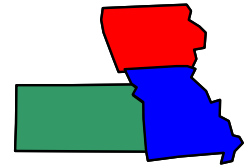




# REGIONAL REPORT

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Remember if you have code or technical questions, the Expert of the Day is there for NFSA members.

Email them at [eod.nfsa.org](mailto:eod.nfsa.org)

**Greetings to all.** As you probably have noticed, summer is among us. Temperatures are heating up and the Midwest humidity has once again arrived making us feel like we have spent hours in sauna. Over the past month there have been a lot of happenings in MO which I will speak of and I want to update everyone on. And even though the Iowa and Kansas are not as currently active with the same pressing issues, I would place my bet that in the very near future we will be seeing similar outbreaks.

- 1) We are still anticipating that the MO Governor will be signing the mandatory option law for residential sprinklers in the near future. If the bill is not officially signed the end of July, the bill automatically becomes law and will go into effect August 28th, 2009. I have met with the fire service this past month to discuss brainstorming ideas about the educational material which will be presented to the MO HBA who will in turn (with over sight from the fire service) will present the educational material to the potential homebuyer. Now I know what you are already thinking, but hold out for a minute here. As industry, we must do our part to ensure that this educational material is offered as the best possible resource that the fire service can obtain. We will have to work with the fire service to ensure they have the proper tools to sell home fire sprinklers to the public. There is no way that we can hold the fire services or the HBA hands to ensure that the material is being presented accurately or fairly to the potential homebuyer. But we must be pro- and re-active to the fire services needs when they need help to provide the best educational material. I heard one fire chief say to the HBA, "Please don't worry about trying to sell these systems to the public. Let us sell fire safety." To the fire service, that is exactly the attitude I ask you to have. If you are the fire service who believes that residential fire sprinklers are a good fit for your community, we the industry will be right behind you to the best of our ability.

Another concern that I hear is that fire sprinklers will be put in by plumbers through the homebuilders. Well you might be right. But again there are two things that we must evaluate to ensure the fire sprinkler industry is protected.

A) We must come to the realization that plumbers might be installing fire sprinkler systems in homes, but as an industry we also have to help educated the AHJ the importance of requiring any person who is going to install life and property fire protection systems that they should all have to meet a certain standard of qualification level.

In Iowa there is currently a state law which outlines contractor and fitters licensing requirements. In MO and Kansas we currently anticipate the local AHJ will ensure that qualified persons are at end of the pipe wrench. In some larger cities this has already been established. It has been brought to my attention that the NFSA will soon be releasing a new or revised 40 hour class which will help set an industry standard for the installation of residential systems. This qualification or certification guidelines will be key for AHJ's as it will help reinforce that residential fire sprinkler systems are being properly installed by properly trained people.

B) Contractors must prepare themselves to be competitive in the residential market if they plan to see their company gain this market. So what is your company doing to prepare for this outcome? Are you sitting back waiting to see if this is really going to happen. If so, then did you put time, money, and effort towards it? So then why would you just wait? I encourage you to sketch out a future business plan so that when everything falls in place you will be prepared to be a part of the benefit package. If your business plan is hammered out, then take the next step to become involved to ensure that things move forward. If we sit back as an industry and have like attitudes, then you can bet that unqualified people will be making money from your past efforts.

- 2) Contractor's licensing. Again we will be having our MO meeting on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009 at the Lodge of the Four Season at the Lake of the Ozarks to discuss with lobbyist the introduction of another fire sprinkler contractor licensing bill. Not only with the items mention above but now is the time that we look towards the future to make sure that the fire sprinkler industry is protected from potential black eyes. This is an invitation to all Fire Sprinkler Contractor's. If you have not RSVP'd please do so as soon as you can so that I know how many to account for. As I said, I know that IA currently has laws in place, but we will need to be thinking about protecting KS as well someday.
- 3) Inspection, Testing and Maintenance. One of our primary goals in the St. Louis area is to help educate the AHJ about the importance of ITM and how it should properly be done. One of the biggest areas of inspection misses we see out there in our industry is the properly preformed NFPA 25 inspection enforcement by AHJ's. In my opinion I am not really sure that it not just a matter of they (AHJs) do not want to enforce NFPA 25 but rather the fact that they do not realize that they are supposed to. I also know that this puts the contractor in a tough spot because you want to inform a local AHJ of a potential system problem or failure, but fear the lost of a customer who thinks you will cost them money he does not want to have to spend. This is another reason we are working with AHJ on educating and encouraging them to adopt local ordinances which will allow them (AHJ) to be informed about a faulty system and allows the contractor and avenue to rely that information to the AHJ legally. We are offering the 3 day ITM class in the St. Louis area July 21-23<sup>rd</sup>. If you would like a brochures on the class please contact me and I will provide you with the information. **If you are a local AHJ in the St. Louis area, please contact me with a special opportunity to attend this class at an extremely discounted rate.** You must contact me ASAP to ensure there is still seat availability.

