

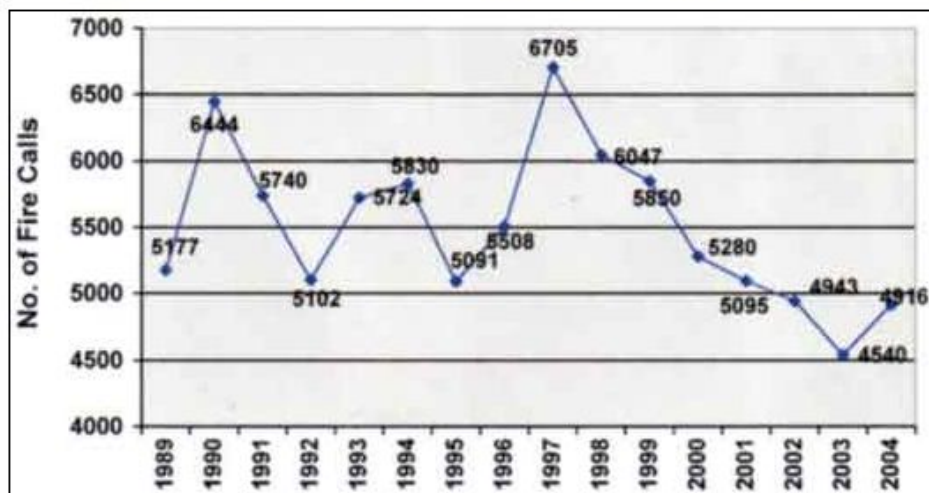


SINGAPORE CIVIL DEFENCE FORCE

FIRE INCIDENT STATISTICS  
(JAN - DEC 2004)

TOTAL FIRE CALLS FOR 2004

1. In 2004, SCDF responded to a total of 4,916 fires in Singapore. Although this is 376 cases (8.3%) higher than the total number of fires in 2003, last year's total number of fires (4,916 cases) ranked the second lowest, after 2003 which saw 4,540 cases. See Graph 1. Nevertheless, members of the public should strive hard to prevent fire outbreaks for the safety of their homes and the community.



GRAPH 1 : GENUINE FIRE CALLS (1989-2004)  
BREAKDOWN OF GENUINE FIRE CALLS

2. Table 1 below shows an increase in all fire fire types in 2004. Fires in residential premises increased by about 6% to reach 3210 cases . Fires at non-residential premises (that is commercial and industrial premises) rose by 10% to 681 cases. Non-building fires increased by about 13% to reach 1025 cases.

DESCRIPTION	Jan - Dec 2003	Jan - Dec 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
Residential Premises	3017	3210	+193	+6.4
Non Residential Premises	617	681	+64	+10.4
Non Building	906	1025	+119	+13.1
TOTAL	4540	4916	+376	+8.3

TABLE 1: BREAKDOWN OF GENUINE FIRE CALLS

### Residential Premises Fires

3. Of the 3210 cases of residential fires, 3041 of them involved HDB flats, 89 involved landed properties, and 77 involved private condominiums. The remaining 3 cases involved workers quarters. See Table 2.

DESCRIPTION	Jan - Dec 2003	Jan - Dec 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
HDB Flats	2862	3041	+179	+6.3
Landed Properties	98	89	-9	-9.2
Private Condominiums	48	77	+29	+60.1
Others	9	3	-6	-66.7
TOTAL	3017	3210	+193	+6.4

TABLE 2: BREAKDOWN OF FIRE CALLS (RESIDENTIAL PREMISES)

4. Table 3 shows the different types of residential fire outbreaks in 2004. Based on this breakdown, **rubbish fires outranks all categories of fires at residential premises constituting about 57% (1813 cases) of total residential fires last year. Rubbish fires involve fires in rubbish chutes and rubbish bins as well as discarded items at common areas.**

TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES	Jan - Dec 2003	Jan - Dec 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
Rubbish Fires (Rubbish chutes, discarded items & rubbish bins)	2862	3041	+179	+6.3
Unattended Cooking	98	89	-9	-9.2
Contents*	48	77	+29	+60.1
Electrical Fires	48	48	48	48
Bicycles/Motorcycles	48	48	48	48
Gas	48	48	48	48
Others**	9	3	-6	-66.7
TOTAL	3017	3210	+193	+6.4

\*Contents include furniture, clothing, awning, mattresses, praying altar, door mats.

\*\* Others include notice boards, banners and lifts.

