

U.S. Religious and Funeral Property Structure Fires Fact Sheet

U. S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of **1,780** structure fires on religious and funeral properties per year during 2007-2011. These fires caused annual averages of:

- **2** civilian deaths
- **19** civilian fire injuries
- **\$111** million in direct property damage

Only 4% of these fires were in funeral parlors. Fires in religious and funeral properties fell from 3,500 in 1980 to 1,660 in 2011, a 53% decrease.

Leading Causes of Structure Fires in Religious and Funeral Properties, 2007-2011

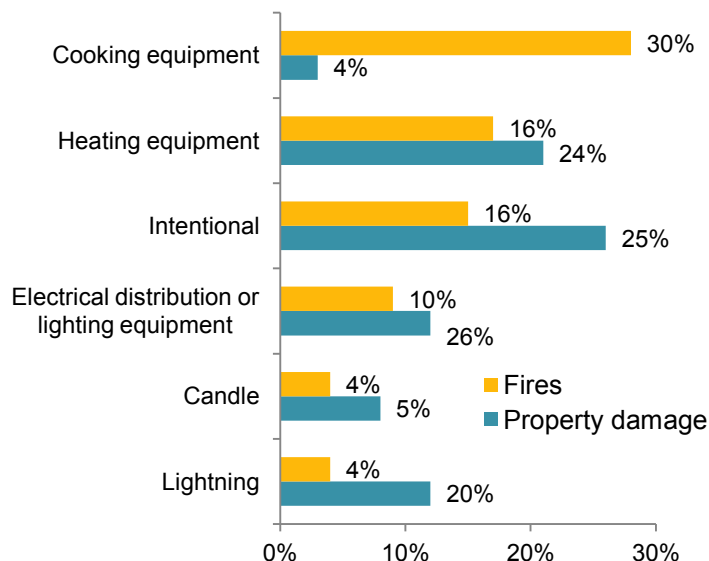
Three of every ten fires in these properties were caused by cooking. Most of these fires were minor.

Heating equipment was the second leading cause.

16% of these fires were intentional, but they accounted for 25% of the direct property damage.

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 10% of these fires and 26% of the direct property damage.

Candles caused 4% of the fires and 5% of the dollar loss. Lightning also caused 4% of these fires but 20% of the dollar loss.



Note: This table summarizes findings from multiple fields, meaning that the same fire may be listed under multiple causes.

Protecting These Properties

- During 2007-2011, fires were least likely to take place during the overnight hours, with the 12-hour period between 9 p.m. and 9 a.m. accounting for 31% of the fires.
- 40% of these fires occurred in properties with no fire detection equipment.

Sprinkler systems were present in only 12% of these fires. When wet pipe sprinklers were present in the fire area, the average loss per fire was 73% lower than when no automatic suppression systems were present. Properties under construction were excluded from these calculations.

Source: [U.S. Structure Fires in Religious and Funeral Properties](#), Richard Campbell, June 2013
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