



U.S. HIGH-RISE BUILDING FIRES FACT SHEET

In 2009-2013, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of **14,500** structure fires per year in high-rise buildings.¹ These fires caused an annual average of

- 40 civilian fire deaths
- 520 civilian fire injuries
- \$154 million in direct property damage

Four property use groups account for half of high-rise fires:

- Apartments (62% of all high-rise fires)
- Hotels (4% of high-rise fires)
- Dormitories (4% of high-rise fires)
- Offices (2% of high-rise fires)
- Facilities that care for the sick (1% of high-rise fires)
- The rest were mostly property uses found in mixed-use residential or office buildings (such as restaurants, stores, and parking garages) or probable miscodes of properties that cannot be high-rise (such as dwellings and sheds)

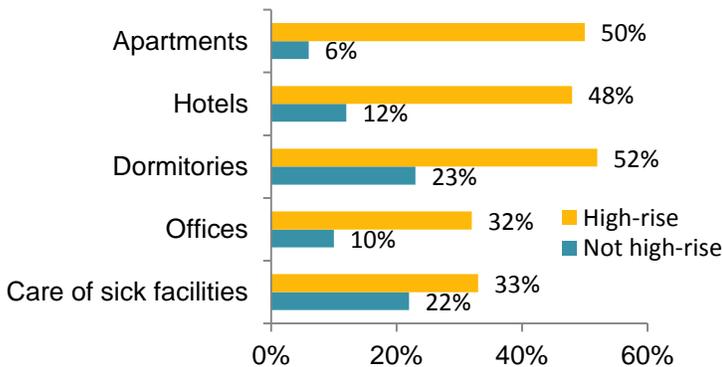
The fire death rate per 1,000 fires and the average loss per fire and of associated losses are generally **lower** in high-rise buildings than in other buildings of the same property use.

A major reason why risks are lower is probably the much greater use of fire protection systems and features² in high-rise buildings as compared to shorter buildings.

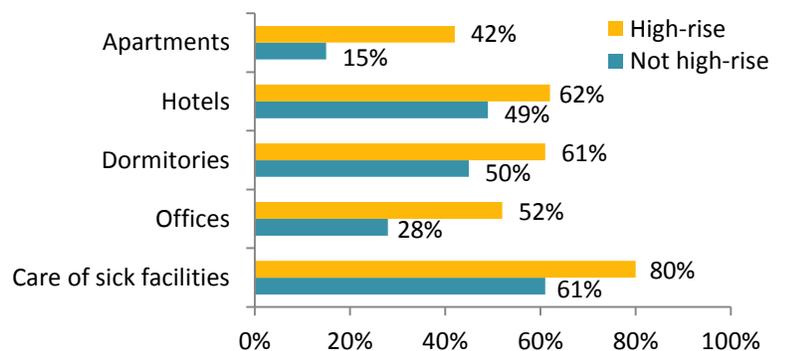
High-rise buildings have lower percentages of fires with flame damage beyond room of origin, providing further evidence of impact from fire protection systems and features:

- Apartments (4% of high-rise fires vs. 10% in shorter buildings)
- Hotels (4% of high-rise fires vs. 11% in shorter buildings)
- Dormitories (2% of high-rise vs. 1% in shorter buildings)
- Offices (10% of high-rise fires vs. 21% in shorter buildings)
- Facilities that care for the sick (4% of high-rise fires vs. 9% in shorter buildings)

Presence of Fire-Resistive Construction in Fires, 1994-1998



Presence of Wet-Pipe Sprinklers in Fires Excluding Partial Systems and Buildings Under Construction, 2009-2013



¹ "High-rise" is defined here as 7 stories above grade. This is roughly consistent with the Life Safety Code definition of high rise as 75 feet (23 meters) in height, measured from the lowest level of fire department vehicle access to the floor of the highest occupiable story.

² Construction type of building involved in fire is not reported after 1998.