

## Copied from "The California Veteran"

### Did My Military Records Get Burned??

Facts about the 1973 Fire at the National Personnel Records Center (St. Louis, MO).

On July 12, 1973, a disastrous fire at NPRC (MPR) destroyed approximately 16-18 million Official Military Personnel Files. The affected record collections are described below.

Branch	Personnel and Period Affected	Estimated Loss
Army	Personnel discharged Nov. 1, 1912, to Jan. 1, 1960	80%
Air Force	Personnel discharged Sep. 25, 1947, to Jan. 1, 1964 (with names alphabetically after Hubbard, James E.)	75%

No duplicate copies of the records that were destroyed in the fire were maintained, nor was a microfilm copy ever produced. There were no indexes created prior to the fire. In addition, millions of documents had been lent to the Department of Veterans Affairs before the fire occurred. Therefore, a complete listing of the records that were lost is not available. Nevertheless, NPRC (MPR) uses many alternate sources in its efforts to reconstruct basic service information to respond to requests.

### DD-214 Application On-Line

The National Personnel Record center now provides veterans wishing to request a copy of their DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, electronically. Visit their website at [www.vetreccs.archives.gov](http://www.vetreccs.archives.gov). This web based application provides better service by eliminating the National Personnel Record center's mailroom processing time.

Next of kin of deceased former military members may also use the online military personnel records system website to request the forms.

Those individuals requesting a copy should receive the form in approximately 3-6 months from the time they submitted the application.