

MAINE FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM

RECENT DATA ANALYSIS EXPERIENCES

Within the past few months, the Office of State Fire Marshal has conducted two data analysis requests, using NFIRS reporting information, that illustrate the value of quality data.

Fire Station Location Analysis

In the first situation, the Office of State Fire Department, MEFIRS State Administrator, was contacted by a local department asking for assistance in providing data analysis that could help them with a fire station location issue. The fire department was in discussion with the city regarding the possible building of a new fire station. The fire departments position was centered on the fact that the response times to a developing area of the community was substandard and a new station was needed in this area to meet the needs of demand and services to this area.

The city administration and governing body, was of the opinion using response time data they had acquired, that the average response times to this area of the city was consistent with the response times associated with other communities on a statewide average. In discussing this situation with the fire department administration, it appeared that the city administrations position was flawed as they had used a comparison of career and volunteer departments to establish their position of a statewide response time average.

The Office of State Fire Marshal, using data within the Maine Fire Incident Reporting System (MEFIRS) conducted a comparative analysis of similar type (career) departments and showed that the city administration position of response time that they were using, was off by a minimum of four to six minutes. An entire NFIRS generated report was provided to the fire department using comparable circumstances and department comparisons.

The Office of State Fire Marshal was informed by this department that by using the comparative data analysis provided, the fire department was able to illustrate to the city administration that their position of response time was flawed, and the department convinced the city administration that the need and desired location for a new fire station was warranted. At this time, plans are moving forward for the construction of the new station that will be used to cover this developing section of the community.

Assistance to American Red Cross for Budget Development

The second recent successful use of data through the Maine Fire Incident Reporting System was provided to a regional administration of the American Red Cross that provides disaster relief services to five counties within the State of Maine. This requested assistance marked the first time an agency or organization, outside of the fire service, utilized MEFIRS data for assistance in the development of their proposed operating budget.

Following the request for assistance, the Office of State Fire Marshal conducted an analysis of incident types that the local chapters of the Red Cross would provide disaster assistance to in the respective counties in this region. This analysis reviewed the submitted data for reporting departments in these counties and provided specific incident data that the Red Cross could use for the preparation of their upcoming budget needs.

This request provides an excellent example of the value and capabilities to provide quality data to agencies and organizations that may not be fire service in nature, but work in conjunction with emergency services providers.