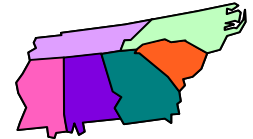




REGIONAL REPORT

Tennessee/South East Edition



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Carl Cutrell Jr. Elected to the NFSA Board of Directors as the Area 3 Directors

Carl Cutrell the President of the Tennessee Fire Sprinkler Contractors Association was elected in December to serve on the NFSA Board of Directors as the Area 3 Director. Carl has served as the President of the TFSCA for the past several years and is a perfect fit for the NFSA Board.

Carl will be replacing Ed Davis of Morristown Automatic Sprinkler, which has severed on the NFSA Board for the past several years. Thanks to Ed for his support of Area 3, the Tennessee Fire Sprinkler Contractors Association and the Southeastern Regional Manager. Ed has been very active with the Tennessee Association serving as a past President and Chair of the Membership committee.



Quick response in nursing home fire in Cookeville, Tennessee

COOKEVILLE -- Fire in a clothes dryer brought 19 firefighters rushing to the NHC nursing home on Walnut Avenue Wednesday evening. But no one was injured and no one had to be evacuated from the facility commonly known as Bunker Hill, according to the Cookeville Fire Department. "Their alarm system worked, **their sprinkler system worked**, and the staff did a great job of making sure all the barrier doors were closed," said Lt. Terry Priest. Smoke from the fire never reached the patient areas, he said.

It happened around 6:30 p.m. Priest said clothes were drying in a large industrial sized dryer in the laundry room when a fire occurred in the drum of that machine. "**That set off one of the sprinklers in the sprinkler system in that area**, and that was enough water to hold the fire in place," he said. "The smoke was confined to that area as the staff quickly closed off all other areas. The fire doors worked well." Firefighters put out the fire and helped the staff clean up the water, he said.

"The dryer was ruined and there was some water damage, but the good news is that no one was hurt and nobody had to be evacuated. "It was a little messy from the water, but every system and their staff worked very well." He estimated the total damage at around \$7,500. The firefighters left the scene at 8 p.m

Please remember that in 2005 15 people lost their lives in a nursing home fire in Nashville, the State of Tennessee passed historic legislation to require nursing home new and existing to have life saving fire sprinklers installed in them.

Sprinklers: Worth the expense in Bedford County, Tennessee?

Shelbyville has adopted the 2009 International Building Codes, but specifically exempted itself from the section of that code which would require fire protection sprinkler systems on new one-family and two-family homes.

Bedford County is on track to do exactly the same, based on a recommendation from Bedford County Planning Commission which will be considered next month by Bedford County Board of Commissioners.

Proponents say that residential sprinkler systems can save lives, and that communities which have required them for a long time, like Scottsdale, Ariz., and Prince George's County, Md., have seen benefits in terms of lives and property saved.

Opponents say that they would unduly increase the cost of buying a new home, especially in rural areas where there's not sufficient water pressure to run the systems directly from the water main, meaning a tank and pump must be installed.

Ed Antosh of the county's codes enforcement office told planners last month that a sprinkler system, plus a tank, pump and backflow preventer and all of the assorted paperwork and labor, could add \$6,000 to the cost of a home.

Wayne Waggoner of the Tennessee Fire Sprinkler Contractors Association disputes that figure, saying that in Tennessee, the cost of adding residential sprinkler systems ranges from 90 cents to \$1.25 per square foot, considerably less than the national average of \$1.61 per square foot.

"I don't know a home in the State of Tennessee that it's added \$6,000 to," said Waggoner.

"It's not cost-prohibitive to put a tank and a pump in," said Waggoner, estimating the cost of a tank and pump at between \$900 and \$1,200

Shop around

Brian Nicholson of Shelbyville Fire Department said he's spoken with homeowners about residential sprinkler systems and found that they are sometimes quoted a higher-than-expected price. He said the contractor may be quoting the price for a standard commercial sprinkler system, which is more expensive than the residential system required by code, or the contractor may simply not be enthusiastic about residential business and may be quoting an artificially-high price just to discourage it. He said those who shop around and who make it clear they are interested in a 13D residential sprinkler system can find better prices.



