

NFPA 906

Guide for Fire Incident Field Notes

1998 Edition



National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, PO Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101
An International Codes and Standards Organization

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NFPA 906
Guide for
Fire Incident Field Notes
1998 Edition

This edition of NFPA 906, *Guide for Fire Incident Field Notes*, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Fire Reporting and acted on by the National Fire Protection Association, Inc., at its Annual Meeting held May 18–21, 1998, in Cincinnati, OH. It was issued by the Standards Council on July 16, 1998, with an effective date of August 5, 1998, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 906 was approved as an American National Standard on August 6, 1998.

Origin and Development of NFPA 906

The proper recording of information about an incident is one of the most effective tools available to a fire investigator. To assist in this endeavor, the NFPA Fire Reporting Committee established a subcommittee to develop a guide to provide persons investigating fires, whether as the company officer, incident commander, fire department or fire marshal investigative specialist, or private investigator, with a tool for taking notes in an organized manner while collecting data about the incident. Using information and input from a variety of sources, the committee developed a series of forms to be used locally in the documentation of an incident by those conducting the investigation. The first edition of this guide was published in 1988.

The committee realizes that through a more organized collection of data in the field, a more complete incident report and/or investigative report can be produced that will ultimately lead to better data to solve the fire problem. It was not the intent of the committee that these forms by themselves be an investigative or fire incident report. All local units of government and private industry involved in fire investigation are encouraged to utilize these forms in the way best suited for their situation.

This edition of the document is a reconfirmation of the 1993 edition.

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This list represents the membership at the time the Committee was balloted on the text of this edition. Since that time, changes in the membership may have occurred. A key to classifications is found at the back of this document.

NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of the Association or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on standard methods of compiling fire experience data by the fire service. The main purposes of this Committee are to develop standard occupancy and cause classification for use by cities and states in the reporting of fires, to suggest other useful information that needs to be collected, and to develop standard forms for these purposes.

Contents

Chapter 1	General	.906-4	Chapter 2	Recording of Fire Incident Data	.906-4
1-1	Scope.	.906-4	2-1	Preparation of Reports	.906-4
1-2	Purpose.	.906-4	2-2	Forms	.906-4
1-3	Application	.906-4			

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Chapter 1 General

1-1 Scope. The scope of this guide is to aid investigators in collecting and recording preliminary information needed for the preparation of a formal incident report. This guide does not cover the interpretation and use of the information.

1-2 Purpose. This guide explains a series of suggested forms that can be used during a fire investigation to record field notes. The forms serve as a reminder of the type of information that can be helpful in understanding the fire.

1-3 Application. This guide contains instructions for the completion of the fire incident field note forms. It has been developed to provide those investigating a fire with a basic system for collecting data and information in a consistent manner so it can then be studied to reach a conclusion regarding a particular incident. The field note forms are not designed or intended to be a complete report but rather to serve as input for developing a final investigative report. They also are not intended to provide all known incident information.

The guidelines for using these forms are only suggestions, as each particular agency should utilize the forms in the way that best suits its needs. The forms are simple to complete and are designed to be handwritten with large areas for comments that can be developed as the investigation continues. The forms shown in this guide area designed to collect descriptive observations rather than definitive conclusions.

Not all forms will be used at all incidents. However, several forms could be used on any specific fire, depending on the magnitude of the investigation or the type of incident. Supplemental local forms should be used as needed. The case supervision form should be used to keep track of the progress of the investigation.

Chapter 2 Recording of Fire Incident Data

2-1 Preparation of Reports. These forms and the information recorded on them are not designed to constitute the

incident report. They provide data helpful in reaching conclusions as to what happened so that the incident report or the investigation report can be prepared. If an incident report has already been filed, part of the process of using this data should be to verify the original incident report and update that report as necessary so that the most accurate information is contained in the incident report and any databases that contain that incident information.

2-2 Forms. There are 12 forms shown and described in this guide. These forms and their applications are listed in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2 Forms for Recording Fire Incident Field Notes

Form	Purpose
906-0 Case Supervision	Used on any investigation to track the progress of that investigation.
906-1 Any Fire	Used on any fire investigation to collect identification and contact information.
906-2 Structure Fire	Used when the fire involves a structure. There are three pages to this form.
906-3 Motor Vehicle	Used when the fire involves any type of motor vehicle.
906-4 Wildland Fire	Used when the fire involves grass, brush, and wildland areas.
906-5 Casualty	Used to collect information on any person injured or killed in the incident.
906-6 Witness Statement	Used to identify a witness and record their statement (one sheet per witness).
906-7 Evidence	Used to record recovered evidence and where it is sent or being stored.
906-8 Photograph	Used to log a description of each photograph taken.
906-9 Sketch	Used to sketch the scene or specific locations within the scene.
906-10 Insurance Information	Used to record information on insurance coverage, adjustment, and loss.
906-11 Records/Documents	Used to record information on incident, property, and business or personal records that are available.

