

MEETING MINUTES



Oregon Fire Casualty Review Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, May 16, 2013

Time: 10:00 a.m. – noon

Location: Office of State Fire Marshal, 4760 Portland Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305, Mt. Hood conference room

Members:

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| Candice Clark, OSFM – Data Unit | Jeff Cranford, McMinnville Fire Department |
| Claire MCGrew, OSFM – FLSE Branch | Jim Walker, OSFM - Administration |
| Dave Gulledge, OSFM – Data Unit | John Phillips, OSFM – Data Unit |
| Debbie McDermott, McMinnville Fire Department | Tim Birr, OFSC |

Guest:

Joe Saltarello, OSFM – FLSE Branch

Dave Gulledge called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. on May 16, 2013.

Agenda Items:

Review of November Minutes

- The February 21, 2013, OFCRC meeting was cancelled.
- Members approved the November 15, 2012 minutes.
 - To view visit: www.oregon.gov/osp/SFM/docs/Data_Services/Meetings/11-15-2012minutes.pdf.

Data Presentation

Dave provided a PowerPoint presentation on data.

- He discussed the *Time of Day of Occurrence of Residential Structure Fire Injuries* handout that Dave and John developed using the 2012 datasets because they were asked if there was a correlation between the highest percentage of injuries being males, the time of day injured being 6:00 PM, and cooking fires.
- The three datasets:
 - Time of day – The highest percentage of injuries occurred at 6:00 PM.
 - Gender – The majority of injuries are male.
 - Fire Cause – The highest percentage of fires are cooking related.
- The Conclusions:
 - There are three distinct areas with significant amount of data based evidence.
- What this tells us:
 - That 2% of all injuries were males injured while cooking dinner.
 - The more layers the smaller the sampling of data.
 - The recommendation is to focus on larger data sets.
- Jim asked Dave if all the injured were over 18 years of age or are they kids cooking after school before their parents get home.
 - Dave replied that they did not focus on age and that it would have been another layer causing the data to shrink even more.
- Debbie asked if we could, for an educational purpose look at the total cooking fires with or without casualty or injury to see if we need to focus educating young males, etc.
 - Claire and Dave explained that age and gender is not captured if there is no casualty or injury. They agree this data would be helpful.

- Dave says the Data Unit could make some correlations with cooking fires if we can identify where they are occurring. He says by using GIS technology, we could identify the counties and areas these fires are occurring in, cross referencing that to the local socioeconomic statistics, and if we find these fires are occurring in areas where generally kids are home alone because both parents are working.
- Dave says we can take separate datasets and just cross reference instead of overlapping.
- Jim asked if we also receive fire injury information from urgent care facilities or just fire departments.
 - Dave explained that we miss a lot of the fire injuries when fire departments do not get called. He shared an example of an unreported fire injury and passed around newspaper articles of the Coos Bay man who was burned while using a torch to cut a vehicle in half and the fuel tank ignited. His wife drove him to the emergency room. The man died of complications from his injuries while at the Oregon Burn Center.
 - Dave shared that Curtis Ryun from Oregon Burn Center is working on a way to notify us of these unreported fire injuries that are needed to make these correlations while staying HIPAA compliant.

Committee Deliverables

- Dave and John found that the US Fire Administration has a hierarchy on how they determine fire cause.
 - John reported that about 17 percent of incidents are still being coded as undetermined.
 - Dave shared that once we have access to the national database warehouse we can determine if 17 percent is the average.
- Dave explained that in the past recommendations were that the Data Unit provides the fire injury report and the fatality report to the OFCRC members for their review.
 - He recommends instead of releasing the fire fatality report one year and then releasing the fire injury report the next year. Is to use a five year study with specific datasets to reduce the numbers and send to OLST to be implemented.
- He recommends the Data Unit and the OFCRC members work on ways to increase reporting, improve and reduce incorrectly and inappropriately coded incidents.
- Dave asked members to let him know if they identify new coding needs that he could take back to NFIRS.
- Claire asked if there are any data reports that can be produced by the OFCRC that could help OFMA, OFCA, etc. by funneling information out that would specifically address those groups.
 - Dave replied that if there is a piece of legislation or a topic, for example if the OFMA wanted data on smoke alarms with batteries. He would recommend that the Data Unit pull the data for the requested topic and have the OFCRC make it presentable.
- Debbie suggests that we make sure the fire chiefs and fire marshals know how important it is that their officers fill out the paperwork and capturing other useful information and how important the data that the OSFM receives is.
 - She says to explain how important it is to have a cause and that in the narrative add a note that it was the most probable cause. If they get subpoenaed, they can point out the notes in the narrative and explain that the data in the report is use statewide and nationally for educational purposes.
 - Tim suggests also informing the IAAI Chapters around the state.
 - Jim agrees with Debbie. He frequently hears from fire departments that the purpose for them filling out these reports is because OSFM is mandating that they take the time out of their busy schedules to fill out this report, that it is not so they can determine what the cause was so that we can do something about it.
 - Jim thinks by marketing the importance of them completing these reports correctly, is helping the OSFM to produce ways to prevent those incidents.
- Dave informed members that this is a project for the OFCRC to work on. For example, developing a way to phrase how the delivery should be or messaging that needs to go out to DPSST, etc. that provide investigator training on doing the investigations and filling these reports out.

Current Fire Casualties

Members reviewed the *2012 Fire Fatality Tracking* spreadsheet, *2013 Fire Fatality Tracking* spreadsheet, and the NFIRS reports for the current fire casualties.

- Dave reported that at the end of 2012 there were no fire fatalities of kids under the age of 18 years old and that we currently have one confirmed fire fatality and one child casualty out of 12 reported casualties. Dave referenced the *Oregon Residential Structure Fires with Civilian Injuries 01/01/2012 – 12/31/2012* handout and highlighted some statistics.

- Males account for most of the injuries,
- Most are minor injuries,
- The most common activity at the time of injury is attempting to control the fire and cooking-related equipment continue to account for most of the fire injuries,
 - Dave informed members that in the last Injury and Fatality Reports a recommendation to OLST for education campaigns on when to leave the firefighting to professionals and to get out and stay out.

Dave reported that both the number of agencies reporting and the number of incidents reported by March have significantly increased.

- He says that the percent of agencies reporting in the past was 45% in 2010, 52% 2011, 58% 2012 and this year it is over 60%.
- Dave likes to use the winter of 2011 as an example. Data identified early on that during the long winter folks were running out of firewood causing them to bring in their space heaters and place them next to their beds, subsequently causing fatalities due to combustibles to close the heat source. They immediately forwarded that information to the OLST to start campaigns, etc. Between the campaigns and the weather warming up, they were able to keep the fatality numbers lowered.

Claire suggested a best practice/SOG document on what and when you should be reporting.

Other Business

Dave reminded members that the August 15, 2013, OFCRC meeting will be held from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at OSFM, Mt. Hood Conference Room.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.