TABLE 3: BREAKDOWN OF FIRE IN RESIDENTIAL PREMISES (BY TYPES)

### Rubbish Fires

5. Rubbish fires is a "preventable" category of fire occurrences for much can be done to easily stamp out the fire. Burning materials such as cigarette butts, incense and charcoal embers should be completely extinguished before they are thrown into the rubbish chute or rubbish bins.

6. With regards to discarded items in common areas, while it may be convenient to leave bulky unwanted items in these areas, it can result in having to put up with the adverse consequences of fire outbreaks. This includes causing alarm and panic to residents in the block and in some cases, the need to evacuate residents from their homes. Other adverse consequences involve disruption to power supplies when electrical wirings are burnt and the unsightly aftermath of burnt walls and ceilings. Further, dumping of rubbish in common areas is a socially irresponsible and dangerous act which can impede evacuation during emergencies.

### Unattended Cooking Fires

7. Unattended cooking fires have been on the downward decline since 2000 when it registered 689 incidents. Last year, this figure fell further to 529 cases from 568 cases in 2003. Although this trend shows a positive continuous drop of such fires over the recent years, unattended cooking still remains as the 2<sup>nd</sup> major cause of house fires. Members of the public are therefore urged to be more careful when cooking. Taking a nap or leaving the stove on while performing other housework may lead to the outbreak of a kitchen fire.

### NON-RESIDENTIAL FIRES

8. Fires involving non-residential premises increased by 64 cases in 2004 to 681 cases. See [Table 4](#). This figure however is still lower than the 2002 figure which registered 702 incidents. Although commercial and industrial fires make up only one tenth of total fire outbreaks in Singapore, it is prudent that members of the public and management of such premises take measures to curb fire outbreaks in work places. Effective fire prevention also results in eliminating business disruptions and profit losses.

DESCRIPTION	Jan - Dec 2003	Jan - Dec 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
Commercial	296	340	+44	+14.9
Industrial	158	197	+39	+24.7
Social / Communal	163	144	-19	-11.7
TOTAL	617	681	+64	+10.4

TABLE 4: BREAKDOWN OF FIRE CALLS (NON-RESIDENTIAL PREMISES)

#### Non-Residential Premises (Commercial & Industrial)

<b>TYPES OF COMMERCIAL &amp; INDUSTRIAL FIRES</b>	<b>Jan - Dec 2003</b>	<b>Jan - Dec 2004</b>	<b>Absolute Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Electrical Fires	104	134	+30	+28.8
Rubbish Fires	71	87	+16	+22.5
Contents	58	78	+20	+34.4
Unattended Cooking	45	50	-5	-11.1
Gas	22	35	+13	+59
Others	154	153	-1	-0.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>+83</b>	<b>+18.3</b>

**TABLE 5: BREAKDOWN OF FIRES IN COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL PREMISES (BY TYPES)**

9. Table 5 shows the different types of fires within commercial and industrial premises in 2004. Electrical fires constitute the highest level of fire safety standards in these premises so as to eliminate fire hazards and lower the risk of fire occurrences. Not adhering to fire safety rules and regulations endangers lives and properties, and is an offence under the Fire Safety Act.

10. Management, owners, tenants and workers alike are urged to observe the highest level of fire safety standards in these premises so as to eliminate fire hazards and lower the risk of fire occurrences. Not adhering to fire safety rules and regulations endangers lives and properties, and is an offence under the Fire Safety Act.

11. They should practice good housekeeping within their premises and all unwanted items and rubbish must be properly discarded. Electrical appliances should also be checked regularly and frayed electrical cables or cords should be replaced or repaired by a licensed electrician. They should also avoid overloading electrical outlets as this could lead to a fire outbreak.

#### Non-Residential Premises (Social/Communal)

12. Fire outbreaks at social and communal premises dropped for the second year in a row. While there were 177 and 163 cases in 2002 and 2003 respectively, the number of fire incidents at social and communal premises fell to 144 last year. See Table 6. The main component of fires in these premises comprises fires at rubbish collecting centres which plunged by 50% to 38 cases last year. Fires at playgrounds and schools however inched up slightly - by 7 and 12 cases respectively.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Jan - Dec 2003</b>	<b>Jan - Dec 2004</b>	<b>Absolute Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Rubbish Collecting Centre	76	38	-38	-50.0
Playground	25	32	+7	+28.0
School	13	25	+12	+92.3
Others*	49	49	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>-19</b>	<b>-11.7</b>

\*Others include public toilets and sports complexes

**TABLE 6: BREAKDOWN OF FIRES FOR SOCIAL/COMMUNAL PREMISES**

## NON-BUILDING FIRES

13. Non-building fires (including vegetation and vehicle fires) climbed by 13% to 1025 cases last year, from 906 cases in 2003. See Table 7. While fires involving rubbish in open spaces, vehicles and vessels have fallen last year, vegetation fires jumped to 500 cases, chalking up nearly 50% of total fires in non-building related fires. Fires involving vegetation last year peaked in February (109), June (60) and August (78) 2004, compared to the monthly average of 35 fires.

