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## **Firefighter Fire Deaths in Massachusetts**

### **1972 — Fourteen Firefighter Deaths**

Tewksbury  
Fall River  
Lawrence  
Medford  
Wakefield  
Boston- 9 in the Hotel Vendome fire

### **1973 — Three Firefighter Deaths**

Weymouth  
Boston  
Tewksbury

### **1974 — Five Firefighter Deaths**

Cambridge  
Wakefield  
Somerville-2  
Weymouth

### **1975 — Seven Firefighter Deaths**

Lowell  
Norwood  
Boston  
Lynn  
Worcester  
Brockton  
Medford

## **1976 — Two Firefighter Deaths**

**Boston**

**Weymouth**

## **1977 — Six Firefighter Deaths**

**Fitchburg**

**Boston**

**Franklin**

**Newburyport**

**Seekonk**

**Chelsea**

## **1978 — Five Firefighter Deaths**

**Bourne**

**Newburyport**

**Fall River**

**Boston**

**Fall River**

## **1979 — Four Firefighter Deaths**

**Framingham**

**Plymouth**

**East Hampton**

**Revere**

## **1980:— Two Firefighter Deaths**

**Gill**

**Blackstone**

## **1981 —Two Firefighter Deaths**

**Boston**

**Salem**

## **1982 — Four Firefighter Deaths**

**Duxbury 8/30/82 Lt. William B. Luce**

- While fighting an electrical fire in a garage, Lt. Luce, age 47, suffered a heart attack and died.

**Provincetown 11/19/82 Deputy Chief Franklin J. Oliver**

- While fighting a suspicious bakery fire, Deputy Oliver, 64 years old, was struck over the head by an airpack and collapsed.

**Salem 2/20/82 FF Raymond McSwiggin**

- While battling an arson in an office building. FF McSwiggin, age 60, suffered a heart attack and died.

**Gloucester 11/12/82 FF Russell M. Shea**

- While fighting a fire caused by LP-gas in a factory, FF Shea, age 61, was exposed to chemicals during fire control and died.

**Holyoke 1/19/82 FF Raymond J. Deshaies**

- While attempting to control a fire in a business w/apartments of undetermined cause, FF Deshaies, age 43, was caught under a falling wall and died of a head fracture.

**1983 — 3 Firefighter Deaths****Newton 1/16/83 FF Bernard A. Frischette****Springfield 3/9/83 FF Warren D. Colby**

- While fighting a chemical dryer fire in an unknown structure, FF Colby, age 61, suffered a heart attack.

**Beverly 3/26/83 FF Robert J. McPherson****1984 — One Firefighter Death****Dedham 11/23/84 FF James A. Flanagan**

- Firefighter James A. Flanagan lost his life in a fire in a two-family dwelling.

**1985 — Two Firefighter Deaths****Belmont 2/4/85 FF Roland A. Weatherbee**

- A 15-year veteran of the fire service, died in the line of duty at age 42. The fire was in a single-family dwelling caused by ignition of combustibles stored too close to the furnace.

**Brookline 2/6/85 FF Richard A. Daley**

- A 35-year veteran of the fire service, suffered a heart attack at age 56 while battling a fire in a single-family dwelling caused by a short circuit in an electric blanket.

**1986 — Three Firefighter Deaths****Boston 3/21/86 FF Edward R. Connolly**

- 18-year veteran of the fire service was engaged in fire control activities in a South Boston fire. He was 46 years old. Three buildings were involved in the 9-alarm fire that resulted from a leaking gas hot water heater.

**Revere 4/18/86 FF Louis DeSantis**

- A 21-year veteran of the fire service, he suffered a heart attack while battling a brush fire in Revere. He was 62-years old.

**Lynn 12/14/86 FF Herve LeBlanc**

- A 19-year veteran of the fire service suffered fatal heart attack while engaged in fire control activities during a mutual aid response in Swampscott. He was 58-years old. The fire was in a single family home caused by heat from a wood stovepipe in an area that was no longer protected by insulation.

**1987 — Two Firefighter Deaths****Fall River 10/20/87 FF Paul R. Bernard**

- FF Bernard was 43 years old, died from asphyxiation while fighting a fire at Roma Color, a paint manufacturing facility. The fire was caused by a misuse of an industrial dryer.

**Swansea 11/5/87 Cpt. Allan A. Wilde**

- Cpt. Wilde was 58 years old, suffered a heart attack while battling a forest fire that consumed approximately 4 acres of woodlands. The fire appeared to have been deliberately set.

**1988 — Two Firefighter Deaths****Everett 6/5/88 FF Anthony Conti**

- FF Conti, a 26-year veteran of the fire service, suffered a fatal heart attack while searching a neighbor's burning home for children who were believed to be inside. He was 57-years old.

**Chelsea 10/5/88 FF Frederick Donovan**

- FF Donovan, a 17-year veteran of the fire service, suffered chest pains while fighting a fire in a 4-family home. He died the same night. He was 47-years old.

**1989 — One Firefighter Death****Lawrence 12/18/89 FF William McGuire**

- FF McGuire was killed when the roof of a burning apartment building collapsed. He was an 18-year veteran of the department. The fire was incendiary.

