To Whom it may concern,

As the end of NFIRS approaches beginning in February 2026, the Missouri Division of Fire Safety continues to move forward with the migration of all Missouri fire departments from the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) to the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS). Part of this process includes ensuring that your monthly NFIRS incident file imports and incident data entry are up to date. If you have not already done so, please take a few moments to review your records and ensure that all available incident report files have been entered or imported into NFIRS for 2025 and previous years. We also recommend that you review your records to ensure that you have retained all required records in accordance with applicable records retention requirements, including those which are required by the State of Missouri under all applicable statutes.

Please review *ALL* of the information provided in the following sections for guidance on how to ensure that your records have been imported into NFIRS for all years up through 2025, and what steps you need to take to ensure that you retain copies of any records which may currently exist in NFIRS, if needed. Please complete these steps no later than **January 15, 2026.** If you have already completed these steps, or are in that process now, congratulations, you are ahead of the "pack" in closing out 2025!

If your agency entered reports directly into NFIRS and have not yet transitioned to NERIS, DO NOT ENTER ANY REPORTS FOR 2026 INCIDENTS INTO NFIRS. Please reach out to Joshua Couture as soon as possible to begin the transition process.

*NOTE: This letter is being provided to all personnel for which contact information has been provided to the Division of Fire Safety through the Annual Fire Department Registration, as well as all NFIRS and NERIS systems users. **Please be sure to communicate and coordinate with all applicable and/or authorized personnel within your organization so that efforts to review and retain records are coordinated, orderly and completed in a timely manner without the duplication of efforts.***

NFIRS 2025 – Incident Report Imports and Entries, Reviews and Corrections

As a starting point, please check the "Monthly Reporting Participation Reports", located on the Division of Fire Safety's Fire Incident Reporting: NFIRS and NERIS webpage, to determine if you have data for any months from 2020 – 2025 that may be "missing". If any of the incident reports from those years are available, please import them into NFIRS as soon as possible.

If your agency has already begun reporting into NERIS, please ensure that all applicable records have been imported or entered in NFIRS for all months/weeks/days in 2025 prior to the date when your agency was transitioned to NERIS reporting.

If your agency does not have an RMS and did not enter any data into NFIRS for 2025, do not enter any new reports into NFIRS for either 2025 or 2026.

You will then need to review all 2025 incident reports that are housed in NFIRS to identify and correct any validation issues which may be present. Please review the steps of this process provided below and complete this process **no later than January 15, 2026**.

1. Log into NFIRS.
2. On the NFIRS homepage, click on the "Incidents" tab, then select "Search Incidents".
3. Once on the Incident Search Page:
   a. Select your "Fire Department" name,
   b. Select the "Year", 2025,
   c. Select "Invalid" under the Validity section,
   d. Then click on the blue "Search" button.
   This will return a listing of any incidents with validation issues.
4. Once the list of invalid incidents is available, if any, click on an incident report number to open the report.
5. Once the report is open, click on the "View Errors" button (located on the upper right-hand side of the page). This action may take up to 30+ seconds to process. Once completed, a listing of the validation errors will populate at the top of the report.
6. Review the list of validation errors. If you use an RMS for reporting, make the corrections in the RMS, save the incident and reimport it (or a batch that contains the corrected report). If you enter incident reports directly into NFIRS (eNFIRS), make the required corrections and save the report.
7. Repeat the steps above for each report that contain validation errors.

   Occasionally, there will be a report which shows having validation errors but when you perform the steps listed above, it says that there are no errors. If this happens, open the report, open and save each module (one at a time), then save the report again. This process should correct the issue that is causing the validation "error".

Once the reviews of these incident report imports and entries have been completed for your agency, please inform the NFIRS SPM/NERIS SDL, Joshua Couture, that these actions have been completed. A quick review will be made to confirm this information.

NFIRS – The Final Steps: Data Exporting and Records Retention Compliance

The Missouri Local Records Board, which is created and empowered to act under RSMO Chapter 109 (109.200 through 109.310), is charged with setting the records retention schedules for all local governments, including fire departments. The records retention schedule provided for fire departments is titled "Fire District". Per guidance from the Local Records Board, this retention schedule applies to all fire departments, regardless of their type (municipal, fire protection district, volunteer fire protection association, etc.). The Fire District Retention Schedule requires that all "Investigative Reports", which include, but are not limited to, incident reports, be retained for a minimum of 20 years from the date of event. Retention of these records

beyond the minimum required retention period should be considered due to their historical value. Full details may be obtained by referring to the retention schedules via the links provided above.

