Destruction of the Government District by Fire

Around 4:30 p.m. on May 8, 1911, a fire broke out from Nanokamachi and spread due to strong winds, burning continuously for 10 hours. This was the Northern Great Fire that destroyed the government district.

This was the day of the Yakushi festival, a traditional event of Yamagata said to have continued for over 400 years from the Edo period to the present day. The flames spread from Nanokamachi to: Hatagomachi, Muikamachi, Yakushimachi, Kajimachi, Miyamachi, Ennojimachi, Yokkamachi, and Katomachi. As a result, major buildings such as the prefectural office, city hall, police station, library, middle school, courthouse, and Yakushi Hall were all burned down. In addition, more than 1300 households in areas such as Hatagomachi and Muikamachi were destroyed.

Although the prefectural office and city hall had completely burned down, important documents of the prefecture and city were successfully saved from the flames. After the fire, the prefectural office moved its operations to Senshoji Temple, and the city hall moved to Saiseikan Hospital to continue administrative work. However, due to the Northern Great Fire, the government district designed by Mishima was lost.

A substantial relief fund was gathered from influential people both within the city and from various other regions. In addition, insurance companies also provided significant payments to those affected by the fire.

Some buildings were reconstructed after the Northern Great Fire, including the prefectural office (present-day Bunshokan) and the prefectural assembly hall (present-day Chitosekan).