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**THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**State Fire Marshal**

**FOR THE YEAR**

**1947**

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**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF FIRE PROTECTION AND INVESTIGATION**

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**Published by  
THE STATE OF IOWA  
Des Moines**



State of Iowa  
1948

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THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

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JOHN W. STROHM  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
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Published by  
THE STATE OF IOWA  
Des Moines



LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Des Moines, Iowa, January 31, 1948

HONORABLE ROBERT D. BLUE, *Governor of Iowa*  
Des Moines, Iowa

Sir:

In compliance with the provisions of law, I have the honor to submit the Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the affairs of this office covering the period beginning January 1, 1947, and ending December 31, 1947, both dates inclusive.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN W. STROHM  
*State Fire Marshal.*

DIVISION OF FIRE PROTECTION AND INVESTIGATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

DIVISION OF FIRE PROTECTION AND INVESTIGATION

Appointed by the Commissioner, Department of Public Safety  
Term, Four Years, Expires July 1, 1951

Office	Name	Legal Residence	County
Fire Marshal.....	John W. Strohm.....	Clinton.....	Clinton
Assistant.....	A. Lubberden.....	Pella.....	Marion
Assistant.....	C. W. Cornell.....	Bedford.....	Taylor
Assistant.....	Zack T. Cook.....	Des Moines.....	Polk
Assistant.....	Fred J. Carlson.....	Des Moines.....	Polk
Assistant.....	George W. Benschhoff.....	Davenport.....	Scott
Assistant.....	E. J. Stebbins.....	Des Moines.....	Polk
Secretary.....	Olive R. Carlson.....	Des Moines.....	Polk
Stenographer.....	Pauline Evans.....	West Des Moines.....	Polk



## A MESSAGE TO YOU

Fire is one destructive force over which man has practically absolute control. To control fire and prevent devastation may cost a little of time, a little of effort, a little of care, but that little may save a life, a home, a town or a city. NO investment can bring greater return and each of us has a talent to invest.

## NATIONAL FIRE LOSS

Our fire loss in the United States for 1947 is the highest in history, according to National Board of Fire Underwriters' estimates.

The figures show an estimated loss of \$692,635,000. This loss was \$130,655,000 or 23.2 per cent greater than the previous all-time high mark of \$561,980,000 set in 1926, and it was 23.3 per cent greater than the 1946 losses of \$561,487,000.

Never has any nation destroyed so much in resources in a single year in peacetime. This destruction means that all efforts to reduce the menace of fire must be intensified.

Economic factors made each fire, big or small, more serious in its impact on the community than ever before. Higher prices increased the replacement costs of everything that burns. Shortages of materials and manpower extended the period of replacement and repair, thus reducing production, jobs and profits.

The building and housing shortage resulting in an overcrowding of buildings, increased the value of their contents. More property was thus subject to destruction by a single fire.

## HOW MUCH IS \$692,635,000?

These comparisons will help show how much the record fire losses cost the United States in 1947. The property loss in dollar value was:

Fifteen per cent greater than the whole farm income of New England in 1946.

Forty per cent greater than the total education budgets of all American cities over 25,000 population in 1945.

Fifteen per cent greater than the total taxes of the electric utility industry in 1946.



Greater than total New York State tax revenues in 1947, and the cost of running the largest state government in the nation.

The \$692,635,000 loss was equal, in dollar value, to the total payroll of the transit industry in 1946, the wages of the whole electric light and power industry in 1946, or the net income of all American railways in 1944.

NATIONAL FIRE LOSS

1941 .....	\$303,895,000
1942 .....	314,295,000
1943 .....	373,000,000
1944 .....	437,273,000
1945 .....	455,329,000
1946 .....	561,000,000
1947 .....	(Estimated) 700,000,000

IOWA'S FIRE LOSS

Iowa's fire loss for 1947 reached a high point of \$8,297,073, the highest since 1931.

The next highest fire loss for Iowa was \$6,626,965 in 1932, and 1946 hit a high mark with \$6,349,980.

There were only 59 more fires reported in 1947 than in 1946, yet, our fire loss amounted to \$1,947,093 more than in 1946.

Again we must consider the increased value of property destroyed, but no matter how we figure the loss of property, there are other things to be considered—the loss of jobs and material, and statistics show that every year, FORTY-THREE per cent of severely damaged firms DO NOT resume operations, and another 28 per cent quit business within three years.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Therefore, you, as an individual, may not be able to do anything to prevent the other fellow from having a fire, so there is not much you can do to influence the aggregate of the Nation's fire bill, but from your own standpoint, the important thing is to *prevent fires whenever and wherever* you can, and prevent yourself from adding to the fire loss. DON'T BE A FIRE HAZARD!

STATE FIRE MARSHAL

IOWA'S FIRE LOSS  
(Compiled by Months)

