



SAFETY GRAM

Fatalities, Entrapments and Serious Accident Summary for 2003

The following data indicate the fatalities and major accidents in calendar year 2003. It includes serious vehicle accidents, fatalities, burnovers/entrapments and injuries associated with wildland and prescribed fire operations. The information was collected by the NWCG Safety & Health Working Team, with confirmation of the fatalities from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

Date	Location	Activity and Type of Accident	Organization	Number of People	Shelter Available	# Shelters Deployed	Fatalities	Injuries
2/1	Santa Barbara, California	Training, Heart Attack	County	1			1	
3/15	Salisbury, Missouri	Firefighting, Sickness	Volunteer	1			1	
3/27	Columbia Recovery Incident Sate, Texas	Aviation, Helicopter 407	State & Contractor	5			2	3 injuries
4/3	Gallipolis, Ohio	Driving, Pumper Rollover	Volunteer	1			1	
4/13	Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin	Firefighting, Collapsed	Volunteer	1			1	
4/28	Chapel Hill, N. Carolina	WCT, Heart Attack	State	1			1	
5/11	A-Bar Incident, Coronado Nat. Forest	Firefighting, Entrapment	Federal	3	Yes	3		None
5/15	White River, Arizona	Prescribed Fire, Entrapment	Federal	1	Yes	1	1	2 nd and 3 rd degree burns
5/22	New Castle, Wyoming	Driving, Tender Rollover	Volunteer	2			1	1 injury

Date	Location	Activity and Type of Accident	Organization	Number of People	Shelter Available	# Shelters Deployed	Fatalities	Injuries
6/26	Terry Canyon, Gila National Forest	Driving, Tender Rollover	Contract, VFD	1			1	
6/29	Mapleton , Oregon	Driving, Van Rollover	Contract	10				
7/19	McNally Fire, Inyo National Forest	Erosion Control, Line rehabilitation	Federal	4			1	
7/22	Cramer Fire, Salmon-Challis Nat. Forest	Fire Fighting. Entrapment	Federal	2	Yes		2	
							-13 -	

During the period from 1998-2001, firefighters were involved in 15 serious vehicle accidents that resulted in 16 fatalities as well as personal injuries. In the first nine months of 2002 there were seven serious vehicle accidents reported to NWCG-SHWT. These accidents resulted in nine fatalities and 26 injuries. Mechanical failure has rarely been a contributing factor, but human factors are a major contributing component to these accidents. Human factors can include fatigue, level of proficiency, experience in the vehicle type and unsafe operator practices, to mention a few. All managers and supervisors must take every measure to ensure their employees are properly trained and experienced in the vehicles they are assigned to drive. Every driver should work to eliminate distractions and have adequate rest prior to driving.

Timely reporting of entrapments or fatalities is necessary. Completion of the Wildland Fire Entrapment/Fatality Initial Report (NFES 0869) accomplishes this need. This initial report is self explanatory and does not replace agency reporting or investigative responsibilities, policies or procedures.

The NWCG Safety & Health Working Team requests any Investigation Reports from agencies that experienced the above or other entrapments/ major accidents in 2003. Please mail reports to the following address or email them to: stan_palmer@nifc.blm.gov.

NWCG/SHWT – Stan Palmer
National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, ID 83705