Roger Hawks, director of the Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Enforcement Academy on Unionville-Deason Road, shows a residential sprinkler system installed in the school's codes prop house, which is used to train building inspectors. The system uses sprinkler heads like those familiar from commercial buildings. When heat triggers one of the sprinkler heads, the red box, a flow detector, activates an alarm bell. It can also be set up to notify the homeowner's home security system.

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Nicholson told Waggoner that there are only four residential sprinkler contractors listed at TFSCA's web site for this area; Waggoner said that was out of date and he would see that the web site would be updated.

Backflow prevention

The cost of the backflow prevention portion of any sprinkler project depends on how the local water utility interprets state and federal backflow regulations. Wayne Cook of Shelbyville Power, Water and Sewerage System said that water utilities are caught between water quality regulations and code requirements. The state has rules requiring local water systems to prevent backflow, the process of standing water from the customer's water system being pushed back into the public water lines. Different water systems have different requirements for how that must be accomplished on the water customer's end, and what type of equipment must be used.



Residential fire protection sprinkler head

Waggoner said that backflow prevention for a residential sprinkler system should not be expensive.

Homeowners who add residential sprinklers to their new home could end up saving money on their homeowners' insurance, according to Waggoner. He said insurance companies offer discounts of anywhere from 5 percent to 30 percent, although in some cases that discount is based on installation of a commercial-style sprinkler system. Waggoner said insurance companies have promised to begin recognizing the residential systems as well.

Nicholson claimed that some insurance companies actually penalize building owners for sprinkler systems, fearing that the sprinkler system will burst or malfunction and cause water damage. Waggoner said that was true in the past but should not be happening anymore. He said insurance carriers recognize the value of sprinkler systems in protecting property.

It is true that, in subdivisions where 100 percent of the homes have residential sprinkler systems, the Insurance Services Office doesn't require as much water flow for fire hydrants when it sets ratings for fire protection. That could result in a better ISO rating for an all-sprinkled subdivision, and a better ISO rating translates into lower homeowners' insurance premiums for homeowners in that subdivision.

Counting the cost

Nicholson said that lighter-weight building materials now being used to save money in building construction can be more prone to fire. Waggoner said that 118 firefighters are killed in the line of duty each year, over and above the lives of homeowners lost.

According to a press release at the TFSCA web site, a 15-year study of Prince George's County, Md., a suburb of Washington, D.C. with a population of more than 800,000, seems to show benefits from residential sprinkler requirements adopted there in 1992. From 1992 to 2007, the period covered by the study, there were no deaths and only six injuries in fires at places where a residential sprinkler system was installed.

Waggoner predicted that at some point in the future, a city or county which has adopted the building codes but exempted itself from the residential sprinkler requirements will have a fatal fire resulting in a lawsuit.

Waggoner said that he understands the impact of the current economy on homebuilders, but he said homeowners don't look at the cost of household plumbing or other normal components when buying a house; they simply understand that the cost of plumbing is part of the cost of buying a home.

"We're talking about something that's really morally right," Waggoner said.

Bedford County Board of Commissioners will consider adopting the 2009 edition of the International Building Code, including whether or not to exempt the county from the residential sprinkler requirement, at its Feb. 9 meeting.

Local decisions about whether or not to require the sprinklers may eventually turn out to be a moot point. Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance is studying the cost and effectiveness of such systems and is due to report to the state legislature in May. A public comment period on the issue was held last year.

A sprinkler saves a building and business in Farragut, Tennessee.

On 1/10/09 at approximately 12:50pm, a commercial structure fire occurred at 11675 Parkside Dr. Farragut, TN. While running a load of clothes in a residential clothes dryer at the Soho Nails & Spa, the occupants noted smoke emanating from the clothes dryer. The occupant opened the door of the dryer to discover the rags inside on fire. Following a brief attempt at extinguishment using water and a portable fire extinguisher, the building fire alarm activated. Upon arrival of Rural/Metro Fire Department, interior crews discovered a smoke filled room and prior to initiating suppression with a hose line, the sprinkler head in the room of origin activated controlling and essentially extinguishing the fire. Fire damage was limited to the dryer. Smoke damage was limited mainly to the room of origin. Minimal water damage was noted. The sprinkler head was promptly replaced and business were allowed to re-occupy. Minimum disruption of services occurred, due in large part, to the effective operation of the fire sprinkler system. Upon further investigation it was noted that lint had begun to build up within the dryer exhaust. It is suggested that dryer vents be regularly cleaned and maintained free of this kind of restriction.

