



U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

Operational Intelligence Division
United States Bomb Data Center (USBDC)

2024

UNITED STATES BOMB DATA CENTER (USBDC) ARSON INCIDENT REPORT (AIR)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SCOPE

The annual *Arson Incident Report (AIR)* reviews fire and arson-related incidents from information reported to the United States Bomb Data Center (USBDC) through the Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS).

OPERATING HIGHLIGHTS

The 2024 *Arson Incident Report (AIR)* is a statistical product generated by the United States Bomb Data Center (USBDC). This report provides a detailed statistical analysis of fire and arson incidents in the United States that have been reported in the Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS) over the past 5 years. This report examines the total number of fire-related incidents reported in BATS for calendar year (CY) 2024.

BATS is a comprehensive web-based arson and explosives incident repository, case management, and reporting system. This system contains incident information that is contributed by more than 5,900 registered users that represent more than 2,200 interagency partners. Currently, BATS contains more than 782,000 incidents documented by Federal law enforcement agencies, Department of Defense Explosives Ordnance Disposal (EOD) units, public safety bomb squads, as well as fire and arson investigation units from participating Federal, State, and local agencies.

DISCLAIMER

It is important to note that BATS is a real-time dynamic incident management system that is strictly user-dependent; therefore, it is possible that the data represented in this report may differ slightly from previously reported data due to updates or changes made by the owner of individual records. According to 18 USC section 846(b), Federal agencies are required to report incidents involving arson and the suspected criminal misuse of explosives to ATF, whereas State and local agencies may voluntarily report such incidents. The data may not reflect all fire-related incidents or casualty figures during the stated period.

STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS

The 2024 *AIR* includes a total of 21,041 fire-related incidents reported in BATS between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024. Of these, there were 5,197 incidents reported as "Incendiary," which accounted for 25 percent of all the fires reported. The total amount of damages for all fire types was estimated at \$10,230,802,022, with 1,060 injuries and 596 fatalities. "Available Combustibles" was identified as the most widely utilized Incendiary Fire Subtype, while "Residential" was identified as the most targeted property type.

LOOKING AHEAD

The USBDC will continue to collect, analyze, and disseminate information regarding arson and suspected criminal misuse of explosives to increase situational awareness to detect, deter and prevent criminal acts.

For Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) inquiries regarding this product, please submit your request using the following link: <https://www.securerelease.us/>. For any specific questions or concerns regarding FOIA requests, please visit the ATF Freedom of Information Act website at <https://www.atf.gov/resource-center/freedom-information-act-foia>.

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FIRE CATEGORIES

1.1 FIRE TYPES

During 2024, there were 21,041 fire-related incidents reported in BATS. This reflects a 9.8-percent decrease from the 23,330 incidents reported in 2020.

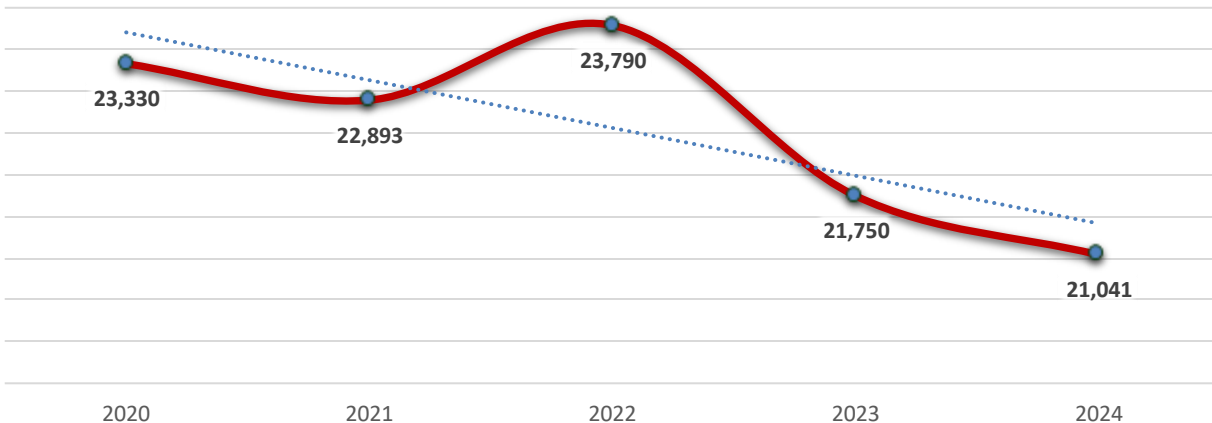


Figure 1. Trendline for Fire-related Incidents, 2020–24

From January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, BATS captured a total of 21,041 fire-related incidents. Of those, 7,165 were reported in BATS as “Accidental,” 5,169 were listed as “Incendiary,”¹ 124 as “Natural,” and 1,782 were entered as “Under Investigation.” There were 45 incidents entered as “Threat – Arson” and 129 listed as “Wildland.” There were 5,853 fires listed as “Undetermined,” which included the final determination/classification of the investigation, along with fires pending further investigative activities and/or laboratory examination. Seven hundred seventy-four (774) incidents did not have a fire type selected and are not represented in the figure below.

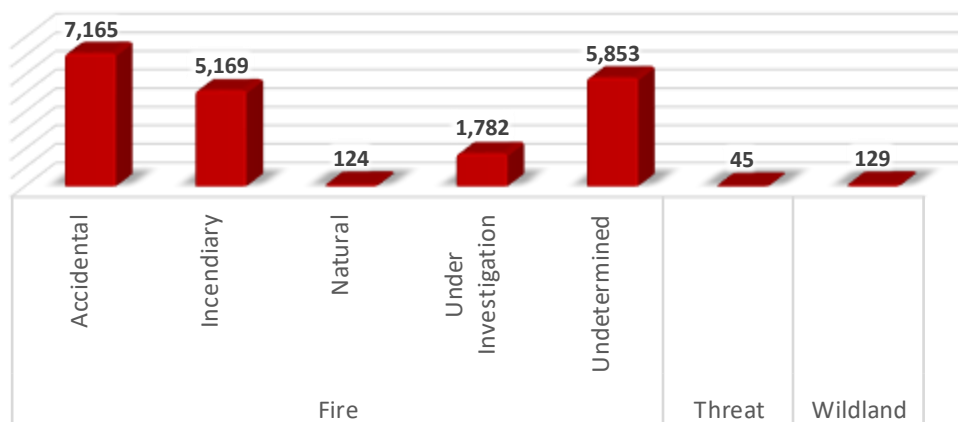


Figure 2. Fire Types as Reported in BATS

¹ There were 5,169 incidents labeled as *Fire – Incendiary* and 28 incidents labeled as *Wildland – Incendiary*; these combined equal 5,197 incendiary fires. The combined total will be used when referencing incendiary fires.

