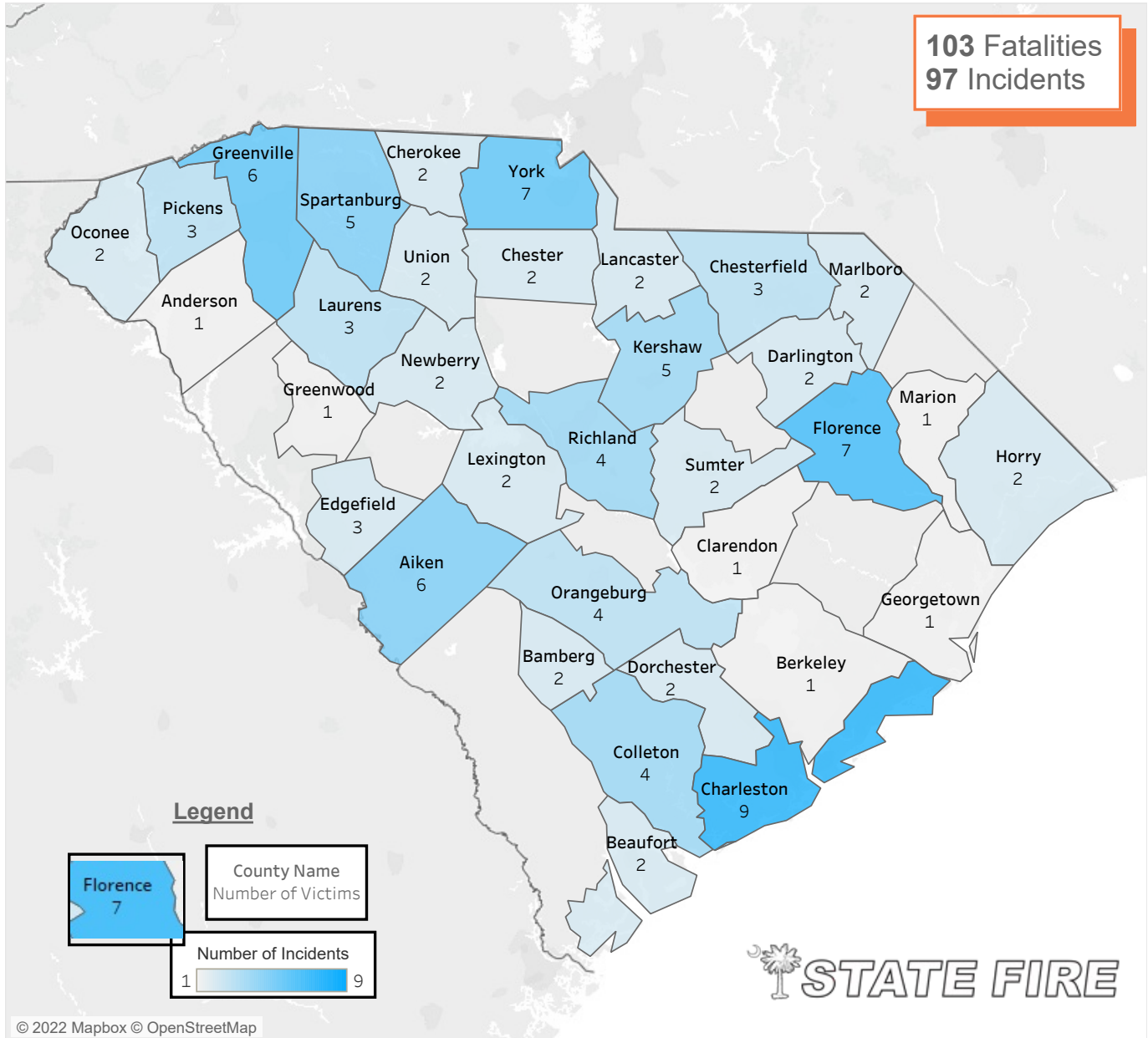


# 2021 Fire Fatality Summary Report

South Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal  
Community Loss Education and Response (CLEAR) Team



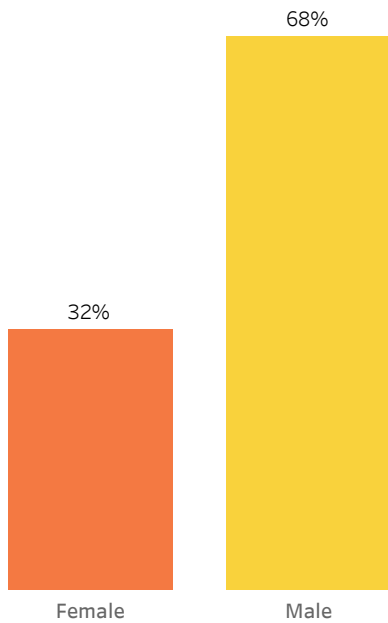
These findings are made possible by the research efforts of the CLEAR Team. In some cases, the percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. If you would like more information or outreach ideas based on the findings, please call South Carolina State Fire at (803) 896-9800.