2-2.1 Case Supervision Field Notes (Form 906-0). The case supervision form shown in Figure 2-2.1(a) is designed to be the cover sheet for the package of information that will result after a fire is recorded.

This cover sheet will assist in keeping track of the progress of the investigation. The remarks section should be used to indicate what has been done or needs to be done, assignments, dates, and so forth. The lower portion can be used to record routine checks or rechecks and other information pertinent to the investigation.

The department or agency conducting the investigation as well as the file number assigned to the investigation should be recorded on the upper right corner of each sheet or form used.

The section entitled Field Notes should be used to indicate

which forms are being used and, therefore, should be part of the final package. If a particular form is not applicable (N/A) to the fire being investigated, check the N/A box so that other investigators or supervisors realize that the form is purposely not present, rather than potentially lost. For example, the motor vehicle form (906-3) and the wildland fire form (906-4) would not be applicable to a structure fire.

Use the back side of the form or additional sheets of paper to record additional dates and remarks.

The date and activity spaces are to record various aspects of the investigation as it continues. As shown in Form 2-2.1(b), the evidence was taken to the lab on May 27, 1993, and the lab results are recorded in the activity section. Each investigator should utilize this space for any notes that could be pertinent to the investigation.

CASE SUPERVISION FIELD NOTES 906-0		AGENCY State Police	FILE NUMBER 1234-93
This cover sheet will assist in keeping track of the progress of the investigation. Indicate what has been done, what needs to be done, assignments, dates, and so forth, in the Remarks sections. The lower portion should be used to record routine checks or rechecks and other information pertinent to the investigation.			
FIELD NOTES FORMS			
ANY FIRE 906-1	☒ COMPLETE	5/26/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS
STRUCTURE 906-2	☒ COMPLETE	5/26/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS
VEHICLE 906-3	☐ COMPLETE	DATE	☒ N/A REMARKS
WILDLAND 906-4	☐ COMPLETE	DATE	☒ N/A REMARKS
CASUALTY 906-5	☐ COMPLETE	DATE	☒ N/A REMARKS
WITNESS 906-6	☒ COMPLETE	5/25/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS
EVIDENCE 906-7	☒ COMPLETE	6/10/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS
PHOTOGRAPH 906-8	☒ COMPLETE	5/27/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS
SKETCH 906-9	☒ COMPLETE	5/25/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS
INSURANCE 906-10	☒ COMPLETE	6/15/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS 6/10 LFJ to follow up
RECORDS/DOCUMENT 906-11	☒ COMPLETE	5/27/93 DATE	☐ N/A REMARKS
INCIDENT AND CASUALTY REPORTS UPDATED ☒ YES 6/15/93 DATE ☐ NO ☐ NOT NECESSARY			
DATE	ACTIVITY	BY	
5/27/93	Evidence to lab. LFJ		
6/2/93	Lab results back. No flammable liquid present. LFJ		
6/15/93	Insurance co. paying claim. CEP		
6/25/93	Evidence destroyed per policy. LFJ		

Figure 2-2.1(b) Example of a case supervision form.

ANY FIRE FIELD NOTES 906-1					AGENCY		FILE NUMBER	
--------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--------	--	-------------	--

INCIDENT								
ADDRESS/LOCATION					DAY	DATE	TIME	FIRE DEPT. INCIDENT NO.
WEATHER AT TIME OF FIRE	GENERAL CONDITIONS					TEMP.	WIND DIR.	WIND SPEED
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	STRUCTURE (906-2) ☐	VEHICLE (906-3) ☐	WILDLAND (906-4) ☐		OTHER ☐			

OWNER/OCCUPANT	
OWNER'S NAME	PHONE NO.
OWNER'S ADDRESS	
OCCUPANT'S NAME	PHONE NO.
OCCUPANT'S ADDRESS	
DOING BUSINESS AS	PHONE NO.

NOTIFICATION FOR INVESTIGATION					
DAY	DATE	TIME	FROM WHOM		
RECEIVED BY			ASSIGNED TO		
ARRIVED AT SCENE	DAY	DATE	TIME	SCENE SECURED ☐ NO (COMMENT ON CONDITION) ☐ YES (BY WHOM):	
AUTHORITY TO ENTER	EMERGENCY	CONSENT ☐ VERBAL ☐ WRITTEN		WARRANT ☐ ADMIN. ☐ CRIM.	OTHER (Describe)
DEPARTED SCENE	DAY	DATE	TIME	COMMENTS	

OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED			
FIRE DEPT.	INCIDENT NO.	CONTACT PERSON	PHONE NO.
POLICE DEPT.	FILE NO.	CONTACT PERSON	PHONE NO.
OTHER	CASE NO.	CONTACT PERSON	PHONE NO.