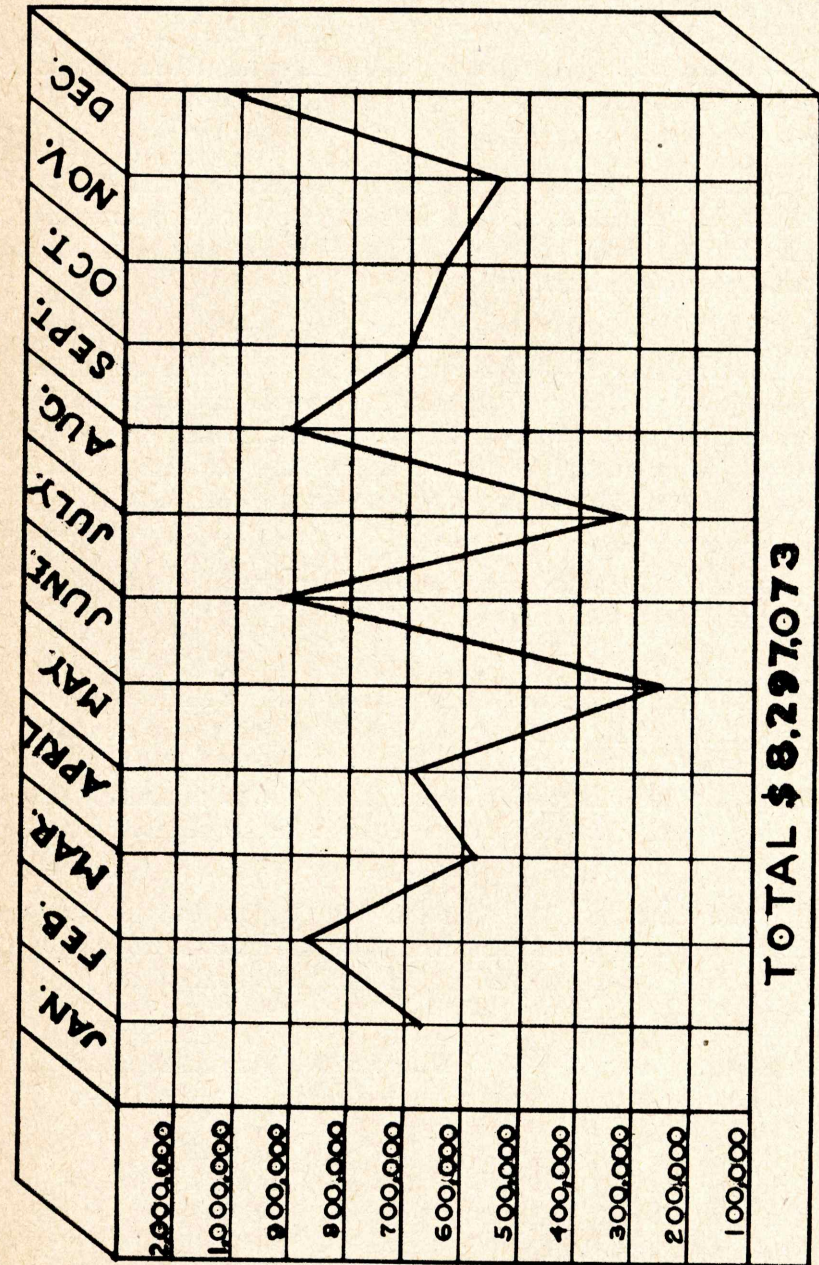
Month	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
January .....	\$ 357,690	\$ 517,426	\$ 799,327	\$ 530,761	\$ 470,024	\$ 524,575	\$ 672,715
February .....	398,858	189,349	386,615	297,555	583,763	716,172	863,952
March .....	615,546	206,338	426,540	385,592	529,001	372,764	593,283
April .....	442,068	613,246	363,333	329,476	403,527	902,599	694,625
May .....	211,965	155,516	265,531	282,149	360,844	591,826	253,212
June .....	73,782	644,386	774,499	254,445	218,600	744,894	921,710
July .....	158,757	142,450	156,570	244,264	311,850	236,749	323,170
August .....	165,720	286,134	214,120	274,173	268,059	288,002	903,119
September .....	217,146	131,235	133,455	266,287	392,313	281,674	703,561
October .....	265,704	234,999	289,065	661,295	320,091	429,290	647,192
November .....	228,137	242,072	336,989	156,909	400,265	458,796	544,595
December .....	319,670	239,000	666,531	651,911	679,726	802,639	1,175,939
	\$3,455,043	\$3,602,151	\$4,762,575	\$4,234,817	\$4,938,063	\$6,349,980	\$8,297,073



IOWA'S PER CAPITA FIRE LOSS

Year	Fire Loss	Per Capita
1939	\$4,745,909	\$1.87
1940	4,449,921	1.75
1941	3,455,043	1.43
1942	3,602,151	1.43
1943	4,762,575	1.87
1944	4,234,817	1.68
1945	4,938,063	1.95
1946	6,349,980	2.50
1947	8,297,073	3.25

The accompanying graph shows the trend of fire loss by months in 1947:





## DID YOU KNOW?

That fire losses in the United States in 1946 exceeded by almost 25 per cent the damage done by the German incendiary blitz on England during 1940 and 1941? And, the 1947 fire loss, when finally reported, will show an even greater fire loss in the United States.

\* \* \* \* \*

FIRE is the leading cause of ALL disasters and catastrophes in the United States. The American Red Cross reports that FIRE is responsible for more disaster relief calls than ALL other causes combined.

\* \* \* \* \*

About 93 per cent of all persons killed by fires are under the age of 25, a five-year survey of fire casualties shows. According to the National Board of Fire Underwriters, this shows the great need for more effective fire prevention education among children and young persons.

\* \* \* \* \*

Burns are the leading cause of accidental death among children under 15.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thousands of tons of badly-needed food are laid waste by fire. Fires occur annually in 2,000 flour mills and elevators, 200 packing plants, 900 bakeries, 10,500 restaurants, 20,000 barns, 500 creameries and dairies and in thousands of groceries, warehouses and farms throughout the United States.

\* \* \* \* \*

Every 38 seconds fire breaks out in the United States. Every 1½ minutes an American dwelling catches fire. Every 50 minutes a person dies in a fire or from burns.

\* \* \* \* \*

FIRE annually destroys enough timber and lumber to build 140,000 five-room houses.

\* \* \* \* \*

Approximately 25 million man days of work were lost as a result of fires last year—enough working time to make 920,000 automobiles.

The amount of wages lost in 1946 as a result of fires would be enough to pay \$45 a week for one year to every man, woman and child in a state the size of Wyoming.

\* \* \* \* \*

The fire bill for every man, woman and child in the United States during 1947 was \$4.84. This is nearly 209 per cent greater than the \$2.32 per capita loss in 1940.

## A STITCH IN TIME

Repairs are cheaper than fires, and employment is cheaper than charity.

All over the country there are thousands of fire traps, old abandoned buildings, serving no useful purpose, a constant source of danger as well as a blot on the landscape.

Repairs, improvements, renewals and removals must be attended to some time. Every day increases the hazards and every makeshift adds to the final bill. In life, property and money, standard materials and prompt action are cheapest in the end.

It is most important that you have your heating plant, your chimneys, your electric wiring, your roof, your garage, your premises inspected with that thought in view. Property which is not a fire trap can quickly become one without care and maintenance.

You can put your property in first-class condition for a fraction of what you would pay for the same amount of labor and materials to rebuild.

In building new homes or other structures at this time, it is a good time to give real consideration to the use of fire resisting materials. To use them means to be freer from fires in the future than you would be if you use ordinary combustible materials.

Above all, don't overlook the roof covering, don't take any substitute for the non-burnable kind, the better roofs of approved covering, make fires less likely.

## WOMAN'S INTEREST IN FIRE PREVENTION

The newspaper headlines daily remind us of unnecessary loss of lives and property by fire and you will agree that every woman should make a study of the causes of fires, and en-



deavor to apply every principle of fire prevention to aid in reducing this loss.

The need of woman's study of fire hazards in the home, school, and other public buildings where groups assemble cannot be overestimated. When fires occur in these places, fatalities often result and property damage follows from the occupant's ignorance or thoughtlessness. The mother who placed the bottle of gasoline in the house either did not know the danger of the explosive, or think of the possible loss that might result from such an act.

For the protection of the family and the home, it is highly important that women study safe construction of their homes and familiarize themselves with the fire hazards frequently found in them. A club or parent-teacher association program and a questionnaire will supply the information and stimulate interest in the study.

Acquaintance with self-protection methods is necessary in case of fire. What to do if one's clothing catches on fire, how to escape from a burning building, how to treat burns, and how to turn in a fire alarm are information every home-maker should have and apply when the emergency arises.

Women should see that construction of the home is made as safe as possible by insisting upon the use of the safest building materials, the proper insulation of gas and electricity, and the best ventilation. With the fire-resisting building and the use of safe cleaning preparations, electrical appliances, and other household articles that are often considered necessary, the hazards in the home may be reduced to a minimum.

A child who is taught fire prevention principles at home, where fire hazards are not allowed to exist, will become "fire conscious," but women must work together in fire prevention education before fire losses will be greatly reduced.

Children must be taught fire prevention as part of school work, in the elementary and high school grades, to obtain nationwide results.

