

StatCan Blog: StatCan and the Alberta wildfire

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Statistics Canada faced a dilemma. How does a statistical agency count everyone in a community, when pretty much everyone has been told to leave?

This edition of *StatCan Blog*, [StatCan and the Alberta wildfire](#), looks at what happened last May, when the northern Alberta community of Fort McMurray was hit by wildfires just as the collection phase of the 2016 Census of Population got underway. The fire destroyed 2,500 homes in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and disrupted thousands of lives. The last thing residents needed was someone asking them to complete a survey.

So, the Agency put its contingency plan into action. Developed for disruptions in the Labour Force Survey, the plan can be adapted to measure the effects of any disaster. The Agency also added new questions to a number of economic surveys to help gauge the impact of the wildfires.

These data provide both a statistical window into the impact had by a major natural disaster on a community's economic and social life, and a baseline for the community to measure progress as Wood Buffalo rebuilds.

This edition of the *StatCan Blog*, [StatCan and the Alberta wildfire](#), is now available.

An infographic entitled "[Fort McMurray 2016 Wildfires – Economic Impact](#)" is also available, as part of the publication *Statistics Canada – Infographics (11-627-M)*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).