This report version was last updated on October 11, 2022.

# Fire Fatality Victim Profile

In 2021, there were 103 deaths from 97 incidents. The victims of fatal fires were reported in 34 of 46 counties, with most incidents happening in Charleston, Florence, York, Greenville, and Aiken counties. Most overall incidents had one victim; however, six incidents had two victims each. Victims were mostly male and 67 percent were older than the age of 50. White victims accounted for 59% of all victims, followed by Black victims at (39 percent), and Hispanic victims at one percent. Victims were typically found in residences, specifically single-family dwellings and mobile homes, although a number were found in vehicles and non-traditional structures converted to permanent residences.

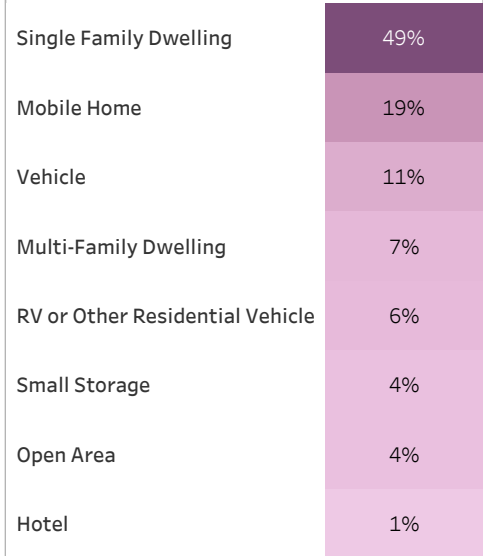
## Victim Gender



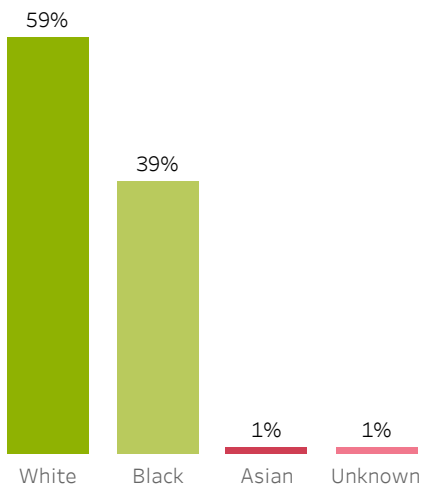
## Incidents and Victims Per County

County	Incidents	Victims
Aiken	5	6
Anderson	1	1
Bamberg	2	2
Beaufort	2	2
Berkeley	1	1
Charleston	8	9
Cherokee	2	2
Chester	2	2
Chesterfield	3	3
Clarendon	1	1
Colleton	4	4
Darlington	2	2
Dorchester	2	2
Edgefield	2	3
Florence	7	7
Georgetown	1	1
Greenville	6	6
Greenwood	1	1
Horry	2	2
Kershaw	4	5
Lancaster	2	2
Laurens	3	3
Lexington	2	2
Marion	1	1
Marlboro	2	2
Newberry	2	2
Oconee	2	2
Orangeburg	3	4
Pickens	3	3
Richland	4	4
Spartanburg	5	5
Sumter	2	2
Union	2	2
York	6	7

