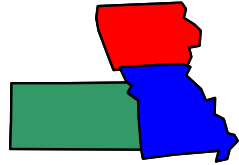




REGIONAL REPORT

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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

IRC FIRE SPRINKLER VOTE WINS BIG-TIME IN BALTIMORE

On October 28, 2009, with a majority vote of 7 to 4, the International Residential Code (IRC) Committee voted no to a new code proposal made by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) that would have eliminated the IRC code requirement that mandates fire sprinklers in all new one-and-two family dwellings and townhouses.

Again, this vote was historic and this time unprecedented! Fire sprinklers are currently in the 2009 edition of the IRC because of a “**FIRST HISTORIC VOTE**” that happened in Minneapolis last year when a 2/3 majority floor vote of residential fire sprinkler supporters overturned a decision of this same committee that would have kept fire sprinklers out of the IRC.

For this years’ scheduled IRC Code Hearing in Baltimore, there were four significant proposals and if passed by the IRC Code Committee, they would have totally eliminated or reduced code requirements for residential fire sprinkler systems.

The following is what happened:

Proposal # RB53 which changes threshold requirements for one and two-story townhouses requiring fire sprinklers and separation wall ratings from 1 to 2 hours. This was withdrawn by the submitter.

Proposal #RB54 by the NAHB which would have eliminated sprinklers in all 1 and 2 family dwellings and townhouses. Representing the Michigan Association of Home Builders, one proponent spoke in support of this proposal. There were several excellent speakers opposing this proposal, including **Glen A. Gaines**, Deputy Assistant Administrator, U.S. Fire Administration, **Jeff Johnson**, President, International Association of Fire Chiefs, **Gary Keith**, Executive Vice-President, National Fire Protection Association, **Shawn Decrane**, representing the International Association of Firefighters and **Michael Willard**, CEO, Habitat for Humanity, Austin Texas. It was expected that this proposal would have been approved by the IRC Code Committee and that another 2/3 majority floor vote would be needed to overturn the code committee vote. That did not happen.

A motion was made by IRC Code Committee members **Kathi Osmonson** and seconded by **Robert Eugene** to disapprove the NAHB proposal. Considerable discussion by code committee members followed this motion and it was clearly stated by some of the code committee members that the majority voice of the membership of the ICC in favor of residential fire sprinklers should be respected and that the whole issue of implementing these systems should now move forward to produce much-needed and effective safety systems. The hearing chair called for a code committee vote and this is where **“HISTORIC VOTE #2”** took place. Seven members voted to disapprove this proposal. As expected, four members, all representing the NAHB, voted in support of their proposal. Immediately following this code committee vote that defeated RB54, proponents of the NAHB proposal called for an “assembly action” to overturn the code committee vote. That attempt was defeated by a show-of-hands vote that clearly indicated another 2/3 majority win by sprinkler supporters. There were approximately 1700 registered voters in attendance and the NAHB support showed less than 50 hands. It was truly an impressive majority that visibly demonstrated that fire sprinklers should stay in the IRC.

(R) The motion to disapprove RB 54 is made by Mounds View, MN Building Official & Fire Marshal Kathi Osmonson, a member of the IRC Committee, leading to a 7-4 vote supporting residential fire sprinklers in the 2012 IRC.



(L) A call for a floor vote on the IRC Committee motion to disapprove RB 54 was requested. The attending membership voted approximately 1,600 to 50 to support the continuance of the residential fire sprinkler provision in the IRC-2012.

Proposal # RB56 by the NAHB. This proposal would eliminate the code requirements mandating fire sprinklers in all new 1 & 2 family dwellings and townhouses and places the provisions into an optional appendix that must be adopted locally. The consequence of this change if passed would be reverting the code to where it was in the 2006 edition. Again, the IRC Code committee voted on this proposal

and defeated it by a 7-4 margin. The proponents of this proposal **did not call for assembly action** to try and overturn the code committee vote because it was obvious from the previous floor action vote on RB54 that they couldn't win with the overwhelming number of sprinkler supporters in attendance.

Proposal #RB57. This proposal was another attempt to eliminate code requirements mandating fire sprinklers in all new 1 & 2 family dwellings and townhouses. Given what had just happened during this code hearing, the proposal was prudently withdrawn.

