FIREWORKS

REFERENCE GUIDE

NFIRS Reports: Understanding Historical Fire Incident Records

What NFIRS reports contain, where historical records live now that NFIRS is retired, and how to keep them accessible.

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INTRODUCTION

What Is an NFIRS Report?

An NFIRS report is an incident record created under the National Fire Incident Reporting System, the federal fire incident reporting standard U.S. fire departments used for decades. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) retired NFIRS in January 2026, and departments now report new incidents in NERIS. Historical NFIRS reports are still part of each department's operational record, used to answer records requests, review past incidents and compare activity over time.

NFIRS at a Glance

- NFIRS stopped accepting new incidents after December 31, 2025.
- NFIRS became unavailable to all users in February 2026.
- NFIRS records do not automatically carry over into NERIS.
- Since January 1, 2026, incidents are reported only in NERIS.
- The U.S. Fire Administration no longer holds department NFIRS incident records.
- The department that created a report owns it.

THE BASICS

What Does an NFIRS Report Record?

An NFIRS report can include the incident type, location, response details and other information about the event. What a given report contains depends on which modules the department completed and how it entered the data.

When reviewing an older report, separate what the record states from what someone might infer. An empty field does not prove something did not happen. It may only reflect how the information was collected or entered.

TIMELINE

NFIRS Sunset: Key Dates

January 1, 2026

NERIS Only

Incident reporting moved exclusively to NERIS. No 2026 incidents go into NFIRS.

January 31, 2026

Final Edits

Last day to edit 2025 incident records in NFIRS.

February 2026

NFIRS Offline

NFIRS became unavailable to all users and was decommissioned.

FINDING RECORDS

Where Are NFIRS Records Now?

With NFIRS retired, the U.S. Fire Administration no longer holds department incident records. Here is where copies may still exist.

Source	What it may hold
Your fire department	The department that created a report owns it. Start here for any records request.
Your records management software vendor	Copies of reports submitted through that software.
State reporting authority (often the State Fire Marshal's office)	Copies of some records.
eNFIRS (direct entry)	Reports entered directly into eNFIRS may not be retrievable.
USFA Public Data Release	Publicly released NFIRS data for research, not individual department records.

USING HISTORICAL DATA

How Can Departments Use Historical Records Without Losing Context?

Historical reports are useful for looking at activity across years, but comparisons need context. Changes in coding practices, how complete the reports were, department boundaries or response procedures can all shift apparent trends.

NERIS also uses updated incident type codes and fields, so NFIRS and NERIS data do not line up one to one. Before drawing conclusions, confirm the date range, the report definitions and whether the records were collected the same way.

Old data is valuable when you know exactly how it was collected.

CHECKLIST

How Can Departments Keep NFIRS Records Accessible?

Five steps to make sure your incident history is there when you need it. Check each one off as you go.

- [ ] **1** Confirm where your NFIRS history lives today: your records management system, an export file or your state.
- [ ] **2** Name who is responsible for keeping it.
- [ ] **3** Decide how staff will search for and export older reports.
- [ ] **4** Test retrieval with real examples: a specific incident number, an address and a request covering a date range.
- [ ] **5** Confirm retention requirements with your records authority.

When planning your NERIS workflow, account for both current reporting and access to past incidents.

GLOSSARY

NFIRS Terms to Know

NFIRS
National Fire Incident Reporting System, the retired federal fire incident reporting standard.

eNFIRS
The U.S. Fire Administration web application departments used to enter and submit NFIRS reports directly.

NERIS
National Emergency Response Information System, the current national incident reporting platform that replaced NFIRS.

Modules
The sections of an NFIRS report a department completed, depending on the type of incident.

Public Data Release (PDR)
The U.S. Fire Administration's release of publicly available NFIRS data for research and analysis.

State Reporting Authority
The state agency that coordinated NFIRS reporting, often the State Fire Marshal's office.

FAQ

NFIRS Report Questions

Can departments still use NFIRS reports for historical research?

Yes. Existing NFIRS records stay useful for historical review, subject to each department's retention and access policies.

Is NFIRS still in use?

No. The U.S. Fire Administration retired NFIRS in January 2026, and incidents are now reported in NERIS. For the latest NERIS releases and timeline, visit the NERIS Resource Center at eprfireworks.com/neris-updates.

How do I request an old NFIRS report?

Contact the fire department that responded to the incident. If it can't help, contact your state reporting authority, such as the State Fire Marshal's office.

Do NFIRS records carry over into NERIS?

Not automatically. NFIRS and NERIS use different data structures, so departments need to keep their historical records separately.

Sources: U.S. Fire Administration, NFIRS Sunset and NFIRS Report Retention Policy (usfa.fema.gov). Dates current as of November 2026.



Your History Matters. So Does What's Next.

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