



# IOWA CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

## General Policy No. 160.03

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**SUBJECT**

NFIRS – Data Quality Control

**ORIGINAL ISSUE**

April 2008

**LAST AMENDED****MANDATORY REVIEW DATE**

May Annually

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**I. PURPOSE:**

This policy describes the importance of data quality control and assigns quality control responsibilities. During the recording of an incident, the report is dynamic not static. The details could change as more information becomes available, due to further investigations by the fire department or other agencies, or due to a change as a result of the initial incident. This gathering of information could take weeks or months. Regardless of whether the gathering of incident data has been completed or the incident is still under investigation, the record in the database should accurately reflect the status of the incident.

**II. SCOPE:**

All personnel assigned.

**III. POLICY:**

A. Is it important to remember:

1. The incident report is a legal record.
2. The incident report must accurately reflect the event.
3. All required fields must be completed.
4. The incident report is a dynamic document.
5. The incident data is used at local, state, and national levels.

B. The following tools are available to ensure the application of proper standards and protocols for accurate and reliable data.

1. The ICFD Firehouse User Guide provides step-by-step guidance in the completion of software based records and reports. The Firehouse User Guide is available electronically at S:\FIR\Firehouse User Guide\FH Version 7 Guide to Data Entry.doc.

2. The NFIRS Complete Reference Guide provides both instructions for reporting data to NFIRS Version 5.0 and an understanding of the data elements collected by the system. It also serves as a reference for the coding of the data. The NFIRS Complete Reference Guide is available electronically at S:\FIR\Firehouse User Guide\NFIRS Complete Reference Guide.pdf.
  3. USFA website. The USFA's website [www.nfirs.fema.gov](http://www.nfirs.fema.gov), Section 3 – Technical Documents contains the following sections that support NFIRS Data Quality Control:
    - a. Edit Requirements
    - b. Relational Edits
    - c. Incident Module Rules
    - d. Incident Flat File Transfer Format
    - e. Data Dictionary
  4. Firehouse Software. From the main menu, click on 'Help' to access:
    - a. NFIRS 5.0 Handbook
    - b. NFIRS 5.0 Quick Reference Guide
    - c. NFIRS 5.0 Coding Questions
- C. Quality Control. Quality control is not a one-person job. All levels responsible for the processing of the incident have a role. Quality control is not just a matter of passing the edit checks (turning data fields from yellow to blue). It is a process of accurately describing the incident (essential data). Data quality control shall be administered as follows:
1. The **member making the report** must collect needed and accurate data and enter it into the report.
  2. The **officer in charge of the incident** must check the report for accuracy and completeness.
  3. The **on-duty battalion chief** shall ensure daily that all system edits and requirements have been met.
  4. The **emergency operations battalion chief** shall review all EMS, haz-mat, and technical rescue reports for detail and accuracy.
  5. The **fire marshal** shall review all fire and false call reports.
  6. The **deputy fire chief** shall include quality control common errors and omissions information in reports to staff.