Women may also contribute to the fire prevention movement by asking that all school buildings satisfy the requirements of safe construction, that custodians keep their buildings free of fire hazards, and that children be taught how to leave the building in case of alarm. The use of a "never failing alarm" in each building is the most important factor

in a successful fire drill. A properly conducted drill is a solution to the panic danger of crowds.

To teach children to think and act quickly, in case regular exits are closed, "obstructed" drills should be constructed. Regular training of this kind will lead children to watch for exits and to change their course quickly if an obstruction exists.

Theaters, churches, and other public buildings where crowds assemble will be kept free of fire hazards if women demand safer construction of buildings and better housekeeping in them. It is important that exits be properly designated and accessible at all times.

Fire prevention committees, fire departments, civic and service organizations, and others interested in fire prevention sponsor campaigns to reduce the loss by fire, and these groups need the cooperation women can give.

#### ELECTRICAL SAFETY HINTS

To lessen the hazards of fire and shock from electric wiring you should observe the following suggestions:

Learn where the main cut-off switch is and how to operate it.

If anything goes wrong with the electric wiring, cut off the current by pulling this switch. If the trouble is not easily corrected, call the power company.

Every electrical appliance should be kept in good order. Frayed or scraped cords are dangerous, inspect them frequently. Do not splice flexible cords.

Have an experienced electrician make all repairs or additions to your wiring.

Have defective sockets and outlets replaced. Screw type baseboard sockets should be replaced by the plug type. They are safer.

Don't handle appliances with wet hands or in the presence of such moisture. You will get a shock if you do.

Keep electric elements or appliances dry.

When buying fuses or cords make sure they bear the Underwriters Laboratories label.

Be sure there is a guard over the light bulb on any hand extension cord.



Know the proper rating for fuses in your box. Keep replacements on hand. Do not allow either fuses or fuse box to be tampered with.

Make sure there is no way for tinsel to short circuit Christmas tree lights.

See that electrical toys and their cords are in good condition.

DO NOT use temporary extensions in place of permanent wiring.

Cords should not touch radiators nor run under the rugs or doors or other places where they may be injured.

Pull the plug, *not the cord*. Remember, the cord is an electrical, not a mechanical connection.

DON'T connect too many appliances from the same outlet. If fuses do not blow, your home may burn.

Before leaving the house for a few days or longer, disconnect all extension cords.

#### WHAT ELECTRICAL PROTECTION MEANS TO FIRE PREVENTION

An effective plan of fire prevention is more than self-supporting. It is said that forty per cent of the industries destroyed by fire never rebuild. This means lost payrolls, lost profits, destruction of good will and years of planning and achievement gone in a short space of time. Also increased unemployment with larger relief rolls and a greater tax burden. Even if the industry destroyed does rebuild, there has been a temporary loss of employment to the workers concerned.

Every time the second hand of your watch ticks off twenty seconds, somewhere there is a fire. Every building burned ceases to be a tax producer. These unpaid taxes must be spread out and shifted to the shoulders of the remaining taxpayers for, of course, most of the tax supported activities of a city must be continued regardless of fire loss.

In addition to fire loss there are approximately 10,000 lives lost by fire in the United States every year, causing untold anguish and expense to their families and loved ones.

Business men should feel it their responsibility wherever possible to teach Fire Prevention and to so equip their factories and stores to reduce *fire hazards* to a minimum.

Electric Fire Protection has a place in every business because it is an outside Supervisory Service which is constantly on guard and in the event of a fire sends aid with dispatch. Electricity travels at the rate of 187,000 miles per second so that in the event of a fire minutes are cut to fractions of a second.

There are three types of Electrical Fire Protection Services which are Night Watch and Fire Alarm Service, Sprinkler Supervisory Service and Automatic Fire Alarm Service.

Night Watch and Fire Alarm Service gives a constant check on the Night Watch Man every minute of the night and in the event of a fire during the day or night every box in the plant is a Fire Alarm box connected to Central Office which transmits the alarm direct to the fire tower, or station.

Sprinkler Supervisory Service stands guard over the sprinkler system keeping it always in working order and in the event of any trouble with the system transmits a trouble signal which is immediately checked and if a head lets go a fire signal is dispatched to Fire Headquarters through the Central Office.

Automatic fire alarm covers the entire building and is ever watchful over the entire building and when a fire breaks out an alarm can be sounded on the premises and in the Central Station.

Electric Protection spells FIRE PREVENTION!

Electric Protection means SPEED, SAFETY and CONSTANT SUPERVISION!

We have had 363 fires, with a fire loss of \$537,594, caused by defective electric wiring, defective electric cords to lamps, and electric appliances, and defective electric appliances, in 1947.

#### THE CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN

#### MAKES CLEAN STREETS

Streets and alleys are cleaned up, repaired and kept in good condition.

#### FIRE LOSSES ARE REDUCED

The accumulations of waste and rubbish are removed, thereby eliminating the causes of many destructive fires. Fire traps are razed and often replaced by modern buildings.



**VACANT GROUNDS IMPROVED**

Lots are cleaned up and converted into playgrounds or thrift gardens, to prevent their returning to disorderliness.

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS RENOVATED**

They are cleaned up and beautified. Stone and brickwork is sandblasted. Landscaping is renewed. Parks are cleaned.

**HOMES ARE BEAUTIFIED**

Shrubbery is trimmed. Trees are planted. Lawns are mowed and raked. Backyards are cleaned up. Homes are thoroughly cleaned inside and out, from cellar to garret; and then are dedicated to continued cleanliness by the ministrations of painters and decorators. Thus living conditions are improved.

**A MORE BEAUTIFUL CITY**

Breeding places for disease are rooted up and destroyed. Mosquitoes, flies, rats, roaches and other pests are practically obliterated. This campaign saves human lives.

**IMPROVES MORALE**

Warehouses and factory buildings are cleaned up and painted to an extent that visibility improves the morale and efficiency of the workers.

**IT ADVERTISES THE CITY**

Many communities have shown a more rapid growth in population after this campaign was inaugurated than they ever hoped to enjoy.

**IT HELPS BUSINESS**

It starts repairs and building activity. It creates a lively demand upon local dealers for everything needed in making homes clean, attractive and **SAFE FROM FIRE**, disease and weather. It stabilizes, restores and increases the value of real estate, and helps the bankers and the borrowers.

**INSPECTIONS**

There were 162 fire hazard inspections made and corrections ordered by the State Fire Marshal's office in 1947.

We also made 91 inspections covering fire escapes, exits and fire safety hazards in hotels, apartments and other buildings.

**"A CLEAN PLACE SELDOM BURNS!"**

**STATE INSTITUTION INSPECTIONS**

We have also made an inspection of all State institutions under the supervision of the State Board of Control, in accordance with the state law.

**FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES**

There were 11 Fire Prevention talks given by the State Fire Marshal's office to 990 adults and children in 1947.

