Bureau of Fire Investigation
Investigative Management and Reporting System
FIRE FATALITIES
Period: January 1, 2009 - December 31, 2009

The Bureau of Fire Investigation (BFI) investigates all fires where a civilian injury is reported or a 10-45 code is transmitted. A "BFI 10-45 Report" is completed for every injury or fatality. The information from this report is then entered into a database similar to the NYFIRS program. The program automatically updates with each entry.

All fire deaths are counted in the month and year in which the death occurs, ***not*** the month or year in which the fire occurred. If a fire takes place in March and the victim dies in June, the death is recorded in June. If a fire takes place in November and the victim dies the following year in January, the death is recorded in January of the New Year.

When a fire victim dies, the Medical Examiner's Office requires a Fire Marshal's report in order to determine the manner of death (accidental, suicide, homicide, other).

In some cases the Medical Examiner will determine that the victim actually died prior to the fire. In that case the victim will ***not*** be counted as a fire death. Some examples of this are:

A murder victim is set on fire in an attempt to cover-up the crime—**not a fire death**.

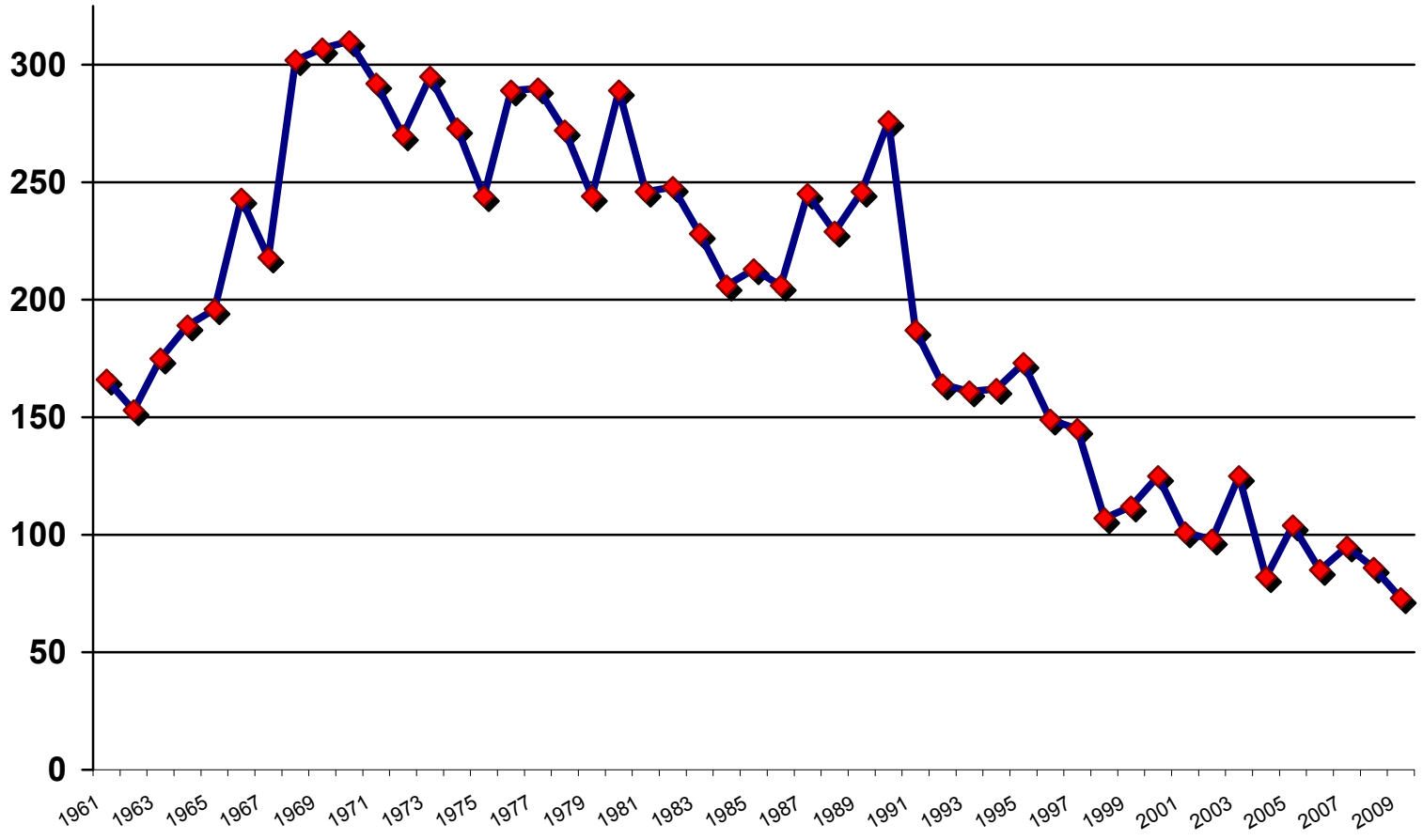
A victim goes into cardiac arrest while cooking food on the stove that causes a fire—**not a fire death**.

A victim of an automobile accident where the car bursts into flames—Medical Examiner determines trauma, **not a fire death**.

There are also many cases in which a fire death is initially deemed a 10-37 (minor injury), and it is only after the Medical Examiner's Office contacts the Bureau of Fire Investigation for the Fire Marshals report that the victim is determined to be a fire death. This occasionally happens when:

A person suffering from smoke inhalation or burns leaves the fire scene before the arrival of medical/fire personnel and then dies elsewhere—**fire death**.

A person who may live alone and dies as a result of a fire confined to him or herself. The deceased victim is found sometime later by a friend or relative. The call generates a CFR-D or ambulance response—**fire death.**

In these times of modern medicine, forensic science and advanced technology, we are confident that all fire deaths are being recorded as such and counted accurately.

73 Civilian Fire Deaths In New York City – A Record Low for 2009!