



# SAFETY GRAM

## Fatalities, Entrapments and Serious Accident Summary for 2002

The following data indicate the fatalities and major accidents in calendar year 2002. 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
3/18	Dillon, Montana	WCT-- Brain Hemorrhage	State	1			1	
3/20	Palisade, Nebraska	Fireline, HeartAttack	Volunteer	1			1	
3/24	Back 40 Incident Flag Pond, Tenn.	Entrapment	Federal	2	Yes	2		No Injuries
3/28	Deary, Idaho	WCT--Aneurism	Contractor	1			1	
4/13	Black Mesa R.D. Arizona	Work Capacity Test (WCT)	Federal	1				Heart Attack
5/7	Socorro, N. Mex.	Driving, Bus Rollover	Contractor	21				Minor Injuries, 1 Broken Arm
5/17	Long Lake NWR North Dakota	Driving, Engine Collision	Federal	2				Minor Injuries
5/26	Borrogo Incident New Mexico	Fireline, Felling	Federal	2				Minor Injuries
5/31	Sycuan, California	WCT, Heart Attack	Federal	1			1	
6/15	Missionary Ridge Incident, Bayfield, Colo.	Entrapment	Contractor/ Federal	2				Minor Burns
6/17	Cannon Incident Coleville, Calif.	Aircraft / C-130	Contractor	3			3	
6/17	Blue Cut Incident San Bernardino, Calif.	Entrapment, 2 engines	State	6	Yes	3		3 Injuries

Date	Location	Activity and Type of Accident	Organization	Number of People	Shelter Available	# Shelters Deployed	Fatalities	Injuries
6/17	Cannon Incident Coleville, Calif.	Driving, Water Tender Rollover	Contractor	1				1 Injury
6/21	Parachute, Colo.	Driving, Vehicle Rollover	Contractor	11			5	Serious Injuries
6/30	Price Canyon Incident Price, Utah	Entrapment	Federal	5	Yes	2		
7/2	Missionary Ridge Incident, Bayfield, Colo.	Fireline, Felling	EFF/Federal	1			1	
7/3	Melbeta, Nebraska	Burnover	Volunteer	1				Smoke Inhalation & 1 <sup>st</sup> Degree Burns
7/8	East Fork Incident Evanston, Wyoming	Fireline, Felling	Federal	2				Minor Injuries
7/13	Pumphouse Incident Yakima, Washington	Entrapment	Contractor/ Federal	2	Yes	2		
7/18	Big Elk Incident Estes Park, Colorado	Aircraft / PB4Y2	Contractor	2			2	
7/24	Tool Box Incident Silver Lake, Oregon	Entrapment	Contractor	17	Yes	17		15 Smoke Inhalation, 2 Minor Burns
7/25	Pepper Incident Rock Springs, Wyo.	Burnover Tractor/Tenders (2)	Federal	0				
7/28	Stanza Incident Happy Camp, California	Driving, Engine Rollover	Federal	5			3	2 Injuries
7/30	Big Elk Incident Estes Park, Colorado	Helicopter/ Lama	Contractor	1			1	
8/1	Red Owl Incident Marcus, So. Dakota	Fireline, Fell from Engine, Burned	Volunteer	1			1	
8/11	San Bernardino, Calif.	Driving, Engine Rollover	State	3				3 Injuries
8/12	Wichita Falls, Texas	Fireline, Fell from Engine, Runover	Volunteer	1			1	
8/12	Bayboro, So. Carolina	Burnover	State	3	Yes	0		

Date	Location	Activity and Type of Accident	Organization	Number of People	Shelter Available	# Shelters Deployed	Fatalities	Injuries
8/21	Tiller Complex Tiller, Oregon	Fell into River	Federal	1				Spinal Cord
9/1	Curve Incident Azusa, Calif.	Entrapment/ 3 Fire Engines	Federal	16	Yes	2		
9/3	Leona Incident Palmdale, Calif.	Entrapment/ 2 Fire Engines	County	5	Yes	2		
9/5	Smyrna, Georgia	Driving, Water Tender Rollover	Volunteer	1			1	
10/14	Bennett Lumber Prescribed Fire Moscow, Idaho	Fireline, Dozer Rollover	Private	1			1	
10/22	Deary, Idaho	Driving, Engine Rollover	State	1				2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Degree Burns
				55		30	23	TOTAL

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 2002. Please mail reports to the following address or email them to: [stan\\_palmer@nifc.blm.gov](mailto:stan_palmer@nifc.blm.gov).

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