During Fire Prevention Week, Fire Prevention talks were given by the Iowa State Fire Prevention Association in Des Moines, Atlantic, Charles City, Manchester, Earlville, and Oskaloosa to 2,955 adults and children, in addition to plays sent to 25 radio stations in Iowa, a number of "spot announcements" and voluntary and spontaneous announcements given by local radio stations featuring Fire Prevention Week.

**FACTORY FIRES**

There were 49 factory fires in Iowa in 1947, resulting in a fire loss of \$834,145.

**REMEMBER**, A clean shop promotes health, prevents accidents and decreases the possibilities of **FIRES**.

Accumulation of dirt and litter about the plant, particularly in basements at the bottom of elevator shafts; under piles of materials, and in other out-of-the-way places, increase the fire hazard.

Many fires have resulted from the careless dumping of ashes and other hot materials in wooden bins or near wooden structures. Permanent non-inflammable bins should be provided for the disposal of ashes, soot and cinders, and an accumulation should not be allowed about doorways. It is often advisable to wet down a pile to insure safety.

**THINK**

Thousands of lives are needlessly sacrificed through the carelessness of people who do not observe the fundamental principle of *carefulness*. So small a thing as a lighted match carelessly tossed on a wooden floor may be the means of starting a fire that would not only cost lives, but put hundreds of workers out of employment for months. Records of such fires are to be found in every large city.

**THINK** before you discard that lighted match!

**SAVE A LIFE!**



ARSON INVESTIGATIONS

There were 70 investigations made in the following counties, and 23 confessions obtained in 1947:

County	Investigations	Number of Confessions
Appanoose .....	1	
Benton .....	1	
Black Hawk .....	5	2
Boone .....	2	2
Buchanan .....	1	
Buena Vista .....	1	
Cedar .....	1	
Clay .....	1	
Clayton .....	1	1
Clinton .....	3	1
Crawford .....	2	
Decatur .....	1	1
Dubuque .....	4	1
Emmet .....	1	
Fayette .....	2	2
Floyd .....	1	
Greene .....	2	
Guthrie .....	1	
Hardin .....	1	1
Jackson .....	1	1
Jones .....	1	
Keokuk .....	2	
Kossuth .....	1	
Lee .....	2	
Linn .....	5	3
Lyons .....	1	
Mahaska .....	1	
Mills .....	1	
Page .....	1	
Plymouth .....	3	
Polk .....	3	1
Pottawattamie .....	3	1
Sac .....	2	2
Scott .....	4	2
Story .....	1	
Van Buren .....	1	
Wapello .....	1	1
Wayne .....	1	
Webster .....	2	1
Worth .....	1	
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>70</b>	<b>23</b>

CIGARETTES CAUSE HEAVY LOSS

Discarded cigarettes are causing more fires daily in Iowa and the balance of the United States than any other single agent of destruction by fire. CARELESS SMOKERS are a FIRE HAZARD.

In the past year, "careless smokers" have caused a fire waste of \$212,782 in Iowa in 1947.

"Careless smokers" have destroyed their own homes, stores and factories. Some even caused their own death by smoking in bed.

Let me remind you to do your part in protecting your own job and life by obeying the "No Smoking" signs in your place of employment. Don't smoke where smoking is prohibited. Carry this thought into your home. When you smoke be careful how you discard the cigarette.

NEVER smoke in bed. A tiny spark might ignite the bed-clothing and cause your death or the destruction of your home.

GARAGE FIRES

Never allow open flame lights in a garage—run the automobile outside when filling the tank so that gasoline vapors will dissipate.

Do not keep quantities of gasoline or calcium carbide inside of a garage. An approved underground storage tank installed so that the gasoline vapors will dissipate is the safest method for keeping gasoline.

A metal waste can should be located at a convenient place outside the garage for all waste and greasy rags. Burn them EVERY DAY.

It is unsafe to use sawdust or shavings to absorb grease or oil in a garage. If the floor happens to be wood, scrub it occasionally with hot water and lye.

The use of gasoline for cleaning parts of the automobile in the garage is a dangerous thing.

The garage should not be heated by means of stove or open fire of any kind, unless the heater or heating plant is isolated in another room so that the gasoline vapors from the garage cannot possibly get to it. *Be careful*, gasoline vapor travels very fast.

Keep an approved fire extinguisher and a pail of sand in the garage. Water thrown on burning gasoline merely serves to spread it, sand does not. Extinguishers should be placed in every garage, protect them against freezing.

Iowa had 212 fires reported in private and public garages in 1947, representing a fire loss of \$224,240.

"DON'T BE A FIRE HAZARD!"



### GASOLINE IS DANGEROUS

Gasoline should never be used for cleaning in the home. It is easy to understand the danger when we consider the fact that explosions of gasoline vapor mixed with air, supply the power for driving our autos, trucks and motor boats; and everybody knows that gasoline ignites readily and burns fiercely.

Someone may say, "I never use gasoline in a room where a gas flame or any other open flame is present, so it can't take fire or explode." Such a statement indicates that the person who makes it has much to learn about the dangers of gasoline.

A gasoline explosion or fire, or both, may occur when there is no open flame or other apparent source of ignition in the room or even in the building where the gasoline is being used.

At ordinary room temperature, 65 degrees Fahrenheit and above, gasoline exposed to the air gives off an invisible vapor which is heavier than air and which may be, and often is, carried to a considerable distance from its point of origin, by air currents. This is, in effect, like a fuse or a train of powder leading from a charge of explosives to the point where it is to be ignited. When the vapor comes in contact with a source of ignition, it may be 100 feet or more distant, it bursts into a flame which travels back, almost as rapidly as the eye can follow it, to the liquid-gasoline container and an explosion of fire occurs. The source of ignition may be a bonfire outdoors, for example, or the fire in the heater in the basement, if the doors are open so that there is nothing to obstruct the flow of the vapor.

This serious fire and explosion hazard can be avoided by refusing to allow gasoline, (or benzine or naphtha, which are similarly dangerous) to be used in or about the home, or even to be brought into the house.

Any person who allows gasoline to be stored about his home, or to be used for cleaning purposes, endangers not only his own life, but also the lives of others.

**"DON'T BE CARELESS IN HANDLING GASOLINE!"**

### CARELESS CAUSES OF FIRE

Seeking clothing in closets with lighted matches.

Searching for gas leaks with lighted matches, kerosene lamps or unprotected flames.

Using kerosene, gasoline or oil to kindle fires in stoves or fireplaces.

Using gasoline or alcohol for cleaning purposes.

Allowing accumulation of rubbish, oily rags, waste paper or excelsior.

Placing hot ashes in wooden receptacles.

Permitting clothing to hang near open fire or heated stoves, or lace curtains near lighted gas jets.

Permitting the use of paper shades upon electric lights.

Permitting electric cords to hang upon nails.

Placing waste paper or other combustible materials in an open fireplace, except immediately preceding its lighting.

Using matches other than safety matches and neglecting to keep matches of any kind in porcelain or metal containers, beyond the reach of children.

Pasting paper over flue hole and neglecting to have the chimneys cleaned once a year.

Smoking in bed.

Neglecting to extinguish cigarettes, cigars or matches before throwing them away.

Encouraging the starting of bonfires.

