



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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More fires in 1999

Some 48 thousand fires were registered in the Netherlands in 1999, 9% more than in 1998, when wet weather had kept the number of fires down. Assistance by the fire services fell by 15%, but this decrease was caused mainly by fewer cases of flooding than in 1998, according to figures from Statistics Netherlands. Fires resulted in damage to property totalling nearly 600 thousand euros, 7% more than in 1998. Just as in previous years, one in three calls to the fire services were false alarms.

Large increase in outdoor fires

Some 48 thousand fires were registered in the Netherlands in 1999. Most of these - over 32 thousand - were outdoor fires, 17% up on 1998, and five thousand of these were verge, forest and moor fires. Just over half of outdoor fires are cases of arson. This proportion has been fairly constant in recent years. In addition to the outdoor fires, another 14 thousand indoor fires and two thousand chimney fires were reported last year .

False alarms

The fire services received 129 thousand calls for assistance in 1999, slightly fewer than in the previous three years. In answer to these calls, the fire services put out 48 thousand fires and provided technical assistance in over 35 thousand cases. Some 46 thousand calls turned out to be false alarms, nearly 70% of which were received through fire alarm systems. In health care institutions in particular, many reports turn out to be false alarms.

More damage

At nearly 0.6 billion euros, property damage caused by fires was over 36 million euros higher than in 1998. Damage caused by outdoor fires was even nearly one and a half times as high as in the previous year. One in ten of the 14 thousand indoor fires were large fires; these accounted for nearly 375 million euros worth of damage, three-quarters of the total damage caused by indoor fires.

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