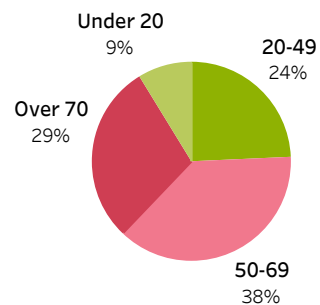
## Occupancy Type



## Victim Race



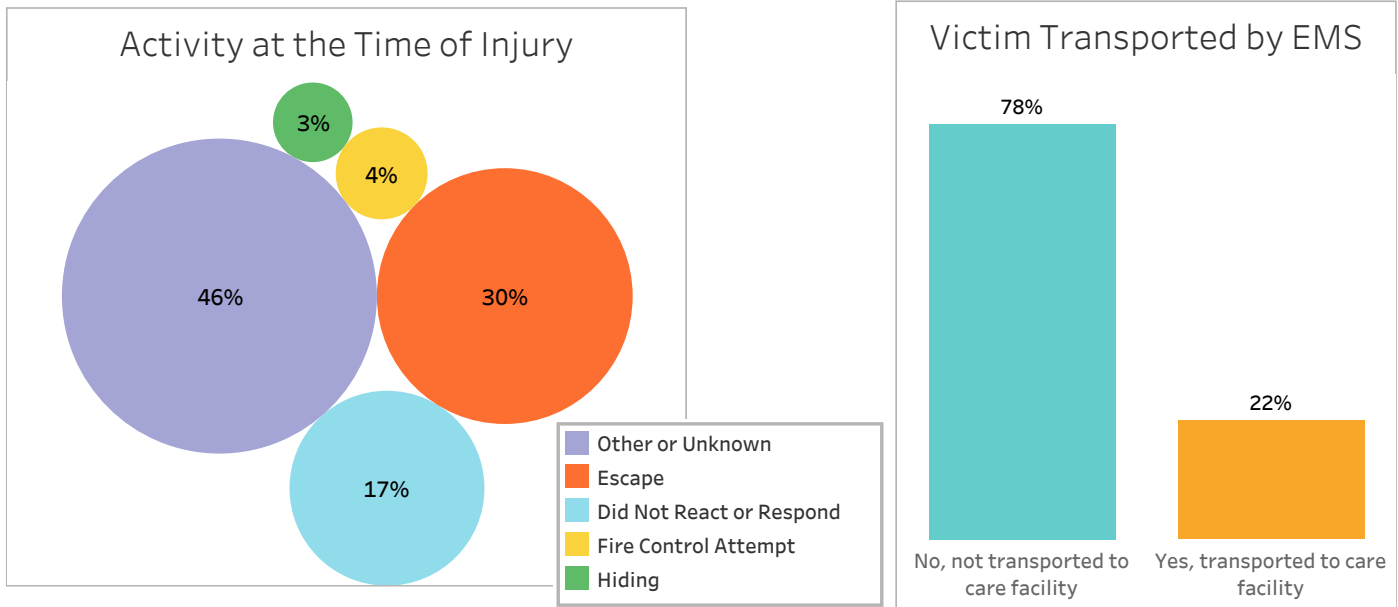
## Victim Age



## Multiple Fatality Incidents

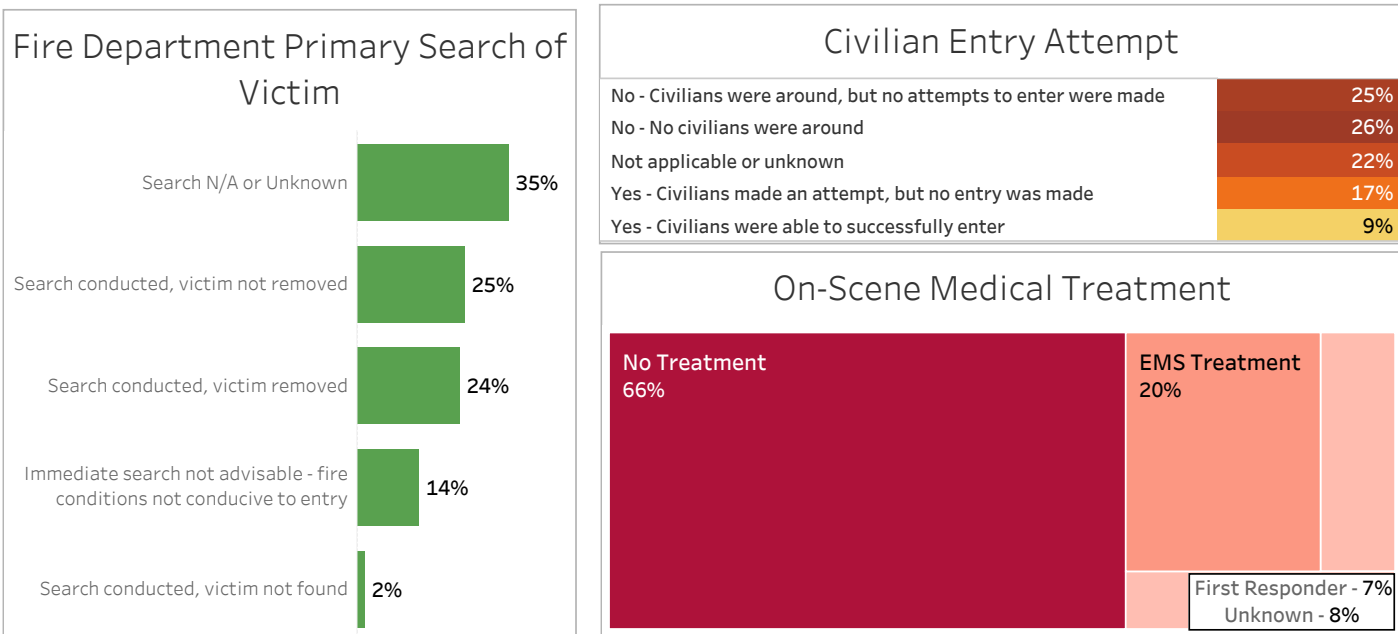


# Fire Fatality Victim Profile



When known, victims were generally found to be attempting escape when they were injured. Thirty percent of victims attempted an escape, while only three percent of victims were successful in their attempt. Seventeen percent did not have time to respond to the emergency before succumbing. In 78 percent of cases, the victim was pronounced deceased at the fire scene. However, citizens attempted to rescue or successfully rescued victims in 26 percent of cases. Prior to fire department arrival, unsafe conditions did not allow for citizens to assist the victim in escaping in about one in six incidents. Fourteen percent of the time, the fire department could not attempt rescue during initial attack, due to dangerous conditions. Victims were removed during search and rescue operations in one out of about every five fatal fires.