### CLEAN PROPERTY SELDOM BURNS

DO YOU KNOW there is a very close relationship between a clean, orderly house, farm or factory and F-I-R-E?

Sailors know for they fear fire above all else on the high seas. If landsmen shared the seaman's respect for fire and his passion for order and regular rubbish removal, 40,000 Americans would not be killed or injured each year in needless flames nor would the United States pay an annual \$700,000,000 fire waste bill.

RUBBISH and preventable fires go hand-in-hand. That's why we say: "Clean property seldom burns." YOUR chances of having YOUR fire department pay YOU a visit are in direct proportion to the amount of rubbish YOU allow.

**"A MATCH HAS A HEAD BUT NO BRAINS!"**



RUBBISH may not be a cause of fire in itself, but it supplies the fuel for a carelessly discarded match, cigarette or stray spark.

RUBBISH is not just waste paper and dirt as so many people assume. Webster defines "rubbish" as: anything worthless or valueless. This means that Uncle Joe's buffalo robe in the garage—that broken down sofa or chair in the attic, or sister's outgrown clothes in the back hall closet are RUBBISH.

You can't use them, why not give them to some worthy charity? At least get them out of your property before fire discovers them!

Americans probably keep more rubbish than any country in the world. We also have the worst fire rate. There's two reasons for this rubbish record: first, national procrastination—the "I'll-take-care-of-the-trash-barrels-tomorrow" philosophy. Second, we have a lopsided sense of thrift. We are a nation of string-savers and trivia collectors. We HATE to throw anything away. We "hang on to things" like "Aunt Emma's moth-eaten muff and three-legged furniture in the vain hope "that we may be able to use them SOMETIME."

"SOMETIME" never comes, but fire DOES.

Good housekeeping is the key to fire safety. A good housekeeper not only keeps dirt and rubbish to a minimum but through a regular check-up keeps a gimlet eye out for any fire threat.

How would YOU stack up as a housekeeper, if you answered the following HOUSEHOLDER'S QUIZ?

- |  |      |     |
|--|------|-----|
| 1. Do you regularly dispose of rubbish?  | Yes— | No— |
| 2. Are walls, floors, ceilings protected from overheated stoves, pipes or furnaces?      | Yes— | No— |
| 3. Do you have any frayed cords or defective electrical appliances?                      | Yes— | No— |
| 4. Are all your fuses the proper size? (usually 15 amperes)?                             | Yes— | No— |
| 5. Are hot ashes kept in covered metal barrels?  | Yes— | No— |
| 6. Are all mops hung up and oily rags kept in metal containers?                          | Yes— | No— |
| 7. Do you have controls on electric irons to prevent overheating?                        | Yes— | No— |
| 8. Are your fire extinguishers charged regularly?  | Yes— | No— |
| 9. Do you have plenty of ash trays in the house?   | Yes— | No— |
| 10. Do stovepipes pass through combustible partitions such as through attics or closets? | Yes— | No— |

- |   |      |     |
|---|------|-----|
| 11. Are chimneys in good repair and cleaned once a year?  | Yes— | No— |
| 12. Do you have screens for all fireplaces?   | Yes— | No— |
| 13. Do you have a firesafe roof, such as asphalt, slate, tile or other fire-resistive material? | Yes— | No— |
| 14. Are matches kept in metal tins away from heat and small children?                           | Yes— | No— |
| 15. If you have a gas stove are curtains or hanging clothes near enough to catch fire?          | Yes— | No— |

HOME FIRES

There were 164 farm dwelling fires and 1,443 town dwelling fires, a total of 1,607 HOME FIRES in Iowa in 1947, representing a total property loss of \$1,521,317.

CAUSES OF HOME FIRES

The principal causes of home fires are: Matches and smoking, carelessness in handling petroleum products, misuse of electricity, defective and overheated stoves and heating plants, defective flues, sparks from chimneys, lightning, hot ashes and open fires, spontaneous combustion, rubbish accumulations, etc.

RURAL FIRE LOSS IN IOWA

Our rural fire loss for 1946 was \$1,951,305, and \$1,959,877 for 1947—an increase of \$8,572.

DEATHS BY FIRE

There were 118 deaths by fire reported in 1947—85 adults died of burns, and 33 Iowa children under 15 years of age.

What a price to pay for CARELESSNESS!

FARM FIRE CONTROL

Fire is destroying America's natural resources, industries and homes at the rate of more than 800,000 fires annually. On farms alone fire annually destroys \$90,000,000 worth of property, kills an estimated 3,500 persons and injures thousands more.

The nation suffers from the costly destruction of food. Thousands of tons of foodstuffs, worth tens of millions of dollars, are lost in fires which level barns, granaries, mills, elevators and warehouses. The farm fire bill of nearly one third of a million dollars for every working day of the year means a



tax upon every bushel of grain the farmer hauls to market; upon his dairy and poultry products, upon his livestock.

Unlike urban areas where fire protection and water supplies are adequate, farms often face total destruction when fire strikes. When fire destroys a farm, the loss of farm equipment, livestock and personal property often throws such an economic burden upon a family that they can not regain their financial independence. While insurance protection is a necessary safeguard against fire loss, the cost of time and labor to rebuild is usually far in excess of the value destroyed.

Burns are a leading cause of death and injury on farms, exceeded only by falls.

Nearly all farm fires can be traced to two basic causes—faulty building construction and lack of knowledge. Realizing the importance of the fire menace, leaders in municipal, county, state and federal government are now waging war on two fronts—PREVENTION AND PROTECTION.

In recent years a great many rural fire departments have been organized in Iowa. The need for community fire protection has been emphasized by agricultural organizations, schools, civic groups and fire departments who are cooperating in a nation-wide educational program to inform the Iowa farmer of fire prevention procedures and methods.

Fire prevention is an individual responsibility.

#### CAUSES OF FARM FIRES

Essential to the prevention of fires on farms and in rural areas is the knowledge of how and why fires start. The principal known causes of these fires are:

Lightning

Chimneys, flues, cupolas, stacks

Petroleum and its products

Matches and smoking

Sparks on roofs

Stoves, furnaces, boilers and their pipes

Exposure

Spontaneous ignition

Misuse of electricity

Friction sparks from running machinery

Hot ashes and coals, open fires

Miscellaneous

The miscellaneous causes of farm fires are: explosions; sparks from locomotives, bonfires, etc; incendiarism; ignition of grease and oil; ignition of electrical devices such as hot irons; gas; fireworks; and rubbish.

As our modern farms become more mechanized, electrical and flammable liquid hazards increase. Closer inspection of the electrical system is imperative when a farm is equipped with milkers, corn dryers and electrical fencing, all of which place greater demands on an electrical system which may be many years old.

Tractors, harvesters and other farm machinery powered by petroleum and its products necessitate great caution in the handling and storage of these volatile fuels.

There were 70 fires reported in Iowa in 1947, with a loss of \$145,213.

#### FARM INSPECTIONS

Inspection is the right arm of fire prevention—the safeguard that may mean the difference between a small blaze, quickly extinguished, and the wholesale destruction of buildings, property and possessions. Farms are very often without adequate water supplies and isolated from fire fighting facilities.