14. As vegetation continue to burn in 2005, with SCDF having to respond to over 400 incidents so far, members of the public are advised not to throw lighted materials such as cigarett butts and match sticks onto grass patches, gardens and fields. Members of the public should also properly discard rubbish, including un-used furnitures, instead of throwing them into open fields/gardens which can serve to fuel buring vegetation. Residents with grass compounds should also keep their gardens well-watered.

DESCRIPTION	Jan - Dec 2003	Jan - Dec 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
Vegetation	355	500	+145	+40.8
Rubbish (in open space)	244	231	-13	-5.3
Vehicles	187	177	-10	-5.3
Vessels	3	2	-1	-33.3
Others*	117	115	-2	-1.7
TOTAL	906	1025	+119	+13.3

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

TABLE 7: BREAKDOWN OF FIRES INVOLVING NON-BUILDINGS

## CAUSES OF FIRES

15. Fires sparked off by "light thrown down" last year continued to dominate the tabulation for main causes of fires in 2004. Table 8 shows 2.643 cases of fire outbreaks due to "light thrown down" last year, which is about 19% higher than the figure in 2003.

16. Such fires can be prevented, with more attention accorded to the proper disposal of lighted materials (such as old tables, chairs, newspapers and boxes). Unwanted items should be properly disposed off, instead of being placed in common areas (such as corridors, lift landings and void deck), where they can easily become the source to fuel fires. For bulky items disposal, residents may engage the help/service of their Town Councils or estate management.

17. Fires caused by "overheating of food" continued to fall last year, from 634 cases in 2002, to 585 cases last year. While this declining trend is a positive sign, members of the public should continue to be alert when cooking. Doing other chores with the stove on can result in dangerous kitchen fires.

18. Fires related to electrical origin has increased marginally by about 9% (or 47 cases). SCDF reminds members of the public to be cautious when handling electrical appliances and when tapping onto electrical supplies.

DESCRIPTION	Jan - Dec 2003	Jan - Dec 2004	Absolute Change	% Change
Light thrown down	2224	2643	+419	+18.8
Overheating of Food	615	585	-30	-4.9
Electrical Origin*	519	566	+47	+9
Incendiary/Suspicious	551	371	-180	-32.7
Exposure to Sun's Rays	240	302	+62	+25.8
Naked Light	220	301	+81	+36.8
Others*	171	148	-23	-13.5
TOTAL	4540	4916	+376	+8.3

\*Electrical Origin includes sparks and overheating of machinery.

**TABLE 8: CAUSES OF FIRES**

#### FIRE INJURIES

19. There were 58 more casualties injured during fires last year as compared to year 2003. See [Table 9](#). The biggest increase came from fires within residential premises. Members of the public are urged to be fire conscious whether at home or at work. Every care taken to observe fire safety enhances the safety level of self, families and friends. Basic fire safety tips can be found in the Emergency Handbook and SCDF Website, including simple steps to take when a fire breaks out. Members of the public should also note of the usefulness of fire extinguishers during fires and the critical alert smoke detectors can give occupants before the fire gets out of hand.

DESCRIPTION	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number of fire injuries	114	70	74	73	131

**TABLE 9: FIRE INJURIES (2000 - 2004)**

DESCRIPTION	2003	2004	Absolute Change	% Change
Residential Premises	44	88	+44	+100
Commercial Premises	6	19	+13	+216.7
Industrial Premises	13	15	+2	+15.4
Non Building	7	8	+1	+14.3
Social/Communal Premises	3	1	-2	-66.7
TOTAL	73	131	+58	+79.5

**TABLE 10: BREAKDOWN OF FIRE INJURIES (BY TYPES OF PREMISES)**

## FIRE FATALITIES

20. Fire fatalities rose to 7 last year. See Table 11. 4 out of the 7 fatalities (3 male and 1 female Chinese) came from an explosion incident, which happened on 13 Jan at Toa Payoh Industrial Park. Another 2 fatalities (1 male Chinese and 1 female Chinese) came from a shophouse fire, which occurred on 3 June at Figaro Street. The 7th fatality (a male Chinese) last year was the result of a private residential fire, which occurred along East Coast Road on 18 Jan.

DESCRIPTION	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number of fire fatalities	6	11	0	1	7

TABLE 11: FIRE FATALITIES (2000 - 2004)