The CLEAR Team was notified about fire fatalities within 24 hours of the death 77 percent of the time and responded on-scene 60 percent of the time. This response allows the team to understand more about why some fires are fatal and connect with fire departments and their communities to prevent further tragedies.



# Human Factors Profile

Human factors were deemed present in 80 percent of all incidents, with 71 percent of incidents having more than one human factor present. The factors below account for some seen in this year's incidents; an inability to be notified of an emergency, an inability to go to a safe area, and risky behaviors contributed to a person's demise in the event of a fire.

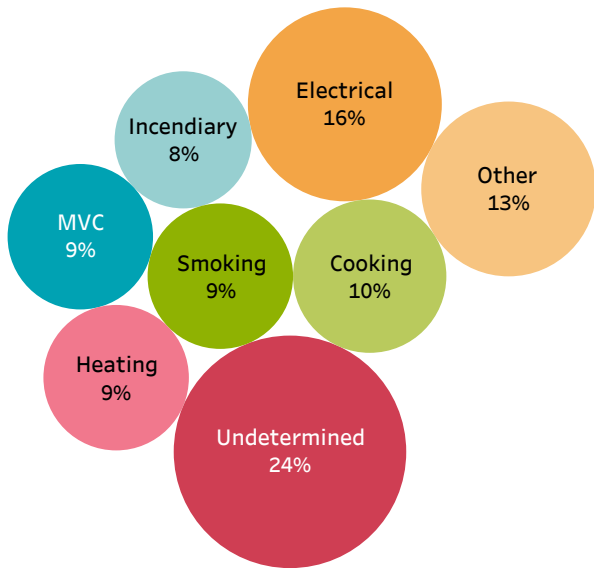
Intentional ignition by victim without malicious acts and intentional ignition by someone other than the victim were present in three percent of incidents each. Children under the age of 2 were also present in three percent of incidents. Reckless driving was accounted for in four percent of incidents, driving while impaired by alcohol was accounted for in two percent of incidents, and distracted driving and driving impaired by other substances accounted for one percent of incidents each.



# Fatal Incidents Profile

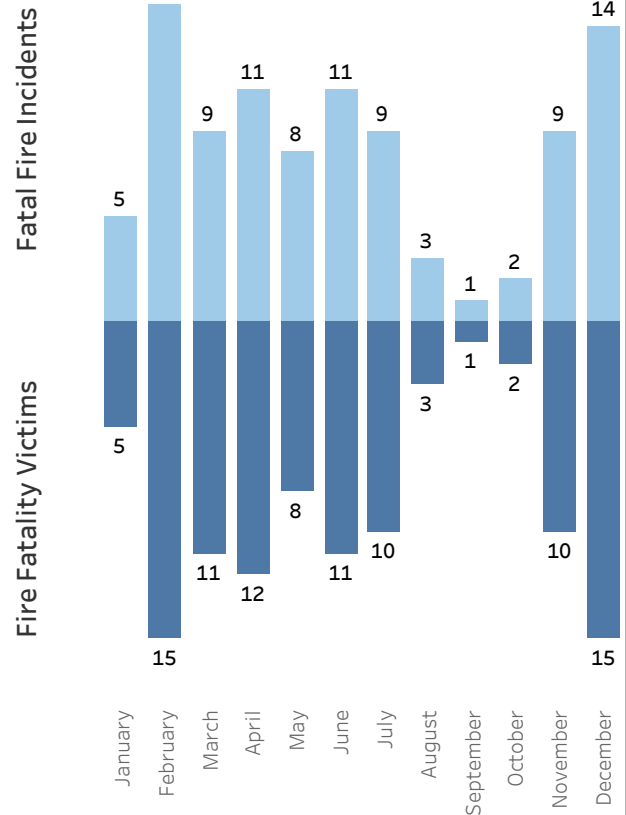
When cause could be determined, fatal incidents were most likely caused by electrical issues, followed by unsafe cooking practices. Incidents occurred everyday of the week, with the most happening on the weekend (Friday through Sunday). Fatal incidents generally occurred during early and late morning, from 12 a.m. and 9 a.m., and in February and December.

## Most Probable Cause of Incidents



Other incidents include: outdoor burning, playing with fire, and other vehicle fires.