The past four years, a Farm Fire Prevention program has been sponsored by the Iowa State College in cooperation with our schools, firemen, insurance groups, State Fire Prevention Association, social and civic clubs, farm organizations, 4-H Club boys and girls and their leaders, County Agents, radio stations, Iowa newspapers, the State Fire Marshal's office and others interested in Fire Prevention.

The State-wide program is supported by a special radio contest sponsored by radio station WHO. The rural schools are honored by a special broadcast from station WHO. These schools are the winners of the contest in their respective counties and high point winners in the state contest. Cash prizes are donated by insurance companies and radio station WHO.

The State Farm Bureau Federation gives certificates of merit to schools that secure fire prevention inspections or reinspections by all families that send pupils to the school.



The winning schools in 1947 came from Hamilton, Floyd, Webster, Winneshiek, Buchanan, Howard, Jasper, Mahaska, Mills and Jackson Counties.

### FIRE SAFETY NEED IN SCHOOLS

The modern school curriculum should include instruction in fire prevention, for though fire is necessary to our living, we must learn how to respect its value and to prevent the disasters that occur when it is uncontrolled. The school child may be subjected to fire hazards both at school, at home and in all places where children assemble. He must be made to recognize these fire hazards, and he should be trained in the methods by which he and his associates can develop a fire-safety consciousness for the good of all.

Much time, thought and attention are being directed at the present to safety from accidents, more particularly on the highway. There is, however, another danger lurking around every corner where children gather, and that danger is the DANGER OF FIRE.

The schools stress this danger very particularly each year during Fire Prevention Week, but the vigilant parent will add to it, instruction of his own and careful watching to see that potential fire hazards do not come within the reach of children and that they have a wholesome fear of fire as a play toy.

### FIRE DRILLS

Chapter 100, Section 100.31, Code, Iowa, 1946, provides:

"It shall be the duty of the state fire marshal and his designated subordinate to require teachers of public and private schools, in all buildings of more than one story, to have at least one fire drill each month, and to require all teachers of such schools, whether occupying buildings of one or more stories, to keep all doors and exits of their respective rooms and buildings unlocked during school hours."

### WHO PAYS FIRE COST?

If every property owner and every taxpayer could be brought to the realization that every fire, regardless of who suffers the direct loss, takes something out of his pocketbook, *fire prevention* would be the most popular and intensive of all community activities.

It costs taxpayers an average of FIFTY DOLLARS every time fire companies answer a false alarm.

It always costs infinitely more when property owners fail to call the FIRE DEPARTMENT soon enough.

A delayed fire alarm, the core of trouble, is a part of almost every fire that gets out of control.

### CLEAN-UP SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

You can keep your home and community free from fire by giving them a thorough Clean-up NOW.

1. CLEAR OUT DEBRIS: Get rid of rubbish or anything combustible that you are not going to use in attics, closets, cellars, garages—rubbish such as old papers and rags is a fire hazard. It not only starts fires itself, but furnishes fuel for fires starting from other causes. Clean these hazards out of your house, store or factory.

2. WATCH OUTSIDE FIRES: Clean up your yard. Keep grass cut low around buildings. Never burn papers on a windy day when there is danger of sparks setting fire to your house, shrubbery, clothing or outbuildings. Use an incinerator wherever possible.

3. CLEAR OUT PAINT AND OIL RAGS: Destroy rags or keep in closed metal containers; hang up mops and paint-soiled clothing so air can circulate around them. Paint or oil-soaked rags heat up from chemical action, burst into flames. Clean up after painting jobs.

4. CHECK YOUR FUSES: Use 15 ampere fuses in regular household circuits, and *don't* put pennies behind blown fuses. Keep wiring in good repair; have all work done by a competent electrician. Fuses protect your appliances, your house and your family from damage and possible fire when wires are overloaded or a short circuit occurs.

5. AVOID FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS: Remove them from your house. Hundreds of persons are killed annually trying to clean with gasoline, benzine, or naphtha. A tiny flame or spark—even from static electricity—will ignite gasoline vapor. Play safe! Use an Underwriters' Laboratory approved fluid or take clothing to a dry cleaner.

6. CHECK STOVES AND HEATERS: Clean and check all heaters and have repair work done. Radiated heat from hot stovepipes, furnaces and stoves will char beams or parti-



tions too near them, causing a blaze that will damage or destroy the house.

7. **PORTABLE HEATERS:** Place portable, open flame heaters so they can't be knocked over or tipped. Avoid using rubber hose as fuel conductors for gas heaters; rigid metal pipes are safer. Always store kerosene outdoors, fill lamps and heaters outdoors. Don't create your own gas chamber by closing off room in which gas or oil heaters are used; keep window open slightly.

8. **CHECK PIPES AND CHIMNEYS:** Clean soot out of chimneys and smokepipes. Check for cracks and holes; have chimneys repaired—where mortar or bricks are loose—and replace pipes if necessary. Dirty and defective chimneys are a leading cause of fires.

9. **CHECK ASH RECEPTACLES:** Always put hot ashes in metal containers. Hot ashes in wood boxes set fire to many houses. In the cellar this is particularly hazardous, because flames quickly spread up through hollow walls of building.

10. **FIREPLACE CARE:** Use a wire-mesh screen in front of fireplace. Be sure the fire is out before you retire or leave the house. Sparks from unguarded fireplaces can start serious fires.

11. **GENERAL REPAIRS:** Plan needed painting and renovating. Remodel and modernize your home for greater safety. Replace faulty stair treads. You can hold a basement fire in check by installing a heavy flush-type door at head of cellar stairs, fitted tightly and kept closed.

12. **SMOKERS:** DON'T smoke in bed. Smoking in bed can be fatal. Fumes from burning cloth may overcome or asphyxiate you before fire reaches you. Place plenty of ash trays about your home for smokers. Keep matches in safe containers and away from young children.

#### COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM CLEAN-UP

Cleaning up vacant lots in your neighborhood will provide more play space for children, thus reducing juvenile accidents and crime. It will also remove breeding places for flies, mosquitos, rats and other disease-bearers.

Tidying up your home and getting your neighbors to clean up theirs will reduce fires.

A clean, tidy neighborhood is a better place to live in.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Clean up your own home and garden.
2. Join your friends in a neighborhood project to correct eyesores and fire hazards in your block or on your street.
3. Take active part in civic groups that cooperate in organized Clean-up campaigns. Visit you local fire department, Chamber of Commerce, safety council, or other civic group to see how you can help.

#### FIRE CHIEFS, MAYORS AND TOWNSHIP CLERKS:

Chapter 100, Sections 100.2, 100.3, 100.4 and 100.5, Code, Iowa, 1946, provides that all fires occurring within the corporate limits of any city or town shall be reported by the Chief of the Fire Department, or if there is no organized fire department, the Mayor of the town is required to make the report, and the Township Clerk of each township is required to make a report of all fires that occur within the township outside of the corporate limits of any city or town in the township.