ESTIMATED TOTAL LOSS	
\$	ESTIMATED BY

REMARKS

Figure 2-2.2(a) Any fires field notes (Form 906-1).

2-2.2 Any Fire Field Notes (Form 906-1). The any fire form shown in Figure 2-2.2(a) is divided into six sections. As with all forms used, the agency name and file number should be entered in the upper right corner.

The first section identifies the incident, including the address where the incident occurred or the general location; the day, date, and time of the incident; and any fire department incident number. The weather description should be general, but the temperature, wind direction, and wind speed should be as exact as possible. The property description should indicate whether the incident is primarily a structure, vehicle, wildland, or other fire. The appropriate form should also be attached. [See Figure 2-2.2(b).]

INCIDENT					
ADDRESS/LOCATION 6478 Smithton Dr., Anytown		DAY Mon.	DATE 5/24/93	TIME 1143	FIRE DEPT. INCIDENT NO. 206
WEATHER AT TIME OF FIRE	GENERAL CONDITIONS Clear, cold				
TEMP 47° F	WIND DIR NW	WIND SPEED 5			
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	STRUCTURE (M-2) ☒	VEHICLE (M-3) ☐	WILDLAND (M-4) ☐		OTHER ☐

Figure 2-2.2(b) Example of the incident section of any fire form.

The second section is for recording the owner and the occupant. List the owner's name, telephone number, and address. If the occupant's name and address are different from the owner's name and address, list those as well. For a business, the name of the business and its telephone number should be recorded on the line "Doing business as." [See Figure 2-2.2(c).]

OWNER/OCCUPANT	
OWNER'S NAME John Ayres	PHONE NO. 639-4728
OWNER'S ADDRESS 6478 Smithton Dr., Anytown, NY 49702	
OCCUPANT'S NAME Same	PHONE NO.
OCCUPANT'S ADDRESS	
DOING BUSINESS AS N/A	PHONE NO.

Figure 2-2.2(c) Example of the owner/occupant section of an any fire form.

The third section is to identify how the investigative agency was notified and when and to whom the case was assigned. All the information relates to when the investigator was notified. In the example in Figure 2-2.2(d), on Monday, May 24, 1993, at 1430 hours, Chief Jones contacted Rogers, who assigned the case to Fahey. The form then shows the arrival time of the investigator at the scene, whether the scene was secured or not, and, in this scenario, the fact it was found in the same condition as it was left by the fire department. The authority to enter was written. The date and time that the investigator departed the scene is also recorded.

NOTIFICATION FOR INVESTIGATION					
DAY Mon.	DATE 5/24/93	TIME 1430	FROM WHOM Chief W. Jones		
RECEIVED BY Rogers			ASSIGNED TO Fahey		
ARRIVED AT SCENE Tues.	DATE 5/25/93	TIME 0910	SCENE SECURED ☐ NO ☐ YES (BY WHOM)	Same as left by FD	
AUTHORITY TO ENTER	EMERGENCY ☐ VERBAL ☒ WRITTEN	CONSENT ☐ VERBAL ☒ WRITTEN	WARRANT ☐ ADMIN. ☐ CRIM.	OTHER (Describe)	
DEPARTED SCENE Tues.	DATE 5/25/93	TIME 1500	COMMENTS		

Figure 2-2.2(d) Example of the notification for investigation section of an any fire form.

The fourth section identifies other agencies that were contacted as part of the investigation. In this case, Chief Jones of the Clio Fire Department and Patrolman Smith of the Vienna Police Department were involved. [See Figure 2-2.2(e).]

OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED			
FIRE DEPT. Clio	INCIDENT NO. 206	CONTACT PERSON Chief W. Jones	PHONE NO. 687-2347
POLICE DEPT. Vienna	FILE NO. 93-916	CONTACT PERSON Patman Smith	PHONE NO. 732-1111
OTHER	CASE NO.	CONTACT PERSON	PHONE NO.

Figure 2-2.2(e) Example of the other agencies involved section of any fire form.

The fifth section provides a space to estimate the total loss and indicate who made the estimate. Additional information on the loss can be recorded in the remarks section. [See Figure 2-2.2(f).] Also note that the insurance information form (Form 906-10) has space for recording information on the insurance loss paid.

ESTIMATED TOTAL LOSS	
\$ 35,000	ESTIMATED BY Chief Jones

Figure 2-2.2(f) Example of the estimated total loss section of an any fire form.

The final section of the any fire form is the remarks section. This section can be used as necessary to record any additional details the user feels are relevant to the investigation. [See Figure 2-2.2(g).]

REMARKS
Property was turned over to John Ayres, owner, at 1500 hrs., 5/24/93. John Ayres gave permission to Fahey to enter property to conduct investigation.

Figure 2-2.2(g) Example of the remarks section of an any fire form.