## Incidents by Month

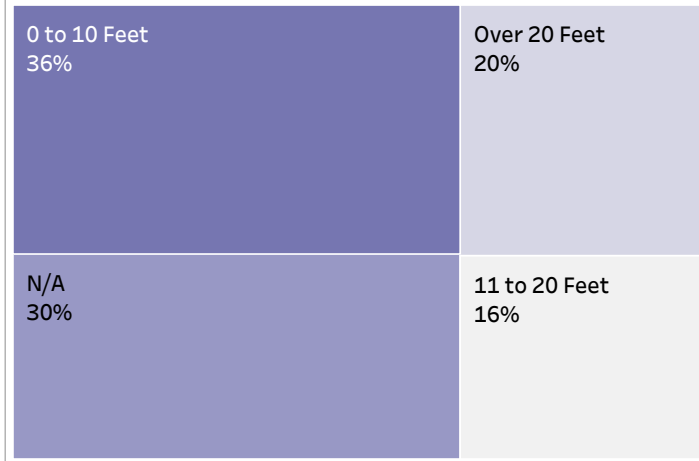


## Days and Times of Incidents Occurring

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
12 AM to 3 AM	2	1	1	2	1	3	4	14
3 AM to 6 AM	2	3		1	3	2	3	14
6 AM to 9 AM	2	1	2	3		4	4	16
9 AM to 12 PM	5		2	2	1	1	2	13
12 PM to 3 PM	1		2	2		3	2	10
3 PM to 6 PM	3	2	2	3	1		2	13
6 PM to 9 PM	2		5	2		1		10
9 PM to 12 AM	1	1	2		2	1		7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>97</b>

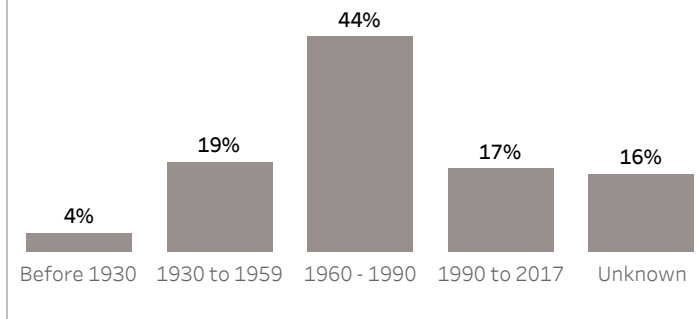
# Homes with Fatal Incidents Profile

## Victim's Distance from an Egress

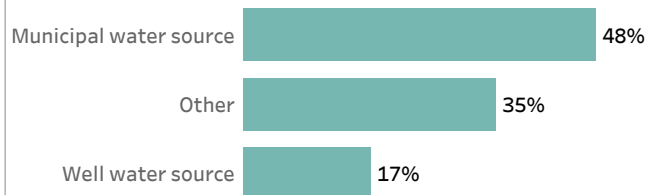


Eighty-four percent of fatal fires occurred in residences. These homes, which are mostly owned, tend to be 30-50 years old, with the most being smaller than 1,500 square feet. These homes are often supplied with city or municipal water. Smoke alarms were only known to be present in 18 percent of home fires. In two incidents, an alarm which was present also alerted the occupants. Notification by an alarm saved five occupants in three separate fires. Code and safety issues were present in 51 percent of incidents, with 41 percent of incidents having more than one issue present. In 32 percent of incidents, it was known the home did not have any smoke alarms present, and in an additional nine percent of incidents, it was known the home had inadequate or nonworking smoke alarms.