Country or rural fires **MUST BE** reported by the Township Clerk for the Township in which the fire occurs.

The Chief of the Fire Department reports **ONLY** those fires that occur **WITHIN** the corporate limits of the city or town.

**ALL** fires must be reported to the State Fire Marshal, State House, Des Moines 19, Iowa, within one week of the occurrence of the fire, and all reports **MUST BE COMPLETE**, showing the amount of damage to the building and contents as well as the value of building and contents, and amount of insurance carried on building and contents.

When you fail to send in your fire reports *promptly*, we are unable to keep our records up to date.

Fires must be reported on regular fire report blanks, furnished you by this office upon request. **ALL** questions in the report must be answered fully.

**"FIGHT FIRES WITH FIRE PREVENTION!"**



TABLE NO. I

Showing the total number of fires reported by counties.  
 Cities of more than 10,000 population are set out separately.  
 Damage to building and contents is combined.

Counties and Cities	No. Fires	Fire Loss
Adair	9	\$ 20,885
Adams	2	1,395
Allamakee	13	15,600
Appanoose	38	51,557
Audubon	8	13,620
Benton	17	40,947
Black Hawk—Waterloo	185	174,081
Balance—Black Hawk County	50	146,151
Boone—Boone	37	33,090
Balance—Boone County	3	13,250
Bremer	0	0
Buchanan	16	56,291
Buena Vista	27	23,440
Butler	12	21,428
Calhoun	3	28,400
Carroll	23	16,915
Cass	42	70,601
Cedar	15	37,740
Cerro Gordo—Mason City	89	39,174
Balance—Cerro Gordo County	3	1,255
Cherokee	15	46,860
Chickasaw	10	12,281
Clarke	5	21,100
Clay	18	465,065
Clayton	15	20,490
Clinton—Clinton	68	52,775
Balance—Clinton County	10	30,544
Crawford	9	28,681
Dallas	12	13,405
Davis	9	17,792
Decatur	20	46,704
Delaware	12	56,083
Des Moines—Burlington	69	209,721
Balance—Des Moines County	1	300
Dickinson	2	6,325
Dubuque—Dubuque	110	192,373
Balance—Dubuque County	8	15,692
Emmet	6	21,400
Fayette	37	75,078
Floyd	26	32,334
Franklin	13	51,320
Fremont	3	14,100
Greene	30	92,914
Grundy	9	1,555
Guthrie	14	11,794
Hamilton	12	41,995
Hancock	8	24,087
Hardin	17	21,823
Harrison	19	36,799
Henry	10	62,093
Howard	17	35,291
Humboldt	5	10,910
Ida	9	6,888
Iowa	3	20,500

TABLE NO. I—Continued

Counties and Cities	No. Fires	Fire Loss
Jackson	9	13,902
Jasper	20	107,805
Jefferson	33	56,995
Johnson—Iowa City	55	34,406
Balance—Johnson County	4	29,683
Jones	3	3,700
Keokuk	17	29,244
Kossuth	31	95,998
Lee—Fort Madison	36	20,811
Keokuk	28	133,845
Balance—Lee County	10	23,958
Linn—Cedar Rapids	180	272,127
Balance—Linn County	37	99,975
Louisa	4	3,133
Lucas	5	21,420
Lyon	14	21,102
Madison	17	40,677
Mahaska—Oskaloosa	15	30,627
Balance—Mahaska County	7	81,215
Marion	33	23,195
Marshall—Marshalltown	45	18,914
Balance—Marshall County	7	6,546
Mills	6	52,005
Mitchell	1	10,400
Monona	14	33,300
Monroe	18	19,379
Montgomery	34	29,581
Muscatine—Muscatine	59	47,250
Balance—Muscatine County	2	4,894
O'Brien	18	11,573
Osceola	0	0
Page	36	29,198
Palo Alto	6	37,800
Plymouth	13	7,585
Pocahontas	18	298,635
Polk—Des Moines	934	1,452,158
Balance—Polk County	32	81,221
Pottawattamie—Council Bluffs	119	286,604
Balance—Pottawattamie County	8	13,175
Poweshiek	11	30,323
Ringgold	2	1,725
Sac	11	33,680
Scott—Davenport	227	210,908
Balance—Scott County	12	75,773
Shelby	13	14,862
Sioux	21	39,825
Story—Ames	30	8,292
Balance—Story County	21	83,760
Tama	13	25,396
Taylor	4	8,627
Union	3	57,775
Van Buren	2	3,950
Wapello—Ottumwa	45	262,829
Balance—Wapello County	8	21,575
Warren	14	21,543
Washington	7	24,436
Wayne	8	12,529
Webster—Fort Dodge	79	347,611
Balance—Webster County	12	31,106



TABLE NO. I—Continued

Counties and Cities	No. Fires	Fire Loss
Winnabago .....	2	4,500
Winneshiek .....	16	10,415
Woodbury—Sioux City .....	285	550,024
Balance—Woodbury County .....	6	21,400
Worth .....	19	32,948
Wright .....	10	174,333
	4,032	\$8,297,073

TABLE NO. II

Showing the kind of property destroyed. Damage to building and contents set out separately.

Kind of Property	No. Fires	Damage Buildings	Damage Contents
Automobiles .....	508	\$ 51,229	\$ 1,035
Trucks .....	110	17,411	6,270
Auto accessories—repair shops and tire shops .....	10	30,336	18,317
Awnings .....	48	1,909	0
Bakeries .....	11	30,439	30,490
Banks .....	3	2,200	25
Barns—FARM .....	113	383,912	254,948
TOWN .....	33	24,430	16,684
Beer taverns .....	36	57,907	27,006
Bridges .....	3	50	0
Cars—Box cars and coal cars .....	13	9,766	919
Passenger and street cars and buses .....	35	22,248	0
Car repair shops and roundhouses .....	4	10	55
Chicken brooders and hatcheries .....	53	41,937	30,614
Poultry houses .....	17	2,650	859
Churches .....	17	145,528	41,272
Cleaning and dyeing .....	17	13,476	10,575
Coal mines .....	0	0	0
Corn driers .....	2	500	510
Corn cribs—granaries .....	15	18,985	22,197
Creameries—cream stations and dairies .....	14	42,565	35,325
Dance halls .....	0	0	0
Depots—freight and passenger .....	2	3,045	3,661
Elevators—seed houses and stores .....	11	28,625	26,204
Engine and boiler rooms .....	5	1,943	150
Factories .....	49	394,942	439,203
Filling stations—oil storage .....	49	26,429	19,085
Foundries .....	7	1,184	715
Funeral Homes .....	1	60	50
Garages—Private .....	164	35,433	23,972
Public .....	48	87,765	77,070
Hay, grain and straw stacks, grain fields and meadows .....	18	2,533	0
Hog houses .....	23	18,595	13,716
Homes for Aged—Orphans Home .....	2	155	225
Hospitals and Nurses' Homes .....	3	65	54
Hotels .....	43	22,578	7,945

