

## Errors and Misrepresentations in Journal Sentinel Stories on Electrical Fires

1. **Major error:** Says national database listed eight deaths in Milwaukee.

U.S. Fire Administration website shows civilian fatalities in Wisconsin from 10/1/2012 thru 12/31/2019 as a total of 316 state deaths in that time period, with a total of 41 in Milwaukee. This error has not been corrected in the online version.

2. Claims “shoddy data” by National Fire Protection Association – but what about U.S. Fire Administration, part of FEMA, data?

3. Implying MFD does shoddy data collection – ignores MFD special investigation unit which investigates fires with deaths, serious injuries or over \$10,000 in damages

4. Unjustified implication about lack of insurance if there is no mortgage. What if mortgage is paid off?

Poor sample – 25 properties with no mortgage. Did they ask the owners of these properties if they carried insurance?

5. Implies that landlords got the law changed to prevent inspections but the statute, sec. 66.0104, specifically refers to “safe operating condition” of electrical system as *habitability concern. Allows inspections for that reason.*

6. “Electrical fires *often* start in concealed spaces.” No, they start from overloaded or improper extension cords. Start from tenants stealing electricity from their neighbor.

7. Damaged electrical meters are a major problem with tenants prying off box cover when power has been shut off for nonpayment.

8. Ignores most read-about Milwaukee fire of all time – In the book *Evicted* the 8 month old daughter of tenant Kamala dies. Lamp tipped over. Two little kids left alone. That fire was electrical.

9. Insulting to MFD – says “key details are missing” in its reporting.

10. “Moonlighting” comment – all legislators have other jobs and businesses. Many Democratic legislators are also rental property owners.

11. **Key: how about comparing fire deaths in cities which do have landlord registration programs?**

**In the very last paragraph of the first story: “many fires still go unreported” to the national database. But surely not unreported by MFD!**

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