Once NFIRS and the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW – where the incident data is stored) are decommissioned in mid-February 2026, the data which is stored in them will no longer be available. Unless your agency already possesses the raw incident data files in an RMS, it is recommended that your agency export a copy of all available agency records contained in NFIRS/EDW to ensure that you do not lose those records permanently. There are several ways to export that data, as noted in the following sections.

Available Data Export Methods

- **Bulk Export** – This method creates a raw data file (.txt) containing all information contained within the reports which are selected for export.
    - This method allows you to export the data for up to one year in a single file, depending upon the number of records in the year. Large batches of data may need to "broken down" into smaller batches to facilitate faster processing of the export job.
    - These files can then be imported into your RMS for local storage and access in the future as needed, or they may be stored/retained/maintained separately as determined by your agency in compliance with all applicable records retention requirements.
    - There is a tutorial video available on YouTube, eNFIRS: Exporting Incidents, that explains how to perform an NFIRS Bulk Export.
- **Excel Export Reports** – This method creates an excel file for each available NFIRS module. However, these reports may not contain all data from every field which was completed in the original incident report that was entered/imported.
    - Primarily for use by agencies without an RMS.
    - A single file can be created for each NFIRS module by year, then downloaded upon completion of the file creation. The exported individual files can then be combined to create a searchable "list/database*".
        - *Requires use of the XLOOKUP function to "merge" the separate files into a single spreadsheet. Users should be comfortable with using Excel functions and should take care to ensure that a protected copy of the original data files is maintained in a secure location in compliance with all applicable records retention requirements.
    - There is a video tutorial available on YouTube, eNFIRS: NFIRS Data Warehouse Quick Start Video, which provides instructions on how to access the system and create reports in the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW). There is also a guidebook that is available in the comments section for the video.
- **PDF files** – This method generates a PDF file of the incident report in a "standard" report format.

- Suitable for agencies without an RMS with small volumes of incident reports (<100/yr.).
- To create PDF files for up to 5 incidents at one time, you can use the Form-Based Incident Report (FBIR) Utility. There is a video tutorial available on YouTube, eNFIRS: Form-Based Incident Report (FBIR) Utility, which details the process for this method of creating PDF copies of the incident reports.
- You can also create a PDF of an incident individually. There is a video tutorial available on YouTube, eNFIRS: How to Search for an Incident, that provides instructions on how to search for incidents, which will allow you to open them individually and create a PDF copy of the incident report. With this method, each incident report must be opened individually, the file generated by clicking on the "PDF" button, then close the report and repeat the process for the next report. The completed PDF will be downloaded to your device and can be stored locally in a secure location in compliance with all applicable records storage requirements.

Each of the methods listed above will satisfy the records retention requirements for "Fire Districts" as defined by the Local Records Board's guidance, provided that the records are retained in an electronic or paper format for the number of years specified by the retention schedule. **It is recommended that all Missouri fire departments export, retain and securely maintain the raw data files of all incident reports for all years contained in NFIRS/EDW, even if they do not have an RMS, so that the information will be available if it is needed or required to be provided in the future**. There are (or will be) service providers* who will be able to transform the raw incident data back into a report form as needed, even if a fire department does not have an RMS. It is up to each fire department to determine if they will use such service providers* to process, handle and/or store their incident data, and which service provider they will select to do so.

The Missouri Division of Fire Safety does not recommend any particular or specific data processing service provider, records management system or vendor, nor any particular or specific vendor over another, for use by fire departments to handle, process, and/or store their data.

It is highly recommended that your agency begins the export process as soon as possible to ensure that you have adequate time to export any required records to comply with all applicable records retention requirements. **The NFIRS system will become unavailable for access beginning February 01, 2026, and all data which exists in the system will also no longer be available.**

If you have any questions regarding the information provided above, please reach out to the NFIRS SPM/NERIS SDL, Joshua Couture, for assistance with any NFIRS/NERIS issues. You may also contact the Local Records Board for assistance with the records retention schedules and related matters. The Division of Fire Safety appreciates your participation and cooperation in

this process, and we thank you in advance for your patience as we complete this transition together.

Respectfully,

Joshua P. Couture

Statewide Fire Mutual Aid Coordinator | NFIRS State Prog. Mgr. / NERIS State Data Lead
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