

Restaurant Fires (2011-2013)

There are many different types of restaurants, from chain restaurants that are found at many locations — including fast-food restaurants — to small, family-owned restaurants that limit business to a single location. Restaurants also vary by the different types of food that they prepare and serve to their customers. No matter the type, however, each restaurant poses unique fire risks as it engages in cooking activities and large numbers of customers potentially gather at one time. Fires originating in restaurants accounted for the most reported incidents in the category of assembly areas, under the broader descriptor of property use in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).¹ For each year from 2011 to 2013, an estimated 5,600 restaurant fires were reported to fire departments in the United States, resulting in fewer than five deaths, 100 injuries, and \$116 million in property damage.²

Loss Measures for Restaurant, All Other Eating and Drinking Establishments, and Other Nonresidential Building Fires (Three-Year Average, 2011-2013)

Loss Measure	Restaurant Fires	All Other Eating and Drinking Establishments	Other Nonresidential Building Fires
Average Loss			
Fatalities/1,000 Fires	0.3	1.8	1.0
Injuries/1,000 Fires	11.0	8.1	9.4
Dollar Loss/Fire	\$22,540	\$34,650	\$30,100

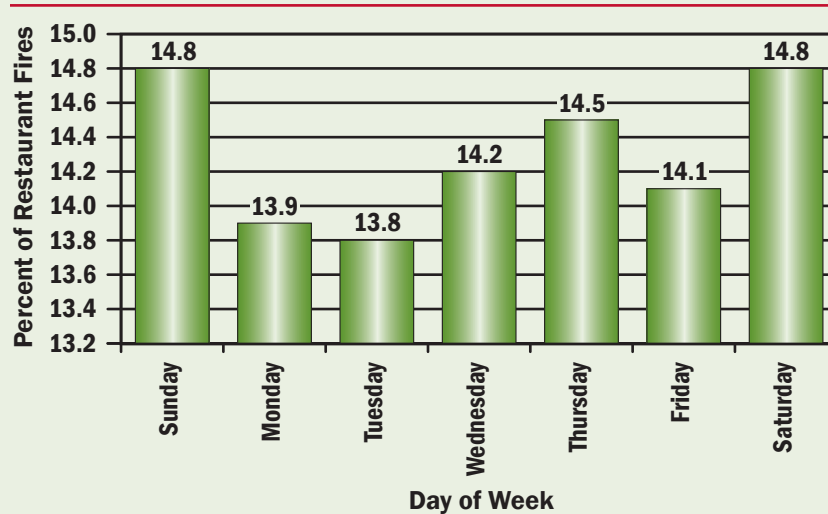
Source: NFIRS 5.0.

Restaurant fires accounted for about 6 percent of all nonresidential building fires reported to fire departments each year. These fires resulted in less than one fatality per 1,000 fires, 11 injuries per 1,000 fires, and

\$23,000 in loss per fire. The loss measures for fatalities and dollar loss were below those for all other nonresidential buildings, yet injuries per 1,000 fires were elevated.³ Fires in all other eating and drinking establishments

— including bars, nightclubs, pubs and the like — had higher fatalities and dollar loss per 1,000 fires than restaurants, yet fewer injuries per 1,000 fires.

Restaurant Fires by Day of Week (2011-2013)



Source: NFIRS 5.0.

Note: Total does not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

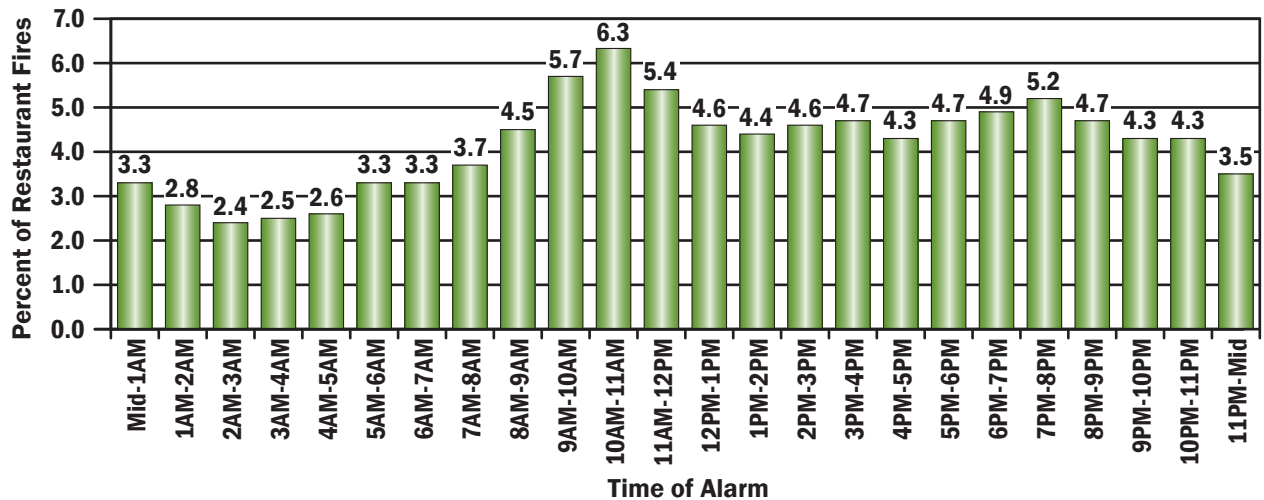
Restaurant fires were most prevalent during the weekend on Saturday and Sunday, followed closely by Thursday. Monday and Tuesday accounted for the smallest percentages of restaurant fires. However, fires that resulted in one or more civilian casualties (injuries and deaths) peaked Wednesday, followed by Monday and Friday (casualty data not shown).