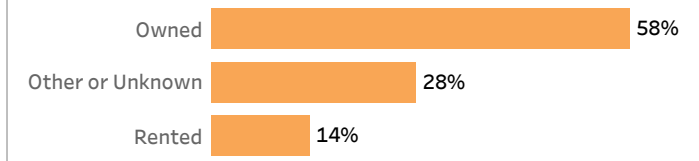
## Age of Homes



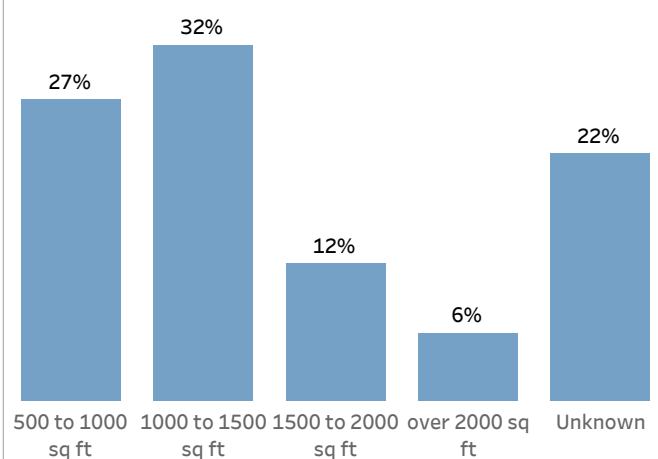
## Water Source



## Ownership Status of Homes



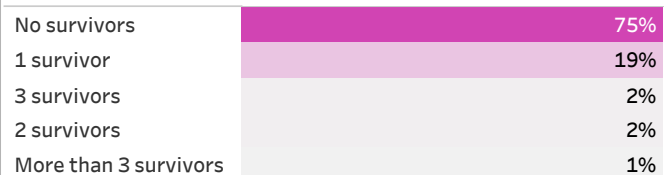
## Size of Homes



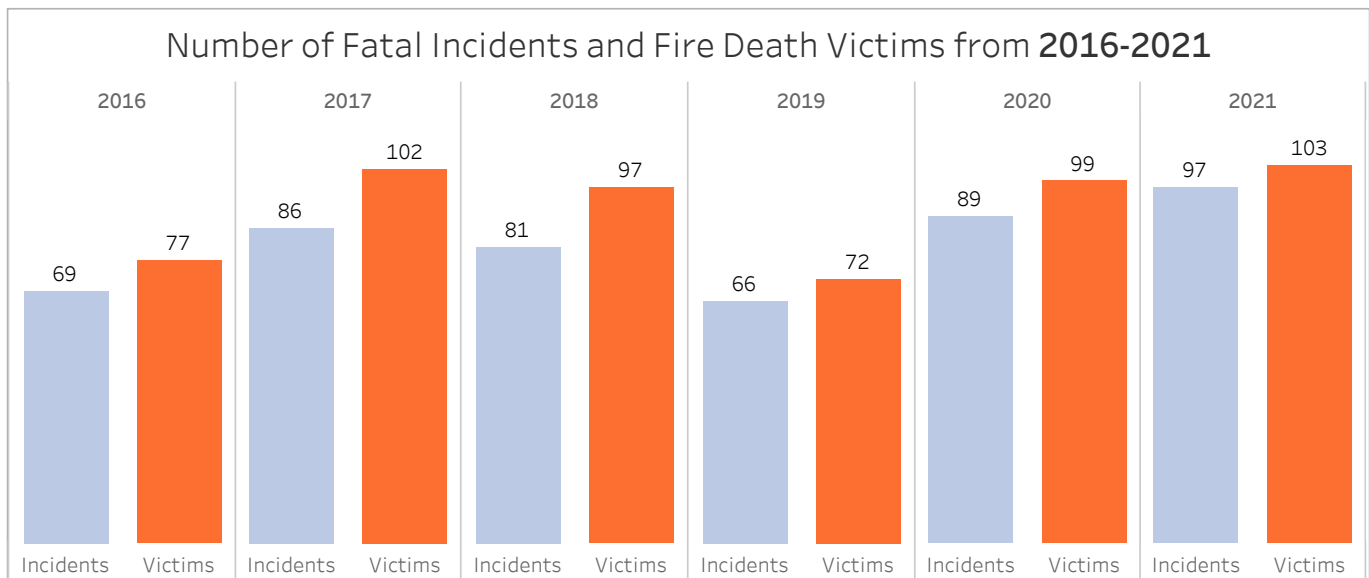
## Code & Safety Issues

No Smoke Alarms	32%
Electrical Risk	28%
Hoarding Conditions	22%
Derelict Conditions	16%
Trip Hazards	13%
Other	13%
Issues with Egress	10%
Improper Storage of Materials	10%
Inadequate or Nonworking Smoke Alarms	9%
Blocked Exits	8%
No Power to Property	6%
Poor Construction	4%