From Dan Johnson, Farragut Fire Marshal

Passion pours out in sprinkler project Madison Alabama

House fire makes feasibility study personal for class

A feasibility study on fire sprinklers in new homes was all too realistic for one student in Donna Jordan's English class at Bob Jones High School.

"One of my students, Kierston Goirl of Madison, experienced a house fire in October," Jordan said. "I asked Kierston if she would share her experience?and ultimately impact our community."

Students viewed videos to determine the project's worth. "Several students were very passionate and were spokespersons at the City Council meeting" for a seven-minute PowerPoint presentation on Dec. 14, Jordan said.

She wanted a service-learning project to promote higher levels of thinking and "give a real-world opportunity to communicate ideas gleaned from research."

The study aligned with Alabama study objectives, Jordan said. Students applied the research process by planning presentations and investigating sprinklers with searches online. Jordan's students evaluated oral presentations with peer critiques. In addition, they informally assessed material from John Wood, a fire safety inspector for Boeing. Wood advised on details, particularly building codes, and clarified questions for their presentation to City Council.

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"Students created PowerPoint presentations and wrote their papers in Microsoft Word to use available technology for communication," Jordan said.

Will Smith, Madison's fire inspector, was pivotal in the project. The class pursued Smith's facts on current building codes and the need for home fire sprinklers.

The Bob Jones students found the council receptive and answered its two primary questions: additional cost and aesthetics of the devices.

The students asked the council to write a city ordinance to update the fire code or adopt the 2009 code that automatically requires sprinkler installation. Their argument cited approximately 3,000 deaths from house fires - 90 percent preventable by home sprinklers. Average cost in new construction would be about \$1 per square foot, or \$6,000 for a 4,000-square-foot house. The sprinklers are hidden behind walls and ceilings and activated only when the temperature reaches 165 degrees.

State Fire Marshal Office Records 79 Fire Deaths in 2009 in South Carolina

The 2009 year came to an end last Friday with a reported 79 fire-related fatalities, an increase of four fatalities from 2008. The leading causes of fire fatalities continue to be heating, cooking, and smoking-related. 12 multiple-fatality fires were responsible for 29 deaths. All but 13 of the reported fatalities occurred in residential occupancies.

Since the New Year, five people have perished in fire-related incidents. South Carolina State Fire Marshal John Reich warns that the extreme cold weather predicted for the state this week, along with a potential winter storm advisory, poses additional concerns for fire and life safety.

Sprinklers urged for Alabama's older hotels

By Val Walton--The Birmingham News

January 23, 2010

Investigators look at the destroyed portion of the Days Inn in Hoover, Ala., on Monday Jan. 18, 2009. Four college students were killed in the fire Saturday night. The wooden structure built in the early 1960s had not been retrofitted with sprinklers. (The Birmingham News/ Mark Almond)A deadly fire at a 45-year-old Hoover hotel a week ago shows the need for older hotels to be retrofitted with fire sprinklers, the head of the Alabama Fire Chiefs Association said Friday.

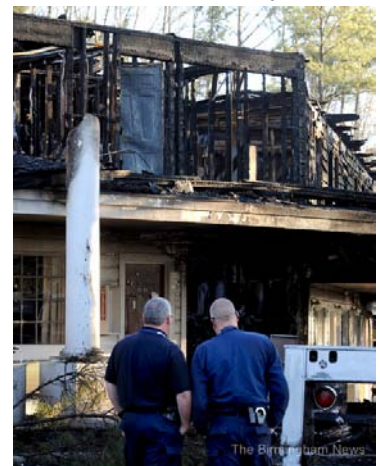
Paul McDougle, who also is chief of Muscle Shoals Fire Rescue, said that as far as he knows, there has not been a fire-related death in a building with a correctly working sprinkler system.

