years of Service: 2025

Years of Service	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
5 or fewer	10	31%	4	14%
6 to 10	1	3%	4	14%
11 to 15	3	9%	4	14%
16 to 20	2	6%	1	3%
21 to 25	6	19%	1	3%
26 to 30	7	22%	4	14%
31 to 35	2	6%	4	14%
36 to 40	1	3%	3	10%
41 to 45	0	0%	1	3%
46 to 50	0	0%	0	0%
More than 50	0	0%	3	10%
Totals	32	100%	29	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 7. *On-Duty* Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States by Age of Firefighter: 2025

Age	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
20 and under	1	3%	1	3%
21 to 25	2	6%	2	7%
26 to 30	2	6%	1	3%
31 to 35	2	6%	0	0%
36 to 40	4	13%	1	3%
41 to 45	5	16%	2	7%
46 to 50	2	6%	0	0%
51 to 55	8	25%	5	17%
56 to 60	2	6%	8	28%
61 to 65	3	9%	2	7%
66 to 70	1	3%	3	10%
71 to 75	0	0%	2	7%
Over 75	0	0%	2	7%
Totals	32	100%	29	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 8. Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States *Within 24 Hours of Duty* by Firefighter Type and Year

Year	Carer Firefighters Number of Deaths	Volunteer Firefighters Number of Deaths
2022	4	13
2023	4	12
2024	5	11
2025	2	16

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 9. Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States *Within 24 Hours of Duty* by Rank of Firefighter: 2025

Rank	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
Firefighter	1	50%	10	63%
Company officer	1	50%	3	19%
Chief officer	0	0%	3	19%
Totals	2	100%	16	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 10. Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States *Within 24 Hours of Duty* by Years of Service: 2025

Years of Service	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
5 or fewer	0	0%	1	6%
6 to 10	0	0%	0	0%
11 to 15	0	0%	3	19%
16 to 20	1	50%	1	6%
21 to 25	1	50%	2	13%
26 to 30	0	0%	3	19%
31 to 35	0	0%	2	13%
36 to 40	0	0%	0	0%
41 to 45	0	0%	1	6%
46 to 50	0	0%	2	13%
More than 50	0	0%	1	6%
Totals	2	50%	16	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.

Table 11. Fatal Municipal Firefighter Injuries in the United States *Within 24 Hours of Duty* by Age of Firefighter: 2025

Age	Career Firefighters		Volunteer Firefighters	
	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths	Number of Deaths	Percent of Deaths
31 to 35	0	0%	1	6%
36 to 40	1	50%	0	0%
41 to 45	0	0%	3	19%
46 to 50	0	0%	5	31%
51 to 55	1	50%	0	0%
56 to 60	0	0%	0	0%
61 to 65	0	0%	4	25%
66 to 70	0	0%	2	13%
71 to 75	0	0%	0	0%
Over 75	0	0%	1	6%
Totals	2	100%	16	100%

Source: NFPA Fire Incident Data Organization (FIDO), firefighter fatality database.