

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Office of Fire and Aviation  
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April 14, 2006

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Instruction Memorandum No. FA IM 2006-024  
Expires: 09/30/07

To: All BLM NIFC Employees  
From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation  
Subject: Instruction Memorandum (IM) on Incident Records

**Program Areas:** Fire and Records Management

**Purpose:** This IM provides information and guidance to all BLM NIFC employees regarding the new records schedules for the creation, maintenance, and disposition of incident records.

**Policy/Action:** A joint project between the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and several Federal Fire Agencies resulted in the development of requirements and tools to improve the management of wildland fire/incident records. The new records schedules require that the host units ensure the permanent preservation of certain incident management records in an Incident History File which will be transferred to NARA after a twenty-year retention period. All other incident records will be destroyed after a seven year retention period. (Note: Agencies should not destroy any records until verification has been made regarding active records freezes and/or moratoriums.) Lists that identify permanent and temporary documents/records can be found at: <http://www.nifc.gov/records/index.html>.

Additionally, a new uniform filing scheme for structuring incident records packages is now available. Host units and responding incident management teams will adopt this structure to make access to records transparent to successor teams, as well as to incident units in the post-incident business process. The uniform filing scheme for paper can be found at: <http://www.nifc.gov/records/index.html>.

The follow represents additional information that can be found at:

<http://www.nifc.gov/records.html>:

- Forms and Examples
- Box Inventory Lists
- Tools for Incident Management Teams
- Incident Management Team Filing Directory
- Incident Management Team Instructions
- Incident Management Team Labels
- Incident Records Kit
- Retention Guidance

The Fire Records Project Team is in the process of developing an on-line training program which will be posted to the web page in the near future.

All incident records created prior to the date of this IM must comply with the new guidance by 30 September 2007.

Utilization and implementation of the Fire Records Project Team's efforts will reduce the volumes of fire/incident documentation stored in insecure environments such as warehouses, attics, engine bays, etc., and will increase an Agency's ability to respond to litigation, scientific, Congressional and public requests.

**Time Frame:** This IM is effective upon signature.

**Background:** On January 12, 2005, the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) approved new records schedules for incident records in the Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, and the National Park Service. Changes to the records schedules were necessary because former Agency records retention rules led to the destruction of some wildland fire/incident records. Many of these records have long-term value for planning and implementation of fire management actions.

**Budget Impact:** A minor impact to workload may be incurred if wildland fire/incident records have not been properly maintained prior to the issuance of this IM.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** None.

**Coordination:** This IM has been coordinated with the BLM Bureau Records Administrator (WO-500), Fire Operations (FA-300), Budget and Evaluation (FA-107), Human Resource Management (FA-202), and Support Services (FA-200).

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