So with the above mentioned there are many things taking place and will probably take place across the country and within our region. And again, my question to you is “how much are you getting involved to make sure there are the right outcomes?” If you are concern that there is an area of our region which is not prepared to answer these questions, then please feel free to call me. We can discuss a strategy to get on track.

## **From NFSA HQ: Patterson, NY.....**

### **NFSA Wins Award for Fire Sprinkler Technician Recruitment Video**

NFSA has won a Public Relations Society of America New Jersey Chapter “Pyramid Award” for its Fire Sprinkler Technician Recruitment Video, targeting entry-level workers to join the fire sprinkler industry. The annual awards program recognizes exceptional performance generating public relations visions, strategies, and programs that result in measurable return for their client’s brands and bottom lines. The project was lead by NFSA’s Technician Recruitment Committee, co-chaired by Terry Victor of SimplexGrinnell and Alan Wiginton of Wiginton Fire Systems. The winning video can be [viewed here](#).

### **NFSA Joins United States Green Building Council**

While it has been promoting the “green” benefits of automatic fire sprinkler protection for some time now, NFSA has made its support of environmentally friendly construction practices official by becoming a member of the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). NFSA’s membership will give the fire sprinkler industry an important voice in the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) program. Appearing in the Mar/Apr 2009 issue of SQ magazine, NFSA’s New York Regional Manager Dominick Kasmauskas wrote an article reviewing USGBC, their LEED program and the role fire sprinkler protection can play in the reduction of ozone depleting greenhouse gases.

[Green Construction and Fire Protection](#)

### **NFSA Cancels 2010 Hawaii Annual Seminar, Cites Responsibility to Industry**

Today, Tuesday, June 16, the Board of Directors of the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) made the very difficult but prudent decision to cancel next year’s Annual Seminar scheduled for May 12 – 15 at the Fairmont Orchid on Hawaii’s Big Island. While not definite, it is possible that NFSA will host a downsized, two-day annual event in a Midwestern city within easy, cost-effective reach of the entire membership. As plans develop, additional information will be posted here as it becomes available. |

[Read the full story](#)

### **Texas Bill Would Limit Cities Rules on Fire Sprinklers**

A late-session provision that would prohibit municipalities from requiring sprinkler systems in some residences has left Gov. Rick Perry stuck between a brigade of Texas fire chiefs and the campaign dollars of local homebuilders.

Rep. John Otto, R-Dayton, tacked the amendment on to a plumber licensing bill during the waning days of the session. If Perry signs it, the measure would stop municipalities from requiring sprinkler systems in single- and two-family homes after Jan. 1, 2009, meaning the bill would nullify any ordinances passed this year.

[Read news story here](#) [From Common Voices](#)

## **Special SAM Council Election Results**

At the request of the NFSA Supplier and Manufacturers (SAM) Council, the NFSA Board recently amended the Association's By-Laws to expand the membership of the Council from 9 to 12 members. A special election was held among the SAM members of the Association, and three individuals have been elected to staggered terms:

**Robert Lopuzzo** – Ferguson Fire and Fabrication, Passaic, NJ, will serve through 2012

**Randal Greenslate** – Fire Protection Products, Carlsbad, CA, will serve through 2011

**Patrick Wallis** – Allied Tube and Conduit, Harvey, IL, will serve through 2010

These individuals will be seated at the June 15, 2009 meeting of the NFSA Councils, which will take place in Quebec in conjunction with the Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association's Annual General Meeting.

## **NFSA Online Seminars Schedule for 2009:**

### **Technical Tuesdays**

**July 21, 2009 - System Terminology**

**Victoria B. Valentine, P.E., Director of Product Standards**

**Basic**

One of the struggles to beginning in any industry is learning the terminology. This is no different for the sprinkler industry and those responsible for inspecting the sprinkler systems. This program will review the components that make up the water-based fire protection systems. It will include basic definitions that are applied in inspections of systems as well as necessary forms and checklists. (Great study guide for NICET Work Elements 41001, 41002, 41003, and 41008)

**August 4, 2009 - Inspection and Testing of Wet Pipe Sprinkler Systems**

**Jeff Hugo, C.B.O., Manager of Codes**

**Basic**

This seminar will start with discussing the proper tools used during inspection and testing of sprinkler systems and preparing to perform a proper inspection. It will cover the basic inspection and testing requirements of NFPA 25 for wet pipe sprinkler systems along with a review of the basic system components of a wet pipe sprinkler system for identification purposes. The seminar will wrap up with a discussion of the proper use of forms to report findings to the owner. (Great study guide for NICET Work Elements 41007 and 43002)

**August 25, 2009 - Field Identification of Sprinklers**

**Russell P. Fleming, P.E., Executive Vice President**

**Basic/Intermediate**

Various product recall and replacement programs have made it important to be able to identify particular types and brands of sprinklers, but field identification goes beyond this. Attributes such as temperature rating, orifice size, response sensitivity and orientation determine sprinkler system performance characteristics, and the need to properly replace sprinklers requires a complete understanding of all variations. (Great study guide for NICET Work Element 41017)

### **Business Thursdays**

