



# Press release

Statistics Netherlands

PR99-240  
17 September 1999  
9.30 hrs

## ***Again fewer fires in 1998***

The number of fires in 1998 was down more than 11% on a year ago. There was more rain than in 1997 so that there were fewer fires in verges, forests and moors. The latest data by Statistics Netherlands shows furthermore that major fires in buildings caused more than 800 million guilders worth of damage. This is almost two thirds of the total damage caused by fires. More than one in three fire alarms is a false alarm.

### ***Rainy summer, fewer fires outdoors***

Almost 44 thousand fires were registered in 1998. In 1997 there were nearly 50 thousand. The number of fires in verges, forests and moors fell by 40%. In 1998 there were 3 thousand versus 5 thousand in 1997. The cause must lie in the amount of precipitation, which was far greater in 1998. Almost 56% of the fires outside is started deliberately.

### ***Limited number of major fires, greatest damage***

More than 3% of all fires are major ones. The amount of damages caused by such major fires was 803 million guilders. This comes down to two thirds of the total amount of damage. The 1998 figure of 1.2 billion guilders in total damages for all fires is about the same as in 1997. The average amount of damage per fire in dwellings went from 25 thousand guilders in 1997 to 27 thousand guilders in 1998. Three out of ten fires are indoor fires. Most of them occur in residential buildings (57%). The main cause of indoor fires is faulty equipment or incorrect use of equipment (29%).

### ***Many false alarms again***

In 1998 the fire department received 132 thousand

Statistics Netherlands  
Press Office

P.O. Box 4000  
2270 JM Voorburg  
The Netherlands  
tel. +31 70 337 58 16  
fax +31 70 337 59 71  
e-mail:  
persdienst@cbs.nl

Statistics Netherlands  
is a department of  
the Ministry of  
Economic Affairs

calls, 2% down on 1997. The fire fighters put out 44 thousand fires, and had 47 thousand false alarms.

In nine out of ten false alarms it is a fire alarm. Almost 75% of these come from fire alarm systems. The fire fighters also offered assistance in 41 thousand cases. This was the first time that fire fighters answered so many calls for assistance. This is due to the extreme rains in September and October.

For further information please contact W.F. Swaager  
+3170 337 56 42.

**Key figures/ Kerncijfers brandweer-  
statistiek**

	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>Fire fighters/ Brandweerlieden</b> (x 1 000)	26,4	26,5	26,5	26,6
w.v. professionals/ beroeps	3,9	4,0	4,1	4,2
Volunteers/vrijwilligers	22,5	22,5	22,4	22,4
<b>Calls / Meldingen</b> (x 1 000)	118,9	131,2	134,2	132,0
w.v. false alarms by fire alarm system / loos alarm via brandmeldinstallatie	26,7	26,6	29,9	33,1
Other false alarms/ overig loos alarm	12,4	15,1	15,5	13,7
Fires/ brand	46,1	55,2	49,5	44,0
Assistance/ hulpverlening	33,7	34,4	39,3	41,1
<b>Fires/ Branden</b> (x 1 000)	46,1	55,2	49,5	44,0
w.v. Chimney/ schoorsteenbranden	2,2	2,5	1,8	1,8
Small indoor/ kleine binnenbranden	12,3	13,6	13,6	13,0
Major indoor/(middel) grote binnenbranden	1,3	1,6	1,4	1,4
Outdoor/ buitenbranden	30,3	37,4	32,7	27,8
fires in verges, forests and moors / w.o. berm-, bos- en heidebranden	7,2	11,7	5,0	3,0
<b>Amount of damage/ Schadebedrag door branden</b> (mln gld)	1056	1237	1218	1223
w.v. schoorsteenbranden	4	5	4	5
kleine binnenbranden	241	389	308	283
(middel) grote binnenbranden	641	680	778	803
buitenbranden	170	163	128	132
<b>Assistance / Hulpverleningen</b> (x 1 000)	33,7	34,4	39,3	41,1
w.v. residential buildings/woongebouwen	11,0	11,7	14,4	13,4
Other buildings/ overige gebouwen	3,0	3,4	4,2	4,0
fires in verges, streets, roads, land /wegen, straten, bermen, terreinen	10,1	9,7	11,1	13,0
Cars/ personenauto's	4,4	4,3	4,1	4,7
Other objects/ overige objecten	5,2	5,3	5,4	6,0
Cost per capita of municipal fire services/ Kosten gemeentelijke brandweer per inwoner (gld)	54	60	58	62
Costs per call/ Kosten gemeentelijke brandweer per uitruk (gld)	7173	7228	6739	7342