



NFSA e-Bulletin

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Industry Leaders Partner for Dwelling Fire Sprinkler Contractor Accreditation.

More than 3,000 people in the U.S. lose their lives each year to fires and 84% of those who die do so in their home. While smoke alarms provide an early warning signal of smoke, fire sprinklers respond to fires while they are still small, controlling the spread of deadly heat, flames and toxic smoke, as well as saving valuable property. The *2009 International Residential Code (IRC)* provides a provision that requires newly constructed one- and two-family houses to include the installation of life-saving fire sprinkler systems, designed to dramatically reduce the number of injuries and deaths in the home caused by fires.

To address the huge upswing in demand for contractors who are qualified to install residential fire sprinkler systems driven by these new regulations, The Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), the International Code Council (ICC), and the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) are developing a joint Memorandum of Understanding that includes the creation of a new Commission for the Accreditation for Dwelling Fire Sprinkler Contractors. Using the CPSE accreditation model, many additional stakeholders will be brought together to form this newly formed commission to jointly develop programs for accreditation, leveraging their collective knowledge, provisions and expertise.

Although this initiative originated with three important and respected organizations, all construction professionals are encouraged to lend their support to help evolve and grow this life-saving initiative. The collective participation of the construction community will ensure that the industry is fully trained and qualified.

The timing of this agreement couldn't be better: approved fire sprinkler systems will be required in all one- and two-family dwellings constructed after the 2009 IRC is adopted or on January 1, 2011, whichever is later. While there are professionals who are well trained to install commercial fire sprinklers, the demand for qualified residential sprinkler contractors is growing at a tremendous rate. Given the dependence on the life-saving benefits of fire sprinklers in residential properties, it is imperative that there is a system to ensure quality installation.

The program will ensure that the entire industry has access to a superior level of training and have taken the ICC Residential Fire Sprinkler Design and Installation Exam, which is critical to enable construction projects to be completed on schedule and ensure quality installation. These highly qualified contractors will be accredited by a well respected, nationally recognized organization. This will provide home buyers, contractors and fire and life safety agencies with an added sense of security in knowing these fire sprinkler systems will be properly designed and installed.

For more information on this new accreditation program, IRC fire sprinkler code provisions, or about fire prevention and safety, contact ICC's PMG Group at 1-888-ICC-SAFE, x4PMG or pmgresourcecenter@iccsafe.org.

The Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) is dedicated to helping local public safety agencies worldwide to streamline and improve services to their communities. Through its individual commissions, CPSE provides a host of programs, including accreditation and education programs for fire and emergency service agencies and professional designations. Visit publicsafetyexcellence.org.

The International Code Council (ICC) publishes building safety, energy efficiency and fire prevention codes that are used in the construction of residential and commercial buildings. Most U.S. cities, counties and states choose the I-Codes based on their outstanding quality. The ICC's Plumbing, Mechanical and Fuel Gas (PMG) Group is devoted exclusively to providing PMG products and support. Contact the PMG Group at 1-888-ICC-SAFE, x4PMG or visit iccsafe.org.

About the National Fire Sprinkler Association

Established in 1905, the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) is the voice of the fire sprinkler industry. NFSA leads the drive to get life-saving fire sprinklers into all buildings; provides support and resources for its members – fire sprinkler contractors, manufacturers and suppliers; and educates authorities having jurisdiction of fire control matters. Headquartered in Patterson, N.Y., NFSA has regional operations offices throughout the country. www.nfsa.org.