

'FIGHTING FIRES WITH FACTS' NEWSLETTER

INFORMATION AND STATISTICS DIVISION

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VFIRS Training

Does your department have new members or has your VFIRS officer recently changed?

Contact the Info & Stats Division for training opportunities.



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Virginia Department of Fire Programs

A Word from the Director

Data is only as valuable as the quality of data received. The old cliché, "Junk in Junk Out" is true today. The VDFP relies solely on you, the submitter, for accurate and timely information regarding your locality fire and emergency responses.

As we upload your data and compile it with the other jurisdictions, we develop the Virginia database which in turn is uploaded to develop the national database. I solicit your support to make Virginia, "The Best of the Best" in data reporting nationwide.

From the VFIRS Program Manager

A Valid Incident Report versus a Complete Incident Report

When you save your incident report is it valid or is it complete? What is the difference? A valid report has passed all the NFIRS (National Fire Incident Reporting System) critical error checks. This means that your incident report counts and can be included in national fire statistics. However, this is not the final level of quality control. You want your incident report to be complete. A complete report is valid and fully documents and accurately describes the incident. This includes proper coding, good remarks, and updated information once it becomes available. A complete incident report is like reading a good book, once it is read the reader should understand the events surrounding the incident - the who, what, when, where, and why.

Remember these two things: (1) the written incident report not only represents the member making the report but the shift, officers, and fire department; (2) if the information is NOT in the incident report, it did not happen. Accurate, complete, and timely information is vital to the successful fulfillment of your fire department's mission. Good report writing starts with you.

What is the difference between a Service Call (Incident type 5XX) and a Good Intent call (Incident type 6XX)? Email your response to vfirsreports@vdfp.virginia.gov



VFIRS (VA Fire Incident Reporting System) Audit

The 2nd 2008 Audit report has been distributed. The intent of the audit is to ensure that the information received is accurate and complete. Please review the reports carefully, make the necessary changes and return on or before **October 31, 2008**. Feel free to contact the Info and Stats Division with any questions.



Important Dates

- **September 15, 2008**
August VFIRS reports are due
- **October 10, 2008**
Needs Assessments are due.
- **October 15, 2008**
September VFIRS reports are due
- **October 31, 2008**
VFIRS Audit Sheets are due.
- **November 15, 2008**
October VFIRS reports are due.
- **December 15, 2008**
November VFIRS reports are due.
- **December 31, 2008**
Conversion to VFIRS Version 5.0 must be completed.

“The secret of joy in work is contained in one word - excellence.”

~ Pearl Buck

Needs Assessment

The purpose of the Needs Assessment is to provide important decision making information to legislators on the overall needs of Virginia’s Fire Service. The results of the survey responses will be tabulated and reported to lawmakers to help support the granting of additional funding to aid with fire service needs in Virginia, therefore, it is very important that your department respond to the survey questionnaire. In addition, fire department survey participation will be documented and routinely posted at our website, www.vafire.com. In order to process the information in a timely matter

for the 2009 General Assembly, please complete your response to the survey questionnaire by **October 10, 2009**.

If you have any questions on how to obtain your password or need help accessing the on-line survey website, please feel free to contact Dwight E. Crews, Fire Research Analyst, by phone at (804) 249-1989 or by email at dwight.crews@vdfp.virginia.gov.



VFIRS Account Questions

1. Why is my account locked?
 - After 45 days with ‘no activity’ your account will become inactive.
 - Or; you have entered an incorrect password three times.
2. What to do if your account is locked?
 - Contact your departments’ VFIRS System Administrator or Renee Tabb at 804-249-1987 or via email at renee.tabb@vdfp.virginia.gov.
3. What activities can the account administrator perform?
 - The VFIRS System Administrator can reset passwords and create new accounts within their department.

Did you know?

- The Basic Module is **always** required for Incident Types: 100-911
- The Fire Module is now required for Incident Type "100" (Fire, other.)
- If Incident Type is "112" (Fires in structures other than in a building), the Structure Module is required.
- If Arrival Time is 20 minutes or more after the Alarm Time then a warning is generated.
- If any Age field value in any module is <0, a critical error is generated.
- The Fire Module is always required for the following Incident Types (with the exception of aid given incidents): 110-112-120-138, 161-164 (160 is not included here because that code can be a wild land fire)