TABLE NO. II—Continued

Kind of Property	No. Fires	Damage Buildings	Damage Contents
Houses—Apartments .....	140	67,211	33,850
Fraternity and Sorority .....	4	2,325	115
FARM .....	164	469,702	151,830
TOWN .....	1,443	631,922	267,863
Rooming houses .....	9	5,192	1,754
Summer kitchen—wash houses .....	12	9,410	3,650
Ice houses .....	2	5,075	25,000
Laundries .....	8	70,915	131,595
Lodge halls .....	14	61,836	36,664
Lumber yards .....	6	9,625	27,000
Meat markets .....	5	828	332
Mills—Feed mills and feed stores .....	9	8,867	12,494
Flour .....	1	200,000	125,000
Office and office buildings .....	52	90,324	76,511
Packing plants and stock yards .....	10	6,200	13,920
Pool halls—bowling alleys .....	7	13,634	23,025
Printing plants .....	5	17,935	12,615
Produce houses .....	8	23,825	17,550
Pump and engine houses—power plants .....	7	52,410	358,200
Restaurants and cafes—lunch rooms .....	57	52,255	42,179
Schools .....	15	192,764	11,654
Sheds—Coal and wood .....	46	3,416	585
Machine and tool sheds .....	16	3,242	8,139
Shops—Barber .....	3	1,150	710
Blacksmith and machine shops .....	9	14,055	12,435
Carpenter and work shops—paint shops .....	15	15,651	21,163
Hair dressing shops .....	2	576	314
Plumbing and heating .....	6	4,022	4,065
Shoe repair shops .....	3	3,120	3,298
Smoke houses .....	5	980	2,090
Stores .....	169	162,088	461,237
Theatres .....	9	3,735	16,500
Tractors .....	10	6,450	0
Trailer houses .....	37	13,565	7,073
Warehouses and storage .....	116	326,136	1,024,291
Miscellaneous .....	121	109,837	72,103
	4,032	\$4,181,118	\$4,115,955
			4,181,118
			\$8,297,073

TABLE NO. III

Cause of Fire	No. Fires	Fire Loss
Adjoining .....	191	\$ 613,573
Ashes and coal against wood .....	41	80,226
Auto backfire .....	55	62,931
Auto wreck .....	11	25,129
Broken gas line—Alcohol on motor .....	130	8,336
Blow and oil torches .....	48	110,711
Bonfires—grass fires .....	159	132,243
Brooder lamps and stoves .....	52	52,050
Candle, lamp and lantern carelessness .....	11	2,531
Children with matches .....	80	38,245
Cleaning clothing, rugs and floors with gasoline .....	5	476
Clothing too near stove and stovepipes .....	14	1,326



TABLE NO. III—Continued

Cause of Fire	No. Fires	Fire Loss
Compressed gas .....	4	7,170
Corn drier burners .....	2	4,366
Curtains blowing into flames .....	10	1,507
Defective auto wiring .....	258	30,593
Defective electric wiring .....	207	483,434
Defective electric cords, lamps, appliances and Neon signs .....	35	30,755
Defective electric appliances .....	21	23,405
Defective fireplace .....	12	7,400
Defective flue .....	210	195,170
Defective and overheated stoves and heating plants .....	179	463,083
Defective gas stoves and furnaces .....	14	10,340
Defective oil burners .....	48	55,202
Defective oil and gasoline stoves .....	152	140,924
Defective and overheated pipes to stoves and furnaces .....	82	74,838
Dust in hot air registers .....	7	4,951
Electric iron—current left on .....	11	9,089
Films .....	4	1,862
Fireworks .....	2	50
Friction .....	8	20,930
Fumigation .....	1	150
Gas leak .....	10	38,704
Gasoline and kerosene carelessness .....	64	66,833
Gasoline and volatile oil explosion .....	6	78,380
Grease, paint, tar, wax and food boiling over .....	36	20,491
Incendiary .....	43	235,912
Lightning—Rodded .....	5	40,725
Not rodded .....	62	374,661
Lightning running in on radio wires .....	4	1,553
Match carelessness .....	31	7,065
Rubbish piled against furnace and flues .....	37	8,804
Short circuit—electric motors, refrigerators, etc. ....	157	82,783
Smoker's carelessness .....	443	212,782
Smoking meat .....	4	2,960
Sparks from engines and locomotives .....	25	20,665
Sparks from chimney .....	345	238,550
Sparks from stoves and furnaces .....	12	25,835
Spontaneous combustion—Coal, dust .....	9	15,237
Hay, straw, grain, feed .....	25	97,079
Rags and rubbish .....	47	125,321
Static electricity .....	2	410
Thawing water pipes .....	5	2,035
Unknown .....	482	3,818,937
Using gasoline and kerosene to start fires .....	7	2,674
Miscellaneous .....	107	85,681
	4,032	\$8,297,073

## CONCLUSION

Iowa's fire loss increased from \$6,349,980 in 1946 to \$8,297,073 in 1947.

One thousand six hundred seven homes were destroyed or partially destroyed by fire.

Forty-nine factories were totally or partially destroyed by fire, causing a work-stoppage, slowing down or stopping entirely the production of many needed items.

Twenty fires occurred in elevators, seed houses, feed mills and feed stores, wasting feed and grain needed not only in Iowa, but in all parts of the world.

There were 169 store fires representing a fire loss of \$623,325, and 116 fires in Warehouses and Storage resulted in a loss of \$1,350,427.

Electric wiring, smokers' carelessness, spontaneous combustion, defective and overheated heating plants and stoves, defective flues, and sparks from chimneys, are a few of the common causes of fires in these buildings.

This fact alone proves the urgent need for more concentrated effort on your part and mine in FIGHTING FIRES WITH FIRE PREVENTION.

There is a real need for Fire Prevention and Fire Protection laws, installation of electric wiring, handling and storage of gasoline, and changes in our fire escape law, rules and regulations.

Our office has made approximately 350 inspections of Liquefied petroleum gas installations during 1947, and corrections of improper installations have been taken care of, and this inspection program will continue until every installation is made in accordance with the state law, rules and regulations.

Iowa has been working on a state-wide Fire Prevention Program outlined by President Truman's Fire Prevention Conference held in Washington, D. C., in May 1947, and plans are under way for a Fire Prevention Conference called by Governor Robert D. Blue to be held in May 1948.

It is our hope that every person called upon to take part in this state-wide program will do everything possible to prevent fires and reduce our annual fire loss.

The Annual Fire School will be held at the Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, May 18-21, 1948, and the District Fire



Schools will be held later in the year. Dates and locations will be announced later.

State records show that 118 persons have died in Iowa in 1947 as a direct result of fire. No accounting is made of the number of persons injured, some of whom may not recover, or may be permanently injured.

I want to express my sincere thanks to all Fire Chiefs and local officers, Sheriffs, County Attorneys, Fire Prevention organizations, civic clubs, newspapers, radio stations and all others who have had a part in Iowa's Fire Prevention program.

We must work together and FIGHT FIRES WITH FIRE PREVENTION if we are to reduce Iowa's Fire Loss in 1948.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN W. STROHM, *State Fire Marshal*  
DIVISION OF FIRE PROTECTION AND INVESTIGATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