What happened on October 28, 2009 in Baltimore was directly linked to a massive effort by those who clearly understand and support the importance of residential fire sprinkler protection. The list of individuals, fire safety leaders, firefighters, fire and building-code officials, IRC code committee members and a vast array of organizations who made this all happen is long and impressive. Each and every one who logged long hours, travelled hundreds of miles and never stopped recruiting support for this historic achievement can equally share in the satisfaction that we **did make a difference and everyone collectively won that day for much-needed residential fire safety in America!!!!**

The Iowa Building Code Advisory Council held a final a special meeting on October 21st to consider final adoption of amendments to the State Building Code, including adoption of the 2009 editions of the following codes, with amendments:

- International Building Code
- International Residential Code
- International Energy Efficiency Code
- International Mechanical Code
- International Existing Building Code

The final adoptions will suggestion submittal which included the following amendments for the 2009 IRC code:

Delete section R313.2 and insert in lieu thereof the following new section:

R313.2 One- and two-family dwellings automatic fire sprinkler systems. Effective January 1, 2013, an automatic fire sprinkler system shall be installed in one- and two-family dwellings.

EXCEPTION: An automatic residential fire sprinkler system shall not be required for additions or alterations to existing buildings that are not already provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system.

It is my understanding that the January 1, 2013 date will also go into effect for all new townhouses as well. The Iowa Joint Rules Committee still has to have a hearing and meeting to take action on these issues before final approval and a statute rules change goes into effect on January 1, 2010. I will report in the December newsletter when the expected date for that hearing will take place.

Also it is my understanding that some new rules have been put in place for the requirements to become a licensed fire sprinkler installer. You can find that information [here](#).

REGISTER NOW FOR.....



FIRE TEAM USA will be coming to Iowa in January 13th and 14th, 2010. If you are a fire official, building official, public works director, water purveyor official, planning or zoning official, or any type of elected or appointed local or state government official, you will not want to miss this free seminar. For more information about Fire Team USA check out www.fireteamusa.com. Click [here](#) to register.

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

Residential Fire Sprinkler Vote-Today!

From the ICC hearings in Baltimore: The residential fire sprinkler vote will be on the agenda today (Wed.) some time late afternoon or early evening, according to an ICC staff member. According to fire sprinkler advocates on the scene, only a limited number of home builders have been seen at today's hearings.

ICC Hearing Update

From the ICC hearings in Baltimore: Amy Acton, Executive Director of the Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors, headquartered in Grand Rapids, Mich., and a Common Voices Advocate, is at the ICC hearings in Baltimore to testify on behalf of mandatory residential fire sprinkler requirements in U.S. building codes. She reports her goal is to emphasize not just the toll on lives, but also the impact of home fires on our citizens as it relates to burn injuries. She notes people routinely look at the 3,000 deaths per year from home fires, but don't always consider the impact of 13,000 plus burn injuries per year from home fires. Amy is confident the fire service can stop the effort by home builders to repeal the safety protections the IRC includes to make homes safer.

ICC Hearing Attendees Invited to Barbeque

ICC hearing attendees are invited to a barbeque! The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, Common Voices Coalition, Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors, and Fire Team USA hosted a BBQ on Wednesday, October 28 on the day of the IRC hearings. The feast was served by the District of Columbia Fire Department's award-winning BBQ Team. The food was served at the Steadman Fire Station, (15 S. Eutaw St. near Lombard St. – just 1-1/2 blocks north from the Hilton Baltimore, where the hearings were being held. Common Voices is an Advocates' Coalition sponsored by the National Fire Sprinkler Association. The advocates that serve as the Coalition's Advisory Committee have all been directly affected by fire. By bringing their voices together, the NFSA hopes to assist the advocates in their quest to ensure that others will not have to deal with similar tragedies. This Coalition strives to make a difference by sharing their stories and influencing change, and will be testifying at the ICC hearings.



Illinois Regional Manager Bob Kleinheinz Receives Achievement Award

Bob Kleinheinz, NFSA Illinois Regional Manager, will be presented with the Achievement Award by the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association on Friday, October 23. Buffalo Grove Fire Marshal George Michehl wrote a winning nomination letter on Bob's behalf. All of us at NFSA wish to congratulate Bob on being recognized for his dedication and hard work. Way to go, Bob!

Sprinkler Industry Business Climate Survey Results Available

Over the last few weeks, NFSA conducted a survey of fire sprinkler contractors to gauge the depth and potential length of the current economic downturn. Over 200 anonymous responses were received from fire sprinkler contractors all over the country. The results have been compiled and are available

[View the results](#)

NFSA Green Committee Seeking LEED Input

The NFSA Green Committee is seeking input on the recognition of fire sprinklers in the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building certification program. The committee formed earlier this year is seeking to promote the concept that a building can't be considered "green" unless it is protected by an automatic fire sprinkler system. The committee is currently trying to find out if LEED credits have been awarded on any projects for sprinkler-related reasons, such as innovation in design. Please take a few minutes and respond to the survey.

