

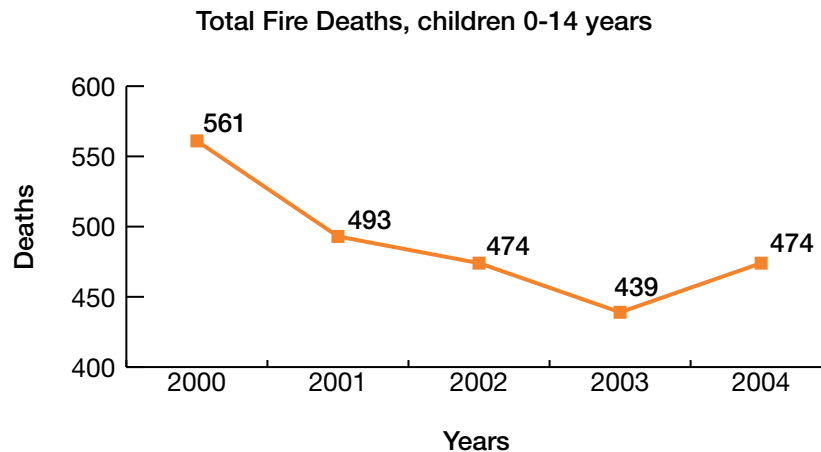


# Fire Safety



## Key Facts

- Each year, approximately 488 children ages 14 and under die in residential fires.



- An average of 116,600 children are injured from a fire/burn-related incident, each year.
- Fires and burns are the third leading cause of unintentional death among children aged 1-14 years.
- When a child is injured or dies from a residential fire, a smoke alarm is not working or not present in two-thirds of these occurrences.
- Each year approximately 300 people are killed in fires started by children playing with fire.
- Having a working smoke alarm reduces one's chances of dying in a fire by nearly half.

## Where, When and How

- Children playing with fire account for 4 percent of home fires. These fires cause 40 percent of home fire-related deaths among children under age 5.
- Nearly 40 percent of home fires and more than 50 percent of all home fire-related deaths occur in the 6 percent of houses without smoke alarms.
- During the cold-weather months of December through March, home fires and home fire-related deaths are more likely to occur.
- Smoking materials (e.g., cigarettes) are the leading cause of fire-related death and the fourth leading cause of fire-related injury in homes.
- Home cooking equipment is the leading cause of injuries in residential fires.

## **Who**

- Children under 5 years of age are at the greatest risk from home fire death and injury; their death rate is nearly twice the national average.
- Children living in rural areas have a dramatically higher risk of dying in a residential fire. Death rates in rural communities are more than twice the rates in large cities and more than three times higher than rates in large towns and small cities.
- Black children are more than three times as likely as white children to die in a fire.
- Male children have a slightly higher risk for fire-related deaths than females, with 57 percent of deaths occurring to boys ages 14 and under.

## **Proven Interventions**

- On average, a \$33 smoke alarm generates \$940 in benefits to society.
- Smoke alarms and sprinkler systems combined could reduce fire-related deaths by 82 percent and injuries by 46 percent.

## **Costs**

- Each year in the United States, \$280 million in property is destroyed by children playing with fire.
- The total annual cost of fire- and burn-related deaths among children ages 14 and under is more than \$2.6 billion. Children ages 4 and under account for more than \$1.4 billion of these costs.

## **Laws and Regulations**

- Many states and the District of Columbia have laws requiring the use of smoke alarms in new and existing homes. A few states still have no comprehensive smoke alarm laws. Other states have a variety of laws covering specific situations such as new dwellings or multi-occupancy dwellings only.
- In 1994, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issued a mandatory safety standard requiring disposable and novelty cigarette lighters to be child-resistant. Since this has been in effect, the number of deaths and injuries associated with these fires has declined by 31 percent and 26 percent, respectively.
- To protect children from burns, the CPSC issued regulations requiring that children's sleepwear must be flame-resistant and self-extinguish if a flame causes it to catch fire. The rules cover all children's sleepwear above size 9 months and up to size 14. Children's sleepwear must be either flame-resistant or be snug-fitting.