## Survivors in Fatal Home Incidents

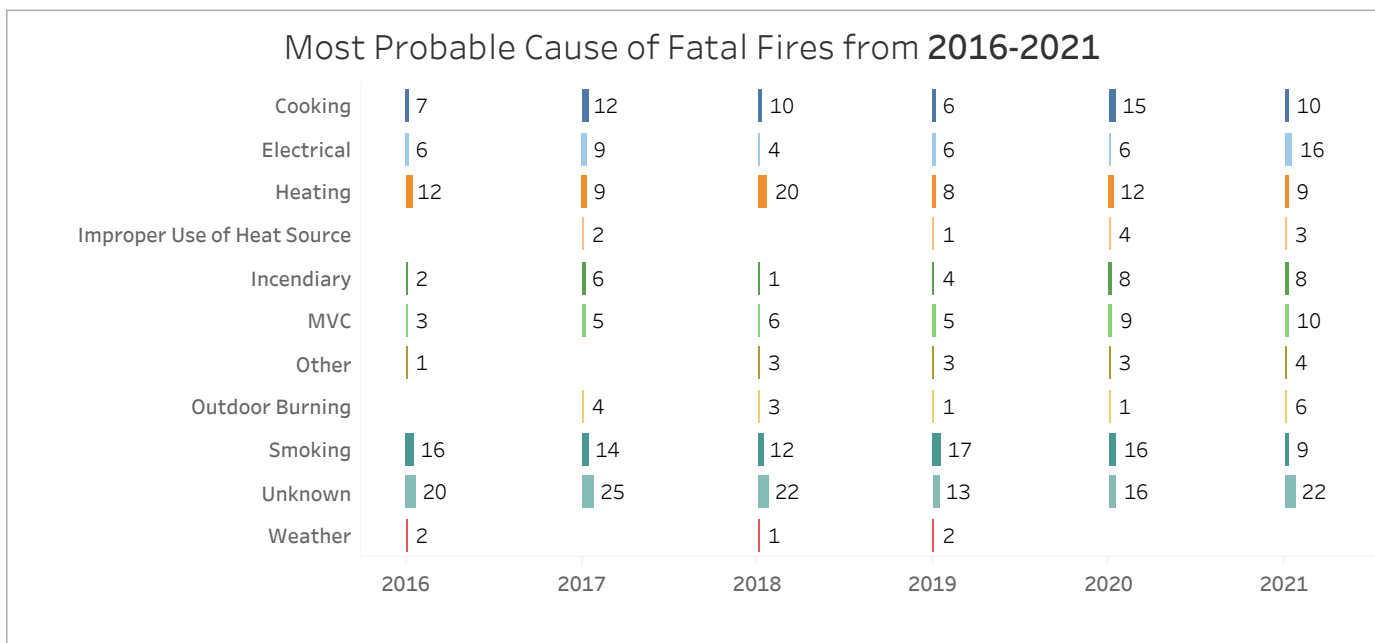


# Annual and Historical Fire Fatality Information



Fire deaths and fatal fires have fluctuated during the past five years. Between 2016 - 2021, the average number of fire victims per year is 89. During the same time frame, the average number of fatal fires per year is 78. There is a 16 percent increase in fire deaths in 2021 compared to the average of the past five years. There is a 24 percent increase in fatal fires in 2021 compared to the average of the past five years. What is responsible for this increase in fire deaths and fatal fires is unknown, possibilities include better reporting of incidents by fire departments and more people living in places not meant for permanent residency.

From 2016 to 2021, the number of "undetermined" cause of incidents has generally remained consistent. Three causes of fatal fires that increased from 2016 to 2021 include cooking fires, from seven fires to 15 fires, electrical fires, from six to 16, and incendiary fires (suicides, arsons, and other intentionally set fires), from two to eight fires.



# Detailed Fatality Information

Data contained in this report or on this site is collected, compiled, and reported for research and educational purposes only. The contents of any report or data herein is not intended to be used as a definitive conclusion related to a fire's origin and cause or a decedent's manner of death. Therefore, data contained in this report or on this site does not replace nor supersede investigative reports for origin and cause or manner of death.

## January

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
1/12/21	Kershaw	RV or Other Residential Vehicle	50	Female	White
1/16/21	Florence	Single Family Dwelling	65	Male	White
	Pickens	RV or Other Residential Vehicle	89	Male	Black
1/24/21	Charleston	Multi-Family Dwelling	66	Male	White
1/27/21	Richland	Single Family Dwelling	88	Male	Black

## February

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
2/5/21	Union	Single Family Dwelling	29	Male	White
2/6/21	Chester	Single Family Dwelling	87	Male	White
2/7/21	Kershaw	Vehicle	71	Male	White
	Union	Vehicle	28	Male	White
2/9/21	Colleton	Mobile Home	53	Female	Black
2/11/21	Oconee	Mobile Home	65	Male	White
2/12/21	Charleston	Mobile Home	76	Female	Black
2/18/21	Newberry	Single Family Dwelling	92	Male	Black
2/21/21	Greenville	Single Family Dwelling	1	Female	Black
2/22/21	Pickens	Single Family Dwelling	51	Male	Black
2/23/21	Spartanburg	Single Family Dwelling	34	Male	White
	York	Single Family Dwelling	49	Female	White
2/24/21	Florence	Single Family Dwelling	32	Male	White
2/27/21	Anderson	Vehicle	57	Female	White
2/28/21	Richland	Mobile Home	2	Male	Black

## March

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
3/6/21	Kershaw	Single Family Dwelling	48	Female	Black
			65	Male	Black
3/8/21	Cherokee	Vehicle	83	Male	White
3/10/21	Marlboro	Single Family Dwelling	70	Male	Black
3/12/21	Charleston	Single Family Dwelling	72	Female	Black
	Lancaster	Single Family Dwelling	69	Female	White
3/16/21	Sumter	RV or Other Residential Vehicle	86	Female	White
3/20/21	Orangeburg	Single Family Dwelling	62	Male	Black
			77	Male	Black
3/28/21	Beaufort	Mobile Home	29	Male	White
3/31/21	Florence	Multi-Family Dwelling	45	Female	White