The Days Inn motel on U. S. 31 in Hoover did not have fire sprinklers because it was built in 1964, before safety codes required them, and was grandfathered, authorities said.

In Alabama, state law requires every hotel or motel room to have a working smoke detector but does not require fire sprinklers, said Alabama Fire Marshal Ed Paulk.

Building codes governing new hotel construction are developed by the International Code Council but adopted at the local level.

It was 1991 when standard building codes began requiring sprinklers in new hotels and motels, with some exceptions, said John Battles, a Birmingham based vice president for architect and engineering services for the International Code Council.



In 2000, standard codes provided an exemption if a hotel was three or fewer stories and had an exterior balcony with exterior stairs by which guests in each room could exit, Battles said. An update in 2003 took away that exemption for newly built rooms, he said.

No others in Hoover

Hoover Fire Marshal Frank Brocato said the two-story Days Inn is the only hotel or motel in Hoover that does not have a fire sprinkler system.

Kevin Maher, vice president of governmental affairs for the American Hotel and Lodging Association, said hotels need to follow whatever the local regulations require. He said it's almost universal that hotels with more than three stories have sprinklers, but smaller hotels are adding them more and more.

Maher said there is a significant cost to retrofit. It would be difficult to say what an average cost would be because every building is different, he said.

Paulk, the state fire marshal, acknowledged that retrofitting an older hotel or motel would be costly.

The fire at the Days Inn in Hoover was described by city fire officials as one of the worst hotel fires in the city's history.

Jim Cavanaugh, a regional supervisor for the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, said the fire likely was caused by incense left burning in the first-floor room of the hotel's maintenance man.

The man, identified as Dhirajlal Bhagat, 55, tried to fight the fire after he discovered it, but the blaze, fueled by wind, quickly engulfed the hotel's wood-frame structure. The fire was first reported at 8:08 p.m., and the first engine arrived at 8:12, authorities said. But by then, the fast-moving fire had trapped four young women in their room. They never escaped.

Efforts to reach Days Inn operators for comment were unsuccessful. Bhagat was not charged in the fire but faces deportation to his native India because he overstayed his work permit by more than two years, authorities said.

McDougle said he believes it's hard to put a cost on potential lives that could be saved by retrofitting older hotels. Once a fire sprinkler head is triggered, it controls most fires, he said.

"The fire is not as intense when sprinklers are working right," McDougle said. "The first two to three minutes are the most important when fighting fires. It makes it so much safer for firefighters to enter and go in."

'Enticing motivator'

John Corso, national training manager for the National Fire Sprinkler Association, agreed that older hotels should be retrofitted. A former Louisville fire chief, Corso who was in Hoover this week on business and visited the fire scene.

He said many hotels were retrofitted with sprinklers in the 1980s when Congress passed a law requiring federal employees to stay in a protected hotel. "It was a very enticing motivator."

Corso said it usually takes a tragedy to spark changes in codes and laws. He said many states and cities, such as Atlanta and Philadelphia, retrofitted high-rise hotels after fire deaths.

"We have tragedies and then we look at changing the codes," he said. "Maybe we should try a different business model. Let's change the code first before people are killed."

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2 kids survive Nashville duplex fire that kills 4 Members of their family and a family friend – Total of 5 dead

A father lifted his 7-year-old daughter to safety through a broken window as the Nashville family's home burned around them on Saturday morning. Jasmine Brooks ran for help, but the fire killed her mother, father and two siblings at the family's two-story duplex on 35th Avenue North.

Firefighters do not know what started the blaze. Nashville Fire Department spokesman Joaquin Toon said there were no smoke detectors in the duplex.

Parents Tedarrel Brooks, 50, and Stephanie Brooks, 32, died in the fire along with their daughters 8-year-old T'Derrica Brooks and 4-year-old Alexis Brooks. The fire also killed family friend Billy Vantrice Austin, 24.

The Brookses' 3-year-old son, Tedarrel Brooks Jr., was listed in critical condition at Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt.