**1990 — One Firefighter Death****Templeton 4/10/90 FF Roger A. Houghton**

- FF Houghton was a Volunteer Firefighter age 56 while battling a mill fire had been in fire service for 39 years.

**1991 — NONE**

## **1992 — One Firefighter Death**

### **New Bedford 8/3/92 FF Lionel Alves**

- FF Alves suffered a massive coronary attack after overexerting himself at an incendiary storage building fire. The alarm was received at 11:18 p.m. The fire department did not get back into service until 3:07 p.m. the next day. A suspect had been charged with this fire. FF Alves had served on the fire department for nearly 25 years prior to his death.

## **1993 — NONE**

## **1994 — One Firefighter Death**

### **Boston 6/24/94 Lt. Stephen Minnehan**

- At 12:37 a.m. on Friday, June 24, the Boston Fire Department responded to a fire in a vacant warehouse located on a pier. One hundred and fifty (150) firefighters from 28 engine companies, nine ladder companies and 15 other vehicles responded to this fire. This fire posed multiple challenges — access was limited because the building was over water, the interior was large, and although it was boarded up, a search was necessary to ensure that no vagrants were inside. Boston Fire Department Lt. Stephen Minnehan, 44, died from smoke inhalation as he attempted to rescue other members of his crew. Three other firefighters were injured at this fire, two critically. Property loss was estimated at \$2,500,000. The cause of this fire remains undetermined.

## **1995 — One Firefighter Death**

### **Stoughton 1/28/95 FF Victor Melendy**

- A rooming house fire started by an overheated light ballast in the second floor bathroom. A member of the first crew responding to the scene, he (47 years old) was told that there were people trapped inside. He was searching for victims when the building erupted into flames. All of the residents had escaped. A smoke detector did operate. There were no sprinklers. FF Melendy was a 23-year veteran of the fire service.

## **1996 — NONE**

## **1997 — NONE**

## **1998 — One Firefighter Death**

### **Lawrence 4/11/98 Lt. James R. Toye**

- On April 11, 1998 the Lawrence Fire Department lost Lt. James R. Toye in a line of duty brush fire. While burning brush in his yard in North Andover, the fire got out of hand and Lt. Toye died of a heart attack while fighting the fire. He served the City of Lawrence for 25 years.

## **1999 — Seven Firefighter Deaths**

### **Russell 4/8/99 Deputy Chief John Murphy**

- Deputy Murphy died while fighting a woodland fire when sparks from a rotary powered hand-saw used by Con-Rail workers to cut a piece of rail, traveled 30-40 feet and ignited dry brush. He was 64-years old.

### **Worcester 12/3/99**

**Lt. Thomas E. Spencer, Age 42, Ladder 2**

**Firefighter Timothy P. Jackson, Age 51, Ladder 2**

**Firefighter James F. Lyons, Age 34, Engine 3**

**Firefighter Joseph T. McGuirk, Age 38, Engine 3**

**Firefighter Paul A. Brotherton, Age 41, Rescue 1**

**Firefighter Jeremiah M. Lucey, Age 38, Rescue 1**

- While involved in a general alarm fire at an abandoned warehouse two of the fire fighters became disorientated during an interior search. (Homeless individuals were reported to be living in the warehouse.) The disoriented fire fighters radioed a mayday and organized crews initiated a search. Soon two groups of two searchers also became disoriented and lost.

## **2000 — NONE**

## **2001 — NONE**

## **2002 — One Firefighter Death**

### **Fall River 9/19/02 District Chief Gerald Nadeau**

- District Chief Gerald Nadeau died from complications sustained while directing the efforts of Fall River firefighters at an apartment fire on September 19, 2002 at 6:42 p.m. at 34 Orange Street. District Chief Nadeau, completed the incident and returned to the station to write the incident report. However, he soon sought medical treatment and was admitted to a local hospital. He died at the hospital on October 10, 2002. He was 51-years old.

## **2003 — One Firefighter Death**

### **Lancaster 11/29/03 Firefighter Martin H. McNamara V**

- Firefighter Martin H. McNamara V, was one of the first firefighters responding to the scene of an apartment fire at 76 Mill St. He was on the first attack line in. He later found himself in the basement with three Clinton firefighters. After an unforeseen flare up of the fire, and amongst the dense smoke and debris he became disoriented and trapped. He was 31-years old.

## **2004 — NONE**

**2005 — NONE**

**2006 — NONE**

**2007 — Three Firefighter Deaths**

**Boston 5/31/07 Firefighter David A. Middleton**

- Firefighter David A. Middleton suffered a fatal heart attack at his home after he had just finished his shift. During his shift he worked at two different fire incidents. After the second incident he told his lieutenant that he was not feeling well. He was 39-years old.

**Boston 8/29/07**

**Firefighter Paul J. Cahill, Age 55**

**Firefighter Warren J. Payne, Age 53**

- Firefighters Paul J. Cahill and Warren J. Payne, of the Boston Fire Department were some of the first firefighters to enter the Tai Ho restaurant at 1727 Centre St. in West Roxbury. During the fire, an HVAC unit collapsed through the roof. Many firefighters became disoriented after the roof collapse and had to be rescued.