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1.2 FIRE INJURIES AND FATALITIES

Victim injuries accounted for 75 percent of all injuries reported in CY 2024 and were the highest population reported across all categories. Of the 102 injuries associated with “Incendiary” incidents, “Victims” were reported as the highest population at 51 percent.

Injuries					
	Fire Service	Law Enforcement	Suspects	Victims	Total
Accidental	77	9	2	375	463
Incendiary	21	9	20	52	102
Natural	1	0	0	0	1
Under Investigation	21	2	10	57	90
Undetermined	86	11	1	306	404
Total	206	31	33	790	1,060

Table 1. Fire Injuries

Victim fatalities accounted for 97 percent of all fatalities reported in CY 2024 and were the highest population reported for all categories. Of the 81 fatalities associated with “Incendiary” incidents, “Victims” were reported as the highest population with 88 percent.

Fatalities					
	Fire Service	Law Enforcement	Suspects	Victims	Total
Accidental	2	0	0	170	172
Incendiary	1	0	9	71	81
Natural	0	0	0	1	1
Under Investigation	2	0	1	61	64
Undetermined	1	0	0	277	278
Total	6	0	10	580	596

Table 2. Fire Fatalities

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1.3 FIRE DAMAGES

Damages associated with the 21,041 fire incidents reported in BATS totaled \$10,230,802,022 for CY 2024. During 2024, damage amounts were only reported for 30 percent of fire incidents entered into BATS.²

Fire Category	Total
Fire	\$ 10,230,741,522
Accidental	\$ 263,668,943
Blank/Not Reported	\$ 25,429,950
Incendiary	\$ 123,096,474
Natural	\$ 5,095,680
Under Investigation	\$ 21,244,001
Undetermined	\$ 9,792,206,475
Threat	
WildLand	\$ 60,500
Grand Total	\$ 10,230,802,022

Table 3. Damage Amount by Fire Type

² There are many reasons damage amounts may not be entered, such as, but not limited to, the extent of damage is not known, the BATS user is unable to estimate the amount of damage, value of property may be unknown, or the department may not enter damage amounts per their standard operating procedures.

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1.4 INCIDENTS BY STATE

In the graphic below, BATS incidents are broken down by State, showing that there are 6 States with more than 1,000 incidents reported. The States that maintain a high level of reporting have remained consistent for the past several years: Illinois (2,981), Florida (2,161), and Texas (1,938).