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Restaurant Fires by Time of Alarm (2011-2013)

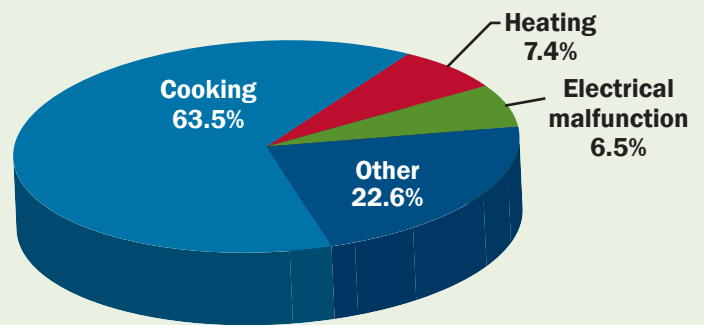


Source: NFIRS 5.0.

Restaurant fires were most likely to occur during the midmorning through noon, with a peak from 10 to 11 a.m., coinciding with the time when restaurants are preparing to serve lunch. Restaurant fires that resulted in one or more civilian casualties (injuries and deaths) were also most prevalent during this period, peaking from 9 to 11 a.m. (casualty data not shown).

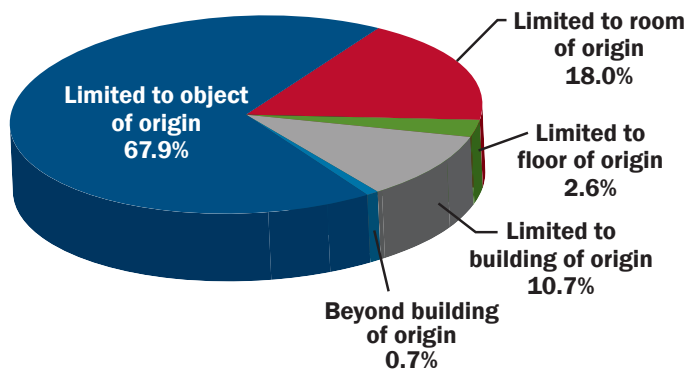
Restaurant Fires by Cause (2011-2013)

As would be expected, cooking was by far the leading cause of restaurant fires, accounting for 64 percent of restaurant fires. Heating and electrical malfunction each accounted for an additional 7 percent. All other causes, including unintentional, careless actions (4 percent), appliances (4 percent), other heat (3 percent) and several other categories at less than 3 percent each accounted for the remaining 23 percent of restaurant fires.



Source: NFIRS 5.0.

Extent of Fire Spread in Restaurant Fires (2011-2013)



Source: NFIRS 5.0.

Note: Total does not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

The majority of restaurant fires, 68 percent, were limited to the object of origin and did not spread further into the room. An additional 18 percent were limited to the room of origin. The remaining 14 percent of restaurant fires extended beyond the room of origin.

For additional fire prevention resources, please visit the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA's) fire prevention outreach resources page.

For additional fire statistics, please visit USFA's fire statistics page.

¹ In this analysis, restaurant fires are defined as a subset of nonresidential building fires in NFIRS by using Incident Types 111-123 (excluding Incident Type 112) and Property Use 161 (restaurant or cafeteria). For Incident Types 113-118, the Structure Type is 1, 2 or null, and for Incident Types 111 and 120-123, the Structure Type is 1 or 2. Aid Types 3 (mutual aid given) and 4 (automatic aid given) were excluded to avoid double counting of incidents.

² The 2011 and 2012 dollar-loss values were adjusted to 2013 dollars.

³ The average loss measures computed from the NFIRS data alone in the loss measures table will differ from the average loss measures computed from national estimates. Average loss for fatalities and injuries is computed per 1,000 fires. Average dollar loss is computed per fire and rounded to the nearest \$10. The 2011 and 2012 dollar-loss values were adjusted to 2013 dollars.



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