After escaping the burning home just before 7 a.m., Jasmine Brooks ran to the other side of the duplex and pounded on the neighbors' door, neighbors and fire department officials said.

She awoke Jonathan Reyna, 11, who lived there with his family. His mother could not find her cell phone to call for help so the children ran to another neighbors' house for help and found Todd Martz, who raced to attempt to save the family.

"I pounded and pounded and pounded while on the phone with 911," Martz said. "There was no yelling and no response."

Neighbors said they knew little about the family, other than Tedarrel Brooks was a retired construction worker.

The fire destroyed the Brookses' home and left the other side of the duplex with smoke damage, displacing Reyna's family.

Firefighters worked with the American Red Cross to find them shelter for the night.

Both families were leasing, Toon said, and officials were locating the landlord.

Searching for the cause

Firefighters sifted through the rubble Saturday evening, searching for the cause.

"They were good people and the neighborhood would like to help," Martz said. "But the story here is to have a smoke detector."

Fire Director Chief Stephen Halford agreed.

"I am troubled by the injuries of an entire family, and while I am proud of the heroic actions made by our firefighters and paramedics, I know that working smoke detectors make a difference when a fire strikes and may have made a difference in the outcome of this fire," he said in a news release.

NFSA Offers Online Support

Efforts to block the adoption of residential fire-sprinkler regulations prompted the National Fire Sprinkler Association to an [online resource toolbox](#), which will provide community leaders with the information necessary to make the case for fire-sprinkler code adoption.

"The NFSA has experienced an upswing in requests for information regarding local code adoption and/or standalone fire sprinkler legislation," President John Viniello said.

The NFSA's free resource toolbox offers reports, articles, documents and brochures related to residential fire sprinklers and fire safety that provide guidance for making the case for fire-sprinkler code adoption. The goal of the toolbox is to highlight resources that have proved beneficial at the local level. Reports include the *Home Fire Sprinkler Cost Assessment* and the [Residential Fire Sprinklers and Housing Economics /A Legislator's Guide to Life Safety](#).

"Local community leaders need all of the latest information in one place, where it is easy to access and use for their specific

needs," said Shane Ray, the organization's director of public fire protection. "It can be overwhelming when you realize how many resources are available."

Tennessee FIRE SPRINKLER CONTRACTORS

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Chapter of NFSA

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE GO TO THE TENNESSEE FIRE SPRINKLER CONTRACTORS WEB SITE AT WWW.TFSCA.COM AND CLICK ON THE TRAINING TAB

Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act of 2009 **Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act Introduced In Senate**

On Friday, January 22, 2010, Senator Tom Carper (D-DE), with Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) as primary cosponsor, introduced the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act of 2010. The bill is the Senate companion bill to HR 1194 in the House of Representatives introduced last year by Representatives Jim Langevin (D-RI) and Eric Cantor (R-VA).

The FSIA intends to amend the 1986 Internal Revenue Code to classify fire sprinkler retrofits as a five year property for purposes of depreciation. Passage of this landmark fire protection legislation will accelerate cost recovery of fire sprinkler retrofits in a large inventory of critical occupancies built under older codes prior to requirements for inclusion of fire sprinkler systems and get us one giant step closer to a fire safe America.

Hats off to a small working group of allied organizations who have worked tirelessly over the past several months on behalf of many more groups to get this bill introduced. In addition, we applaud the vision and leadership of Senators Carper and Collins in joining together to insure bipartisan support for a very important quality of life issue.

Continue to monitor the NFSA web site for posting of a bill number next week,

To view the up to date information on the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act please go to www.nfsa.org or click on the

NFSA 2010 Annual Seminar in Chicago April 14-18

The Fairmont Chicago in Chicago, Illinois will host NFSA's 2010 Annual Seminar. Due to economic conditions, the NFSA

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Board of Directors unanimously endorsed a recommendation of the Seminar and Exhibition Committee to move the venue from the Hawaiian Islands to the mainland. Look for details on extended business sessions and timely topics on how to maintain a competitive edge in a very difficult business environment. The business sessions will be conducted on Thursday April 15 and Friday April 16. Details will follow in special mailings and on our website.