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Columbia, Tennessee—Fire Sprinkler Activations Save Property and Reduce Risks to Firefighters and Occupants

On May 23, 2010 fire sprinkler systems are credited with potentially saving a large amount of property and reducing the risk of injury or death to Columbia residents and firefighters. At approximately 0846 hours firefighters were alerted to a fire alarm activation indicating water flow at a multi-story apartment complex. Fire companies arrived on-scene and reported a slight amount of smoke visible in the apartment. Firefighters assessed the situation to find there had been a cook stove fire extinguished by the fire sprinkler system. Fire service professionals know the potential this incident held for our firefighters and the occupants of the apartment building. In this incident where the facility was equipped with a fire sprinkler system no occupants and/or firefighters were injured or killed due to this incident and there was only minor property damage associated with the fire or sprinkler activation.



Later the same day, on May 23, 2010 at approximately 1914 hours, firefighters were alerted to a fire alarm activation indicating water flow at a doctors' professional center in Columbia. Fire companies arrived on-scene and reported nothing showing. Upon further investigation it was found that the fire sprinkler system had activated in the riser room but there was no evidence of a fire. Initially, it was thought that this may have been a malfunctioning fire sprinkler system but it was determined that a heater had gotten the ceiling temperature in the riser room to a high enough level to activate the fire sprinkler. No fire was found but the alarm activation as a result of the fire sprinkler may have averted a structure fire in the facility later in the night. This incident was terminated with no occupants and/or firefighters being injured or killed and minor property damage.



In conclusion, Interim Fire Chief Steve Cross credits these fire sprinkler systems with reducing the risk of injury and/or death to our firefighters and the public with these incidents. The Columbia Fire Department primarily exists to save life and protect property. Since neither of these incidents became working structure fires, we feel our city reaped some secondary benefits from the fire

sprinkler system activations. Our environment, there was no negative environmental impact associated with these incidents like the smoke that would have been released by or the water run-off associated with large fire suppression operations necessary to extinguish such fires. Proactive fire prevention and suppression activities were very successful in helping our department meet this primary mission.

Sprinkler Requirements in Franklin, Tennessee

Fire sprinklers would be included in every new home built in Franklin if the new version of the International Building Code are adopted, unless Franklin leaders choose to opt out. The question of requiring the systems in new-home construction again sets up a potential showdown between fire officials, who say the sprinklers would help save lives, and home builders, who say the move would be over-regulating and costly.

A decision won't come until later this summer. However, city aldermen are set to adopt the new 2009 