

U.S. plan to improve firefighter shelters falters

By Keith Ridler, AP

Crews who battle wildfires will have to wait at least another year before getting better fire shelters than those that failed to save 19 firefighters trapped by flames in Arizona four years ago, officials told The Associated Press on Thursday.

The deaths pushed the U.S. Forest Service to speed up work to get an upgraded shelter in place this year, but the effort has been delayed a year after prototypes could not outperform the shelter developed in 2002.

It comes as firefighters are facing more destructive wildfires and the struggle to protect more homes being built in or near remote areas.

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