



**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT**  
**TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON**  
**GLOUCESTER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

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**EMERGENCY**  
**9 -1-1**

Board of Fire Commissioners  
P.O. Box 653  
Turnersville, N.J. 08012-0653

**Washington Township Fire District**  
**Fire Department Policy # 27-12**  
**Fire Investigation Response Criteria**

It is the policy of the Washington Township Fire District to enforce The New Jersey State Fire Code in reference to Fire Investigations:

**N.J.A.C. 5:18-2.1**

**Enforcement Authority (f)** The Fire Official shall investigate, or cause to be investigated, every reported fire or explosion occurring within the jurisdiction that involves the loss of life or serious injury or causes destruction or damage to property. Such investigation shall be initiated immediately upon the occurrence of such fire or explosion; and if it appears that such an occurrence is a suspicious nature, the Fire Official shall take charge immediately of the physical evidence, and in order to preserve any physical evidence relating to the cause or origin of such fire or explosion, take means to prevent access by any person or persons to such building, structure or premises until such person designated by law to pursue investigations into such matters become involved and shall further cooperate with such authorities in the collection of evidence and prosecution of the case.

The following shall act as a guideline for requesting the response of the Washington Township Fire Investigation Unit to investigate any incident.

If there is a need for the Fire Investigation Unit, call for them immediately.

The response of the Fire Investigation Unit shall be requested when the following conditions exist:

- A. When there is more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) in property damage by fire, smoke, or water, and ALWAYS when structural damage has occurred.
- B. When the owner or occupant states that the fire was caused by another person.

FD Policy # 27-12

The Fire Investigation Unit shall be requested when a fire causes more than \$500.00 in damage in the following situations.

1. Dwellings, occupied (including apartments and condominiums)
2. All unoccupied dwellings.
3. Structures (Business, Mercantile, Commercial, Factory)
4. Outbuildings (Storage Sheds, Barns, etc.)
5. All unattended parked vehicles regardless as to where they are located.
6. Kerosene or other portable heating devices.
  
7. All fires in storage compartments of any truck whether parked or in motion.
8. Washer and dryer fires in common area of apartment complexes.
9. Bodily injury to civilians and or fire fighters requiring medical attention.
10. All motor vehicle accidents involving Fire District owned vehicles.

It is not necessary to call for the Fire Investigation Unit when:

1. Fire is contained in a chimney while burning in fire place or wood stove.
2. Dryer fires while in use and the owner/occupant is at home.
3. Electrical shorts in appliances and the owner/occupant are at home.
4. Occupied vehicles in motion on the roadway.
5. House heater backfires.
6. Dumpster Fires (unless there are multiple dumpsters involved or there is evidence of an incendiary or explosive device(s)).

The Fire Investigation Unit shall be notified if any of the above situations causes more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) in property damage by fire, smoke, or water. The Fire Investigation Unit shall ALWAYS be notified when structural damage is done or **WHENEVER** there is an injury that involves a fire, regardless of the dollar amount.

On any fire when the Washington Township Fire Investigation Unit is not called, the O.I.C. should write a neat and concise incident report reflecting all pertinent details. A copy of this report shall be sent to the Bureau of Fire Prevention within 48 hours.

If there is no response from the Washington Township Fire Investigation Unit, the Gloucester County Fire Marshal's Office shall be notified to respond.

**The above policy was amended at a meeting of the Washington Township Board of Fire Commissioners held on June 7, 2012. The original date of Policy # 27 was June 3, 1987.**

**BY:**



Samuel Micklus  
Chairman

**ATTEST:**



Frank Stella  
Secretary