[Take the survey!](#)



NFSA Banner Televised on Today Show

The NFSA banner appeared on the Today Show on Monday, October 5th. In honor of Fire Prevention Week, Darcie Borden of NFSA's public relations firm, R&J was able to get a shot of the banner on the air and spoke with Al Roker about Fire Prevention Week.

Sprinklerman to Celebrate Fire Prevention Week with Coloring Contest

Fire Prevention Week was October 4-10, 2009 and to celebrate, Sprinklerman™© hosted a coloring contest. Entries were separated into four categories based on age: 3-4, 5-7, 8-9 and 10-12. The prize for each category will be a \$50 US Savings Bond. Entries had to be postmarked by October 31, 2009. Winners will be notified by November 30, 2009 and published at the NFSA website, in the March/April 2010 issue of SQ magazine and other NFSA publications.

[Here're the rules and picture.](#)

NFSA Develops Online "Resource Toolbox" to Support IRC Adoption

Adoption of the latest edition of the International Residential Code has been the source of hearings and debates in cities and states all over the country. To provide support for authorities interested in arming themselves with the facts about residential fire sprinkler requirements and their advantages, NFSA has made available a new online resource.

[Read the release](#) [Resource Toolbox](#)

Central Region to Hold NFSA Classes in Des Moines, IA Dec 1-3, 2009

Location: Iowa Department of Public Safety Building
215 E. Seventh Street
ICN room first floor
Des Moines, IA 50319
Co-sponsor: Iowa State Fire Marshal

Classes: Day 1 (DEC 1) - NFPA 13, 13R, 13D Update 2007
Day 2 (DEC 2) - Hydraulics for Fire Protection Systems
Day 3 (DEC 3) - Sprinkler Protection For General Storage

Register online at <http://nfsa.org/seminars/seminarchoices.html>

NFSA Online Seminars Schedule for 2009: **Technical Tuesdays**

November 10, 2009 - *Inspection and Testing of Tanks*
Kenneth E. Isman, P.E. Vice President of Engineering
Intermediate

This seminar will cover the basic purpose, function and operation of tanks used for fire protection including basic system terminology from NFPA 22. It will also cover the inspection and testing requirements for atmospheric tanks and pressure tanks along with their accessory equipment as required by NFPA 25. (Great study guide for NICET Work Elements 42003, 44004, and 44005)

November 24, 2009 - *Obstruction Inspection and Investigation*
Russell P. Fleming, P.E., Executive Vice President
Intermediate/Advanced

In addition to making a distinction between obstruction inspections and obstruction investigations as described in NFPA 25, this seminar deals with the various causes of problems and a review of available data concerning frequency of such problems. It includes some analysis of flushing procedures and discusses other remedial measures. (Great study guide for NICET Work Element 45005)

December 8, 2009 - *Preaction and Deluge Systems*
Cecil Bilbo, Jr., C.E.T.
Beginner/Intermediate

NFPA 25 requires the inspector to report on the installation of preaction and deluge systems. This seminar will discuss the different types of preaction and deluge systems. NFPA 25 also requires certain inspection and testing procedures be performed for these systems. We will also discuss the inspection and testing requirements for these different types of systems. (Great study guide for NICET Work Elements 44012 and 46010)

Business Thursdays

November 19, 2009 - *Time Scheduling*
Michael J. Friedman, P.E., NFSA Consultant

This seminar will cover some of the pertinent aspects of scheduling associated with Inspection and Testing. The need to plan the time that is necessary for the procedures to be performed, as well as, how much time will be necessary to get to the job before embarking will be featured. Also we shall cover concerns for site control, security, and safety.

December 3, 2009 - *Workplace Safety and "Right to Know" Information*

Dave Bowman, Ph.D., NFSA Associate Director of Regional Operations and Executive Director of the Florida Fire Sprinkler Association

This seminar focuses on informing the inspector how to recognize workplace hazards that may be encountered, particularly having to do with exposure to hazardous materials. Learn how to recognize the presence of hazards as well as some of the basic characteristics of the various classes of hazardous materials. Included will be labeling and packaging information and some of the things you really wished you would have paid more attention to in high school science class.