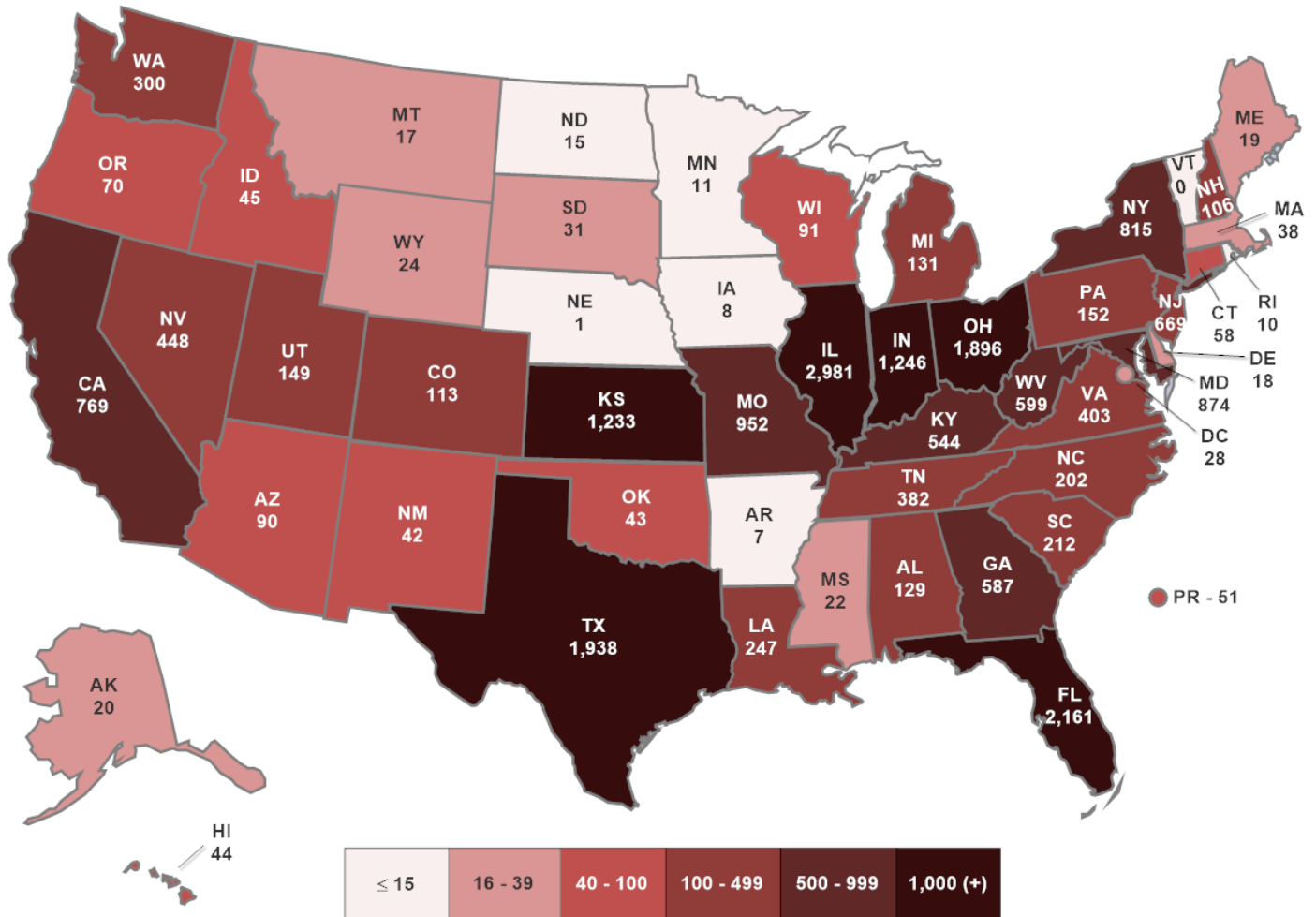


Figure 3. Incidents by State

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1.5 EDUCATION FIRES

There were 169 fires associated with an “Education” target during CY 2024. Of those, 85 were listed as “Incendiary,” 52 were listed as “Accidental,” and 18 were listed as “Undetermined.” There were also 12 fires listed as “Under Investigation,” as the incidents were pending further investigative activities and/or laboratory examinations. The target subtype category of “High School/Junior High/Middle School” accounted for 38 percent of all fire types and 41 percent of all Incendiary fires associated with an “Education” target. There was an increase of 32 percent in “Elementary School” target types from CY 2023 to CY 2024.

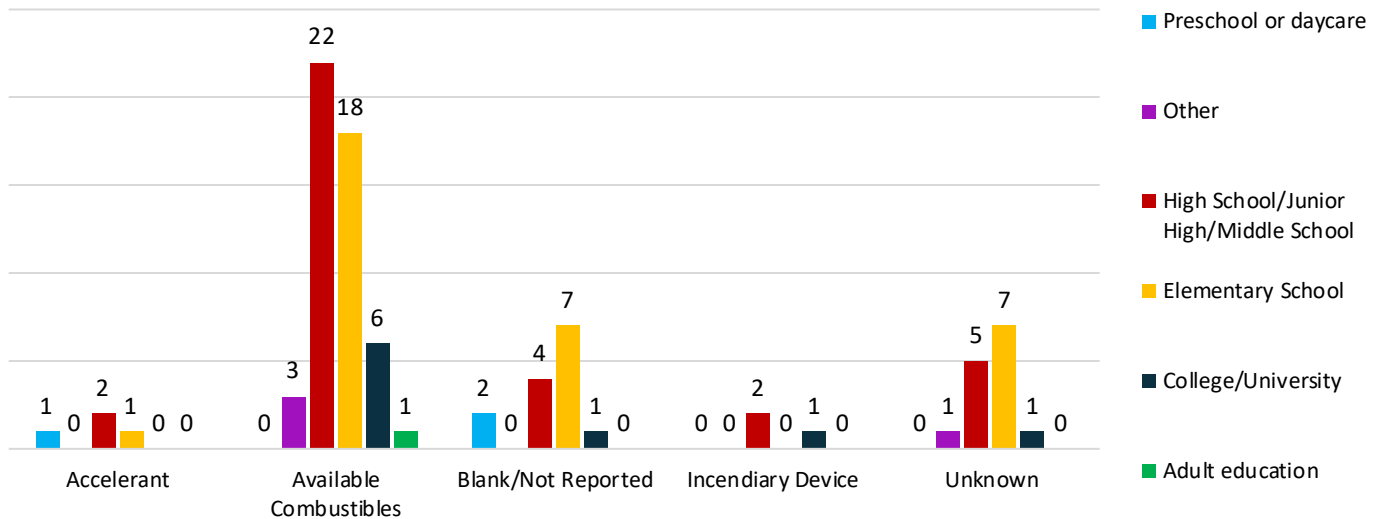


Figure 4. Education Fires

1.6 WILDLAND FIRES

In 2024, there were 129 “Wildland” fire incidents entered into BATS. Of those 129 fires, 28 were categorized as “Incendiary” and 29 were “Undetermined.”

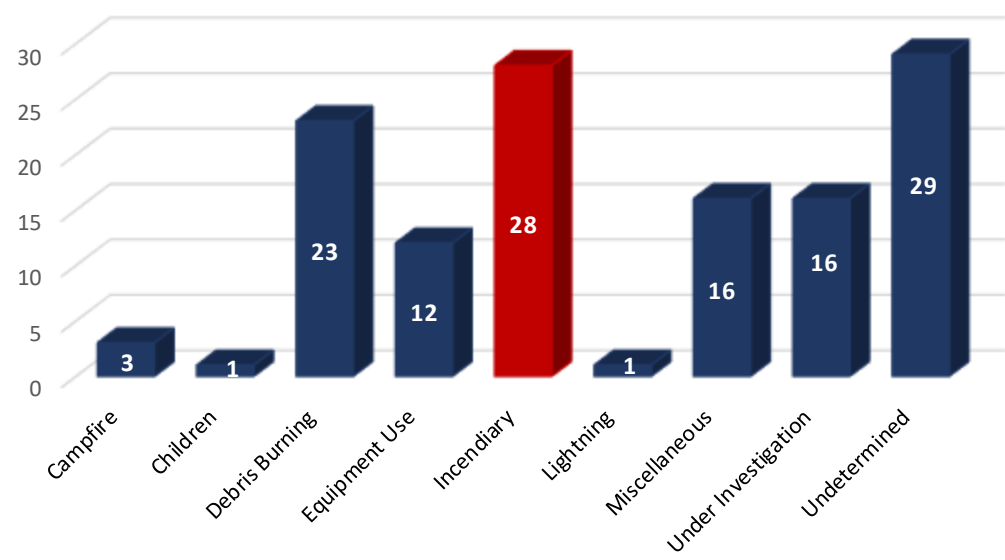


Figure 5. Wildland Fire Types

INCENDIARY FIRE-RELATED CATEGORIES

2.1 INCENDIARY FIRE SUBTYPES

Of the 5,197 Incendiary fire-related incidents³ reflected in BATS, there were 896 Incendiary fires listed as involving an “Accelerant,” along with 1,943 fires involving “Available Combustibles” and 218 fires involving an “Incendiary Device.” “Available Combustibles” accounted for 37 percent of all incendiary fires, while “Accelerant” and “Incendiary Device” were 21 percent combined. There were 1,310 incendiary fires listed as “Unknown” and 830 incendiary fires with no information reported or left blank. The “Unknown” category can include incidents that are under investigation as well as undetermined.