## April

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
4/2/21	Greenville	Mobile Home	79	Female	White
4/4/21	Horry	Single Family Dwelling	83	Male	Black
	Spartanburg	Single Family Dwelling	47	Male	White
4/7/21	Colleton	Single Family Dwelling	73	Male	White
4/10/21	York	Single Family Dwelling	55	Male	Black
			62	Male	Black
4/11/21	Orangeburg	Mobile Home	9	Female	Black
4/13/21	Charleston	Vehicle	52	Male	White
4/25/21	Edgefield	Single Family Dwelling	67	Female	White
	Laurens	Mobile Home	60	Male	White
4/27/21	York	Single Family Dwelling	71	Female	White
4/30/21	Spartanburg	Open Area	1	Female	White

## May

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
5/2/21	Greenville	Mobile Home	29	Male	White
5/5/21	Cherokee	Single Family Dwelling	60	Male	Black
5/7/21	Chesterfield	Single Family Dwelling	42	Male	White
5/19/21	Marlboro	Vehicle	78	Male	White
5/21/21	Berkeley	Single Family Dwelling	88	Male	Black
5/27/21	Laurens	Hotel	51	Female	White
5/28/21	Newberry	Single Family Dwelling	78	Male	White
5/31/21	Greenville	Mobile Home	69	Female	White

## June

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
6/2/21	Oconee	Vehicle	54	Male	White
6/12/21	Clarendon	Single Family Dwelling	76	Male	White
6/22/21	Orangeburg	RV or Other Residential Vehi..	82	Female	Black
6/23/21	Dorchester	Single Family Dwelling	76	Male	White
6/24/21	Richland	Single Family Dwelling	62	Male	White
6/26/21	Charleston	Small Storage	77	Male	Black
	Spartanburg	Open Area	68	Female	White
6/27/21	Florence	Single Family Dwelling	42	Female	Black
6/28/21	Horry	Mobile Home	58	Male	White
6/29/21	Lexington	Multi-Family Dwelling	10	Female	White
6/30/21	Georgetown	Single Family Dwelling	49	Male	White

## July

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
7/1/21	Pickens	Mobile Home	58	Female	White
7/3/21	Marion	Single Family Dwelling	72	Male	Black
7/6/21	Greenville	Mobile Home	49	Male	White
7/7/21	Colleton	Single Family Dwelling	39	Male	White
7/21/21	Lexington	Mobile Home	58	Male	Unknown
7/25/21	Greenwood	Vehicle	68	Male	White
7/31/21	Charleston	Multi-Family Dwelling	8	Male	Black
			61	Male	Black
		Single Family Dwelling	91	Male	White
	York	Single Family Dwelling	63	Male	Black

## August

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
8/1/21	Charleston	Mobile Home	24	Male	White
8/3/21	Greenville	Multi-Family Dwelling	34	Male	Black
8/13/21	Chesterfield	Vehicle	68	Male	White

## September

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
9/13/21	Chesterfield	Vehicle	61	Male	White

## October

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
10/17/21	Aiken	Single Family Dwelling	65	Male	Black
10/19/21	Laurens	Mobile Home	19	Male	Black

## November

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
11/5/21	Darlington	Mobile Home	72	Male	Black
11/6/21	Edgefield	RV or Other Residential Vehicle	8	Female	Black
			45	Female	Black
11/14/21	Darlington	Single Family Dwelling	79	Male	White
	Florence	Mobile Home	44	Male	White
11/24/21	Bamberg	Single Family Dwelling	54	Female	White
	York	Single Family Dwelling	23	Male	White
11/26/21	Colleton	Mobile Home	90	Female	White
	Richland	Single Family Dwelling	46	Male	White
11/30/21	York	Small Storage	60	Male	Black

## December

Incident Date	County	Occupancy Type	Age	Gender	Race
12/2/21	Bamberg	Single Family Dwelling	89	Male	Black
12/4/21	Aiken	Single Family Dwelling	68	Female	White
			72	Female	White
	Lancaster	Single Family Dwelling	53	Female	Asian
12/6/21	Dorchester	Open Area	56	Male	White
	Florence	Single Family Dwelling	28	Male	White
	Spartanburg	Small Storage	76	Female	White
12/7/21	Florence	Single Family Dwelling	49	Female	Black
12/10/21	Aiken	Vehicle	29	Male	White
12/15/21	Aiken	Small Storage	10	Female	Black
12/24/21	Sumter	Single Family Dwelling	21	Male	Black
12/28/21	Beaufort	Single Family Dwelling	57	Male	White
	Chester	Mobile Home	74	Male	Black
12/30/21	Aiken	Open Area	52	Male	Black
	Kershaw	Multi-Family Dwelling	70	Male	White