Burn Severity Stats and Facts

FACTS

A burn is an injury to the skin or other organic tissue primarily caused by heat or due to radiation, radioactivity, electricity, friction or contact with chemicals.

Thermal (heat) burns occur when some or all of the cells in the skin or other tissues are destroyed by:

- hot liquids (scalds)
- hot solids (contact burns), or
- flames (flame burns).

There are a number of other risk factors for burns, including:

- occupations that increase exposure to fire;
- poverty, overcrowding and lack of proper safety measures;
- placement of young girls in household roles such as cooking and care of small children;
- underlying medical conditions, including epilepsy, peripheral neuropathy, and physical and cognitive disabilities;
- alcohol abuse and smoking;
- easy access to chemicals used for assault (such as in acid violence attacks);
- use of kerosene (paraffin) as a fuel source for non-electric domestic appliances;
- inadequate safety measures for liquefied petroleum gas and electricity.

STATS

- From the mid 1970s about 9,000 people died of burn injuries annually and anyone with burns covering more than 20 percent of their body almost always died.
- Today, people with burns covering 90 percent of their body can survive, but will likely have permanent disabilities.

- Americans have a 1 in 1,442 chance of dying from exposure to fire, flames or smoke inhalation.
- Around 10,000 people die annually from burn-related infections.
- **1,345,500 Fires Were Reported In 2015**– almost a 4 percent increase from 2014.
- 639,500 were classified as outside & ‘other’ fires, totaling one every 49 seconds.
- 501,500 fires were classified as structure fires, totaling one every 63 seconds.
- 174,000 fires were classified as highway vehicle fires, totaling one every 181 seconds.
- A fire department responded to a fire every 23 seconds.
- These fires killed 3,280 people and injured almost 16,000.
- 78 percent of deaths occurred in house fires.