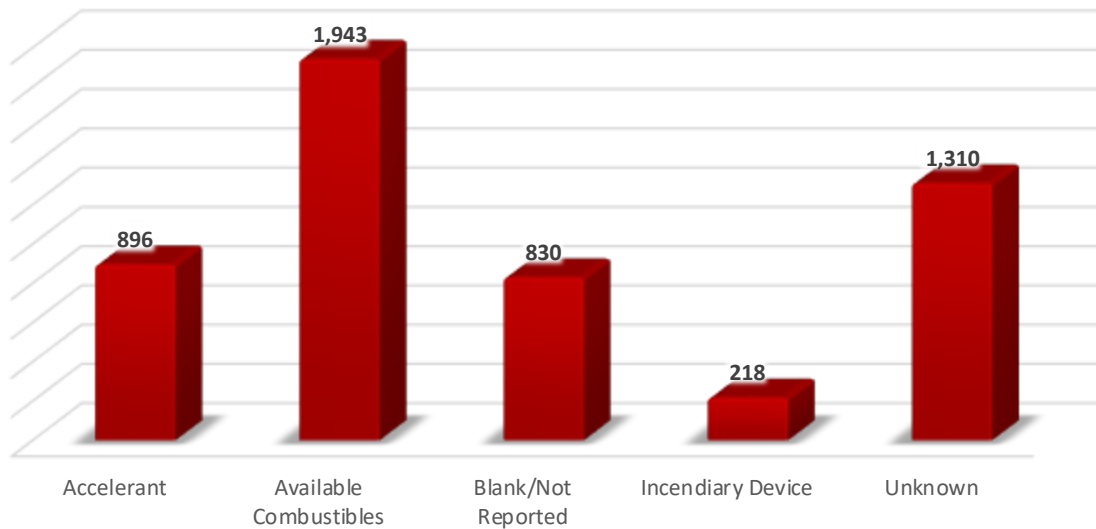


Figure 6. Incendiary Fires by Subtype

³ There were 5,169 incidents labeled as *Fire – Incendiary* and 28 incidents labeled as *Wildland – Incendiary*; these combined equal 5,197 incendiary fires. The combined total will be used when referencing incendiary fires.

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2.2 INCENDIARY FIRES BY STATE

A review of the 5,197 incidents listed in BATS as “Incendiary” by location (State) revealed the highest number of incidents were reported in Illinois (862), followed by Texas (679) and Florida (554). These three (3) States accounted for 40 percent of the total “Incendiary” fires reported in BATS during CY 2024.

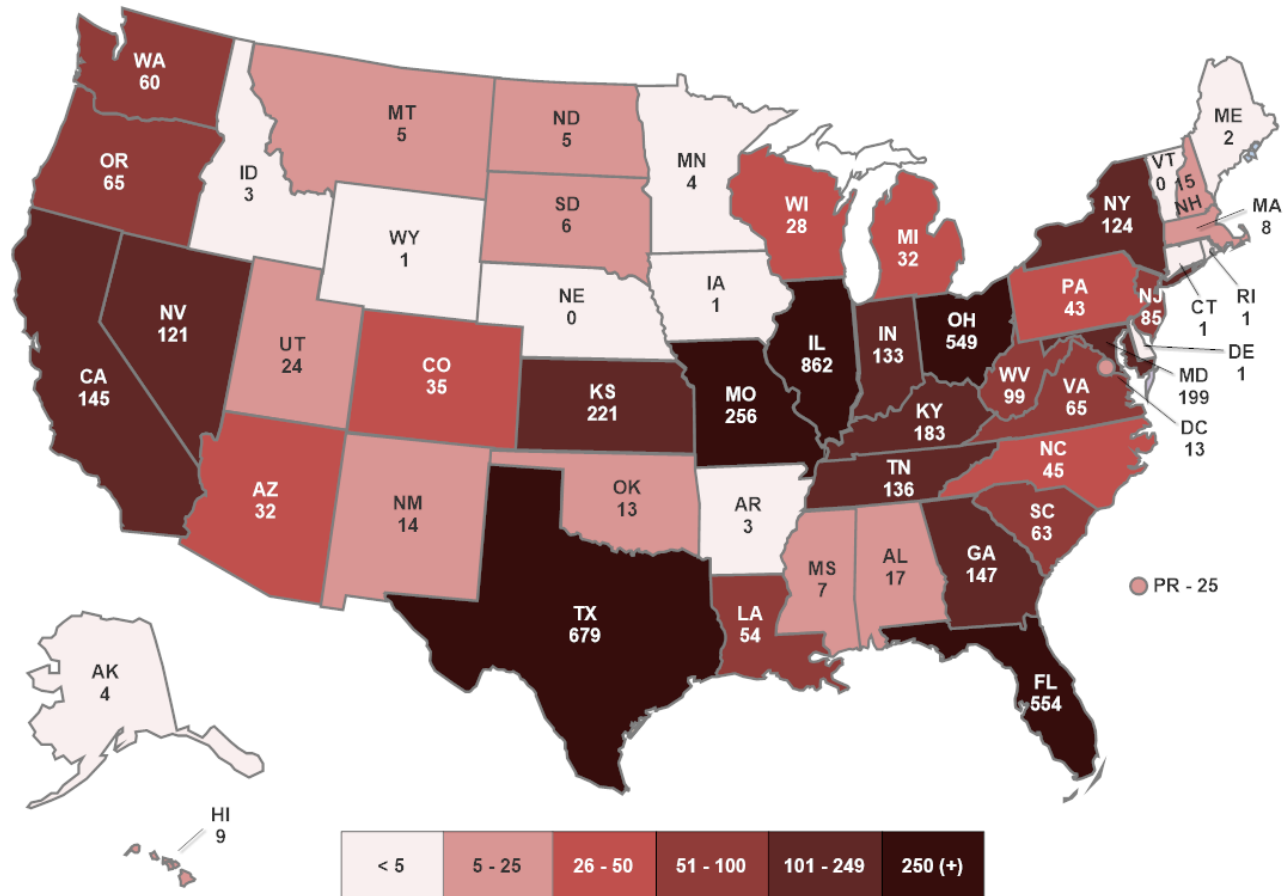


Figure 7. Incendiary Fires by State

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2.3 INCENDIARY FIRES BY FEMA REGION

A breakdown of the 5,197 incidents listed in BATS as “Incendiary” by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region revealed the highest number of incidents occurred in the following regions: Region V (1,608) and Region IV (1,152). These two regions accounted for 53 percent of the total “Incendiary” fires reported in BATS during CY 2024.

