



SINGAPORE CIVIL DEFENCE FORCE FIRE AND AMBULANCE STATISTICS

TOPIC 1

FIRE INCIDENT STATISTICS (JAN – DEC 2006)

FIRE CALLS

1. SCDF responded to 4,702 fire calls in 2006. This is 337 cases (or 7%) less than the number of incidents in 2005 when there were 5039 cases. It is also the lowest number of incidents recorded in the last 20 years, except for 2003 which registered 4,540 cases.
2. The overall downward slide in fire figures over the years (see **Annex A**) can be attributed to the concerted efforts put in by not just the SCDF but also its active community partners and supporters. This includes the National Fire Prevention Council (NFPC), Civil Defence Executive Committees (CDEC), grassroots leaders and the community at large. Island-wide programmes such as Community Emergency Preparedness Programmes (CEPP), Emergency Preparedness (EP) Days, Outreach Programmes in schools, commercial and industrial sectors have been useful in forging a more fire safety conscious community.

BREAKDOWN OF FIRE CALLS

3. Of the 4,702 fires last year, 2,957 involved residential premises constituting a drop of about 3% (ie. 99 cases) compared to the previous year. **See Table 1.** This is the lowest since 1993 which recorded 2419 of such fires that year.
4. The number of fires involving non-residential premises (ie. commercial, industrial and social/communal premises) last year fell by 25 cases to 610. This is

also one of the lowest in the past decade. Such fires began to drop after hitting a high of 820 cases in 1999.

5. Fires affecting non-buildings such as those involving bushes, rubbish and vehicles fell from 1348 cases in 2005 to 1135 last year.

DESCRIPTION	Jan-Dec 2005	Jan-Dec 2006	Absolute Change
Residential Premises	3056	2957	-99
Non Residential Premises	635	610	-25
Non-Building	1348	1135	-213
TOTAL	5039	4702	-337

TABLE 1: BREAKDOWN OF GENUINE FIRE CALLS

6. Of the 610 fires involving non-residential premises, 311 cases involved commercial premises including shops in complexes and residential heartland estates. Industrial buildings including factories and warehouses fell to 152 cases from 159 in 2005. Fires involving social/communal premises such as schools, rubbish collection centres and sports complex also declined, from 162 cases in 2005 to 147 last year. See **Table 2**.

DESCRIPTION	Jan-Dec 2005	Jan-Dec 2006	Absolute Change
Commercial	314	311	-3
Industrial	159	152	-7
Social/Communal	162	147	-15
TOTAL	635	610	-25

TABLE 2: BREAKDOWN OF FIRE CALLS (NON-RESIDENTIAL PREMISES)

FIRES IN RESIDENTIAL PREMISES

7. Types of fire outbreaks in residential premises are captured in **Table 3**. A large bulk of these fires involved rubbish in bin chutes, discarded items in common areas (such as void decks) and rubbish bins in lift lobbies. While such fires have fallen from 1777 in 2005 to 1751 last year, SCDF urges members of public to be more discriminate when throwing rubbish into chutes and bins. For instance, lighted cigarettes must be extinguished before disposal; charcoal embers must be doused with water before disposal; and flammable substances like paint, oil and kerosene must not be thrown down the chute.

8. Fires resulting from unattended cooking lowered by 40 instances last year to 509. Despite this fall, members of public are reminded to be careful when

cooking. Such fires can result in a whole kitchen being burnt, not just the wok, pots and pans. To prevent such fires, home-makers should not be distracted when cooking. Taking time off to chat on the phone, take a nap or leave the house to run errands can be dangerous when cooking activity is in progress.

9. Fewer fires involving contents of houses such as furniture, clothing and mattresses broke out last year. This is a drop of about 3% (or 10 cases) from 358 in 2005 to 348 last year. Electrical fires also fell, from 181 cases in 2005 to 177 last year.

TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES	Jan-Dec 2005	Jan-Dec 2006	Absolute Change
Rubbish Fires (Rubbish chutes, discarded items & rubbish bins)	1777	1751	-26
Unattended Cooking	549	509	-40
Contents*	358	348	-10
Electrical Fires	181	177	-4
Bicycles/Motorcycles	44	33	-11
Gas	26	26	0
Others**	121	113	-8
Total	3056	2957	-99

* Contents include furniture, clothing, awning, mattresses, praying altar, curtain, door, toiletries

** Others include notice boards, banners, lifts, footwear/racks and sparklers

TABLE 3: BREAKDOWN OF FIRES IN RESIDENTIAL PREMISES

FIRES INVOLVING NON-BUILDINGS

10. Non-building fires (e.g. vegetation, vehicle) fell to 1135 cases last year from 1348 in 2005. As shown in **Table 4**, all fire types under this category dropped last year.

DESCRIPTION	Jan-Dec 2005	Jan-Dec 2006	Absolute Change
Vegetation	800	651	-149
Rubbish (in open space)	241	216	-25
Vehicles	168	161	-7
Vessels	4	0	-4

Others*	135	107	-28
Total	1348	1135	-213

*Others include bus stops, stand alone ATM kiosks, praying altar, incense, tentage and canvas.

TABLE 4: BREAKDOWN ON FIRES INVOLVING NON-BUILDINGS

CAUSES OF FIRES

11. The main causes of fires last year are listed in **Table 5**. 'Light thrown down' led to 2,873 cases. This is a significant drop of 217 cases. Despite this drop, this cause continues to contribute to the bulk of fires in Singapore. It is therefore important for members of public to do their part in lowering such fires.

DESCRIPTION	Jan-Dec 2005	Jan-Dec 2006	Absolute Change
Light thrown down	3090	2873	-217
Overheating of Food	601	555	-46
Electrical	498	497	-1
Incendiary/Suspicious	376	374	-2
Naked Light	277	277	0
Others	197	126	-71
Total	5039	4702	-337

TABLE 5: CAUSES OF FIRES

FIRES CAUSED BY CHILDREN

12. There was a rise in the number of fire outbreaks traced to children playing with fire last year. The number of such fires almost doubled from 37 cases in 2005 to 73 cases in 2006. These cases have led to 4 casualties, compared to none in 2005.

13. The first incident resulting in injury last year occurred on 9 Oct 2006 at Jurong West St 91. Contents of a bedroom were engulfed in flames and an 11 year old boy's left hand was scalded by the melted candle wax. A 2 year old boy witnessing the scene suffered shock. The second incident which also led to the contents of a bedroom going up in flames took place on 1 Dec 2006 at Yishun St 11. In this case, a 7 year old boy and an elderly woman suffered burns.

14. SCDF responded to 11 cases of children playing with sparklers last year. The Police also recorded 32 reports of explosive-related incidents involving

sparkler sticks or powder. With the Lunar New Year coming soon, the public is advised to pay close attention to children playing with sparklers and to have them under adult supervision when engaged in such activities.

FIRE CASUALTIES

15. The number of casualties from fire incidents last year fell from 112 in 2005 to 94 last year, comprising 91 injured persons and 3 fatalities. See **Table 6**. The first fire death was a male Chinese found at an internal staircase of a 2-storey laundry factory at Ang Mo Kio Industrial Park 2 following a fire on 13 Feb 2006. The second fatality (a female Chinese) came from a kitchen fire at Circuit Road on 10 July 2006. This fire incident also led to the injury of a male Chinese who suffered smoke inhalation and burns on his face. A female Chinese also died when a fire involving the contents of a bedroom broke out at Marine Crescent on 23 October 2006.

Description	Jan-Dec 2005	Jan-Dec 2006
Persons injured	111	91
Fatality	1	3
Total	112	94

TABLE 6: BREAKDOWN OF FIRE CASUALTIES