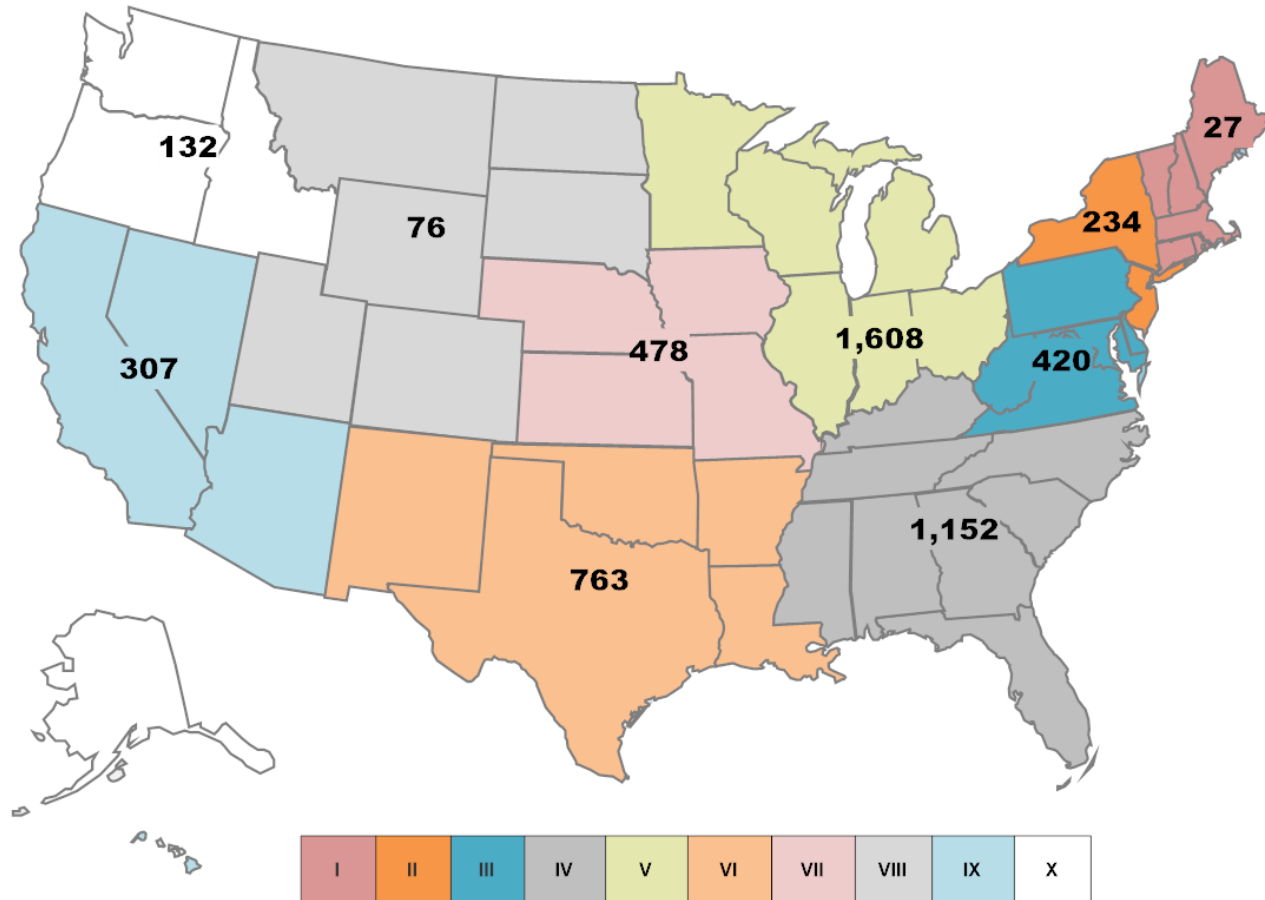


Figure 8. Incendiary Fires by FEMA Region

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2.4 INCENDIARY FIRES BY PROPERTY TYPE

There were 23 different “Property” types selected within BATS that involved “Incendiary” fires for 2024. Of the reported “Incendiary” incidents reported, “Residential” and “Vehicle” fires accounted for a combined 65 percent.⁴

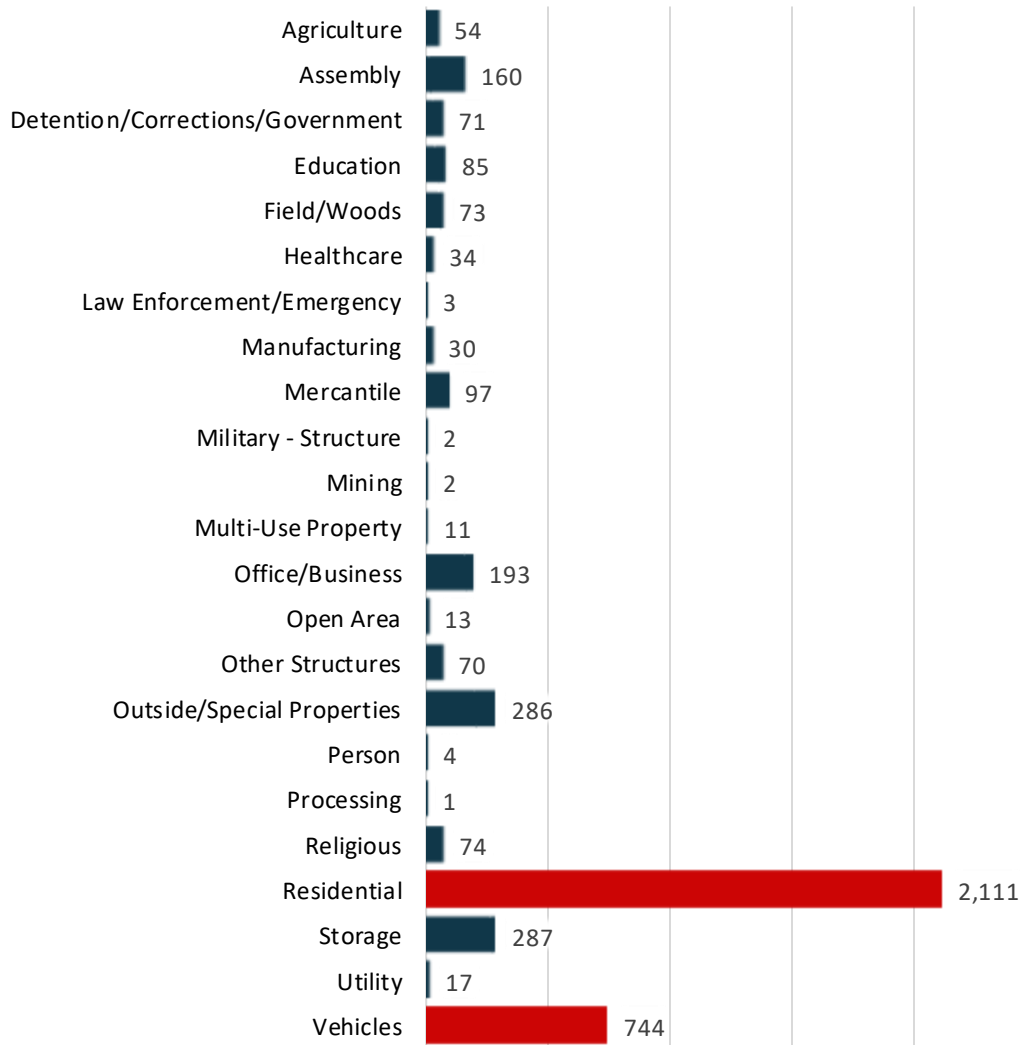


Figure 9. Incendiary Fires by Property Type

⁴ There were 775 incidents that did not have a property type selected. These incidents were not included when calculating percentages for property types.

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2.5 INCENDIARY FIRES BY PROPERTY SUBTYPE

During CY 2024, there were 2,111 incidents of incendiary fires associated with residential property.⁵ Sixty-four percent of residential incendiary fires were single-family dwellings.

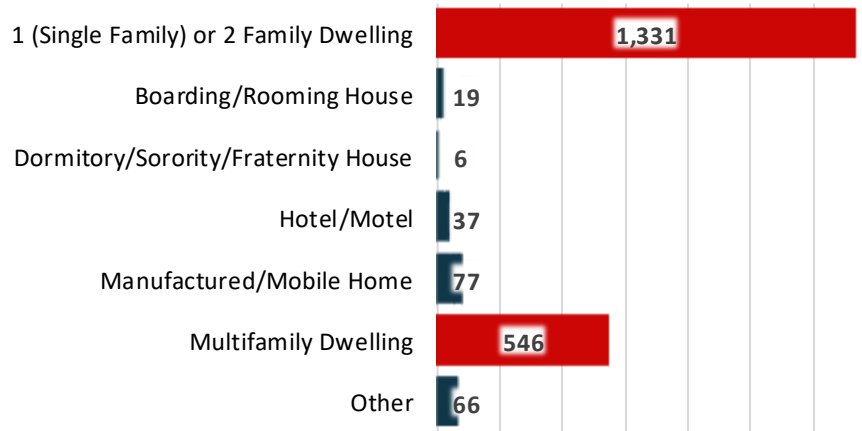


Figure 10. Incendiary Fires by Property Subtype – Residential

There were 744 incidents of incendiary fires associated with vehicles. Of those vehicle fires, 68 percent were associated with an “Automobile/Car,” followed by 9 percent that were associated with a “Truck” (Pickup).

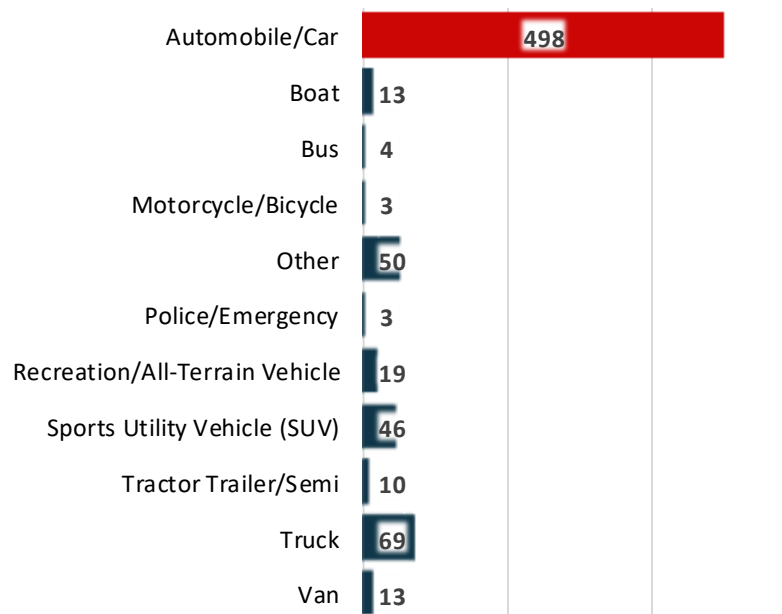


Figure 11. Incendiary Fires by Property Subtype – Vehicles

⁵ There were 29 incidents that did not have a secondary target type selected. These incidents were not included when calculating percentages for property types.

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2.6 JUVENILE OFFENDERS

There were 130 Incendiary fires recorded in BATS during 2024 where the suspect was listed as a “Juvenile Offender” (3 percent of total incendiary fires). A review of the property type involved in those 130 incidents revealed the primary property target of juvenile offenders was “Residential” followed by “Education.” These 2 property types accounted for 80 incidents or 62 percent of the property types targeted by juvenile offenders during 2024.

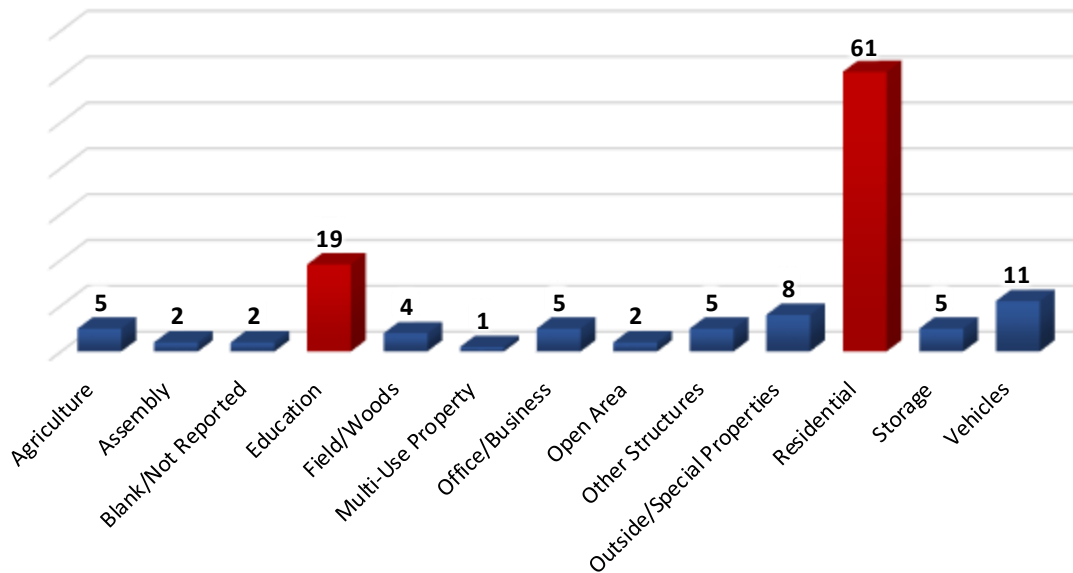


Figure 12. Property Type Targets of Juvenile Offender Fires

Excitement was established to be the top motivator for Juvenile-involved incendiary fire incidents during CY 2024 with 20 incidents. Motivation was either not reported or left blank for 80 incidents and was not included in the figure below.

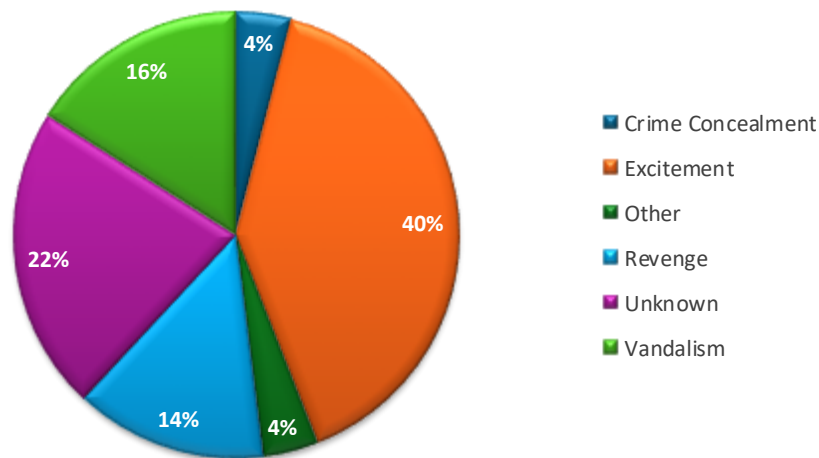


Figure 13. Motivators for Juvenile Offender Fires

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2.7 HOUSE OF WORSHIP (HOW) FIRES

During CY 2024, BATS captured a total of 174 fire-related incidents involving a House of Worship (HOW). Of these, 74 were listed in BATS as “Incendiary.” The denominations targeted most frequently were Baptist (13), Catholic (11), and Methodist (10). Additional detailed information can be found in the 2024 *House of Worship Report*.

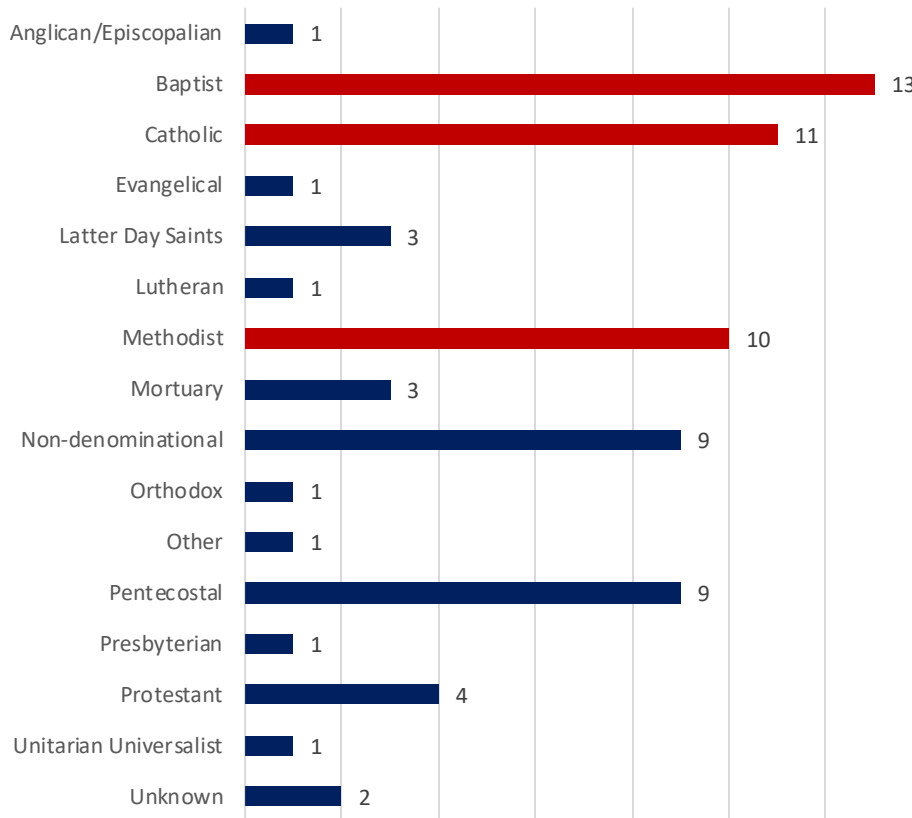


Figure 14. Denomination of Incendiary HOW Fires

2.8 INCENDIARY FIRE DESCRIPTORS

The top 3 “Fire Descriptors” identified for the 5,197 incendiary fires reported in 2024 were “Ordinary Combustibles,” “Open Flame,” and “Fire Spread/Movement Patterns.” Sixty-eight (68) percent of reported incendiary fires did not identify any type of fire descriptor.

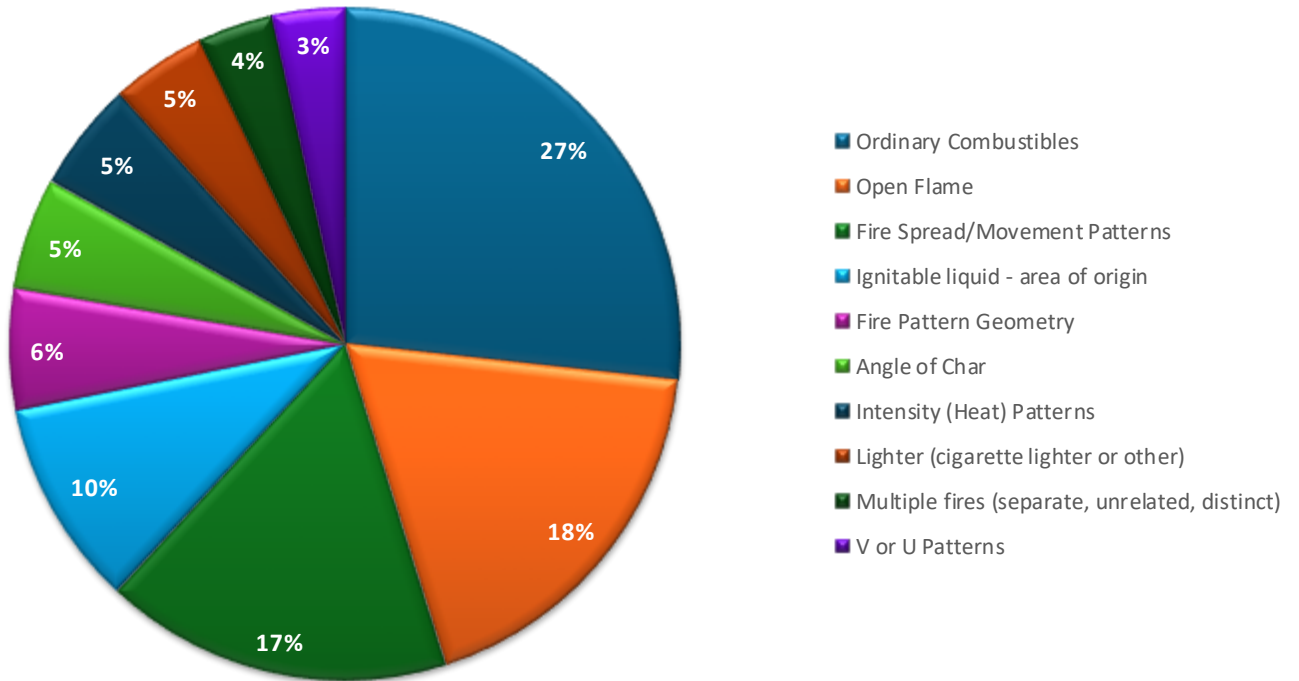


Figure 15. Top 10 Fire Descriptors for Incendiary Fires

2.9 INCENDIARY FIRE AREAS OF ORIGIN

The top 3 “Areas of Origin” identified for the 5,197 incendiary fires reported in CY 2024 were “Transportation,” “Other,” and “Functional Areas.” Areas of origin were not reported for 53 percent of incendiary incidents and were not included in the below figure.

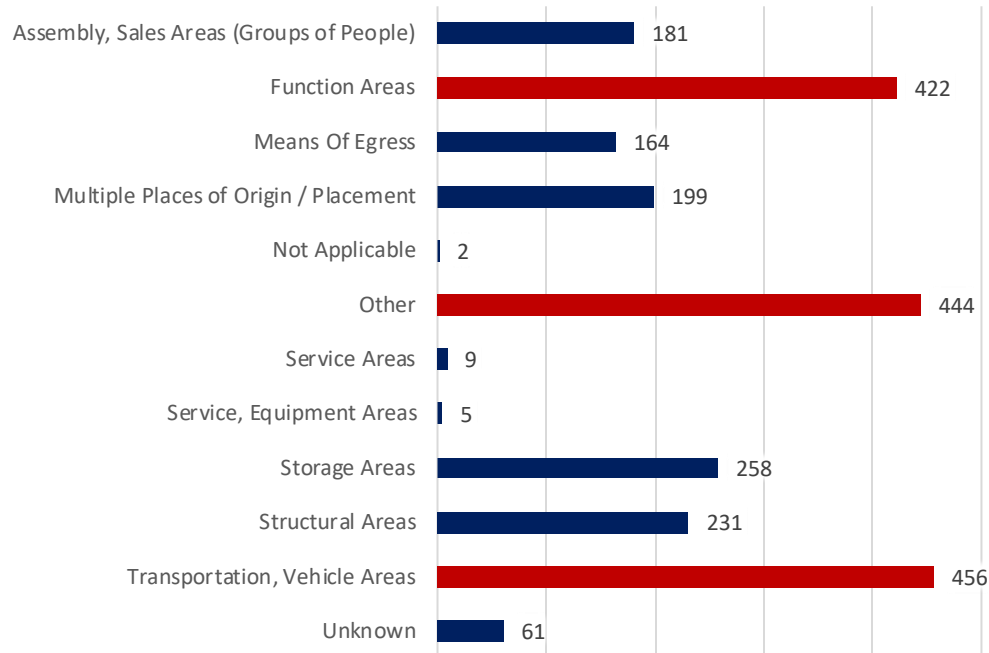


Figure 16. Areas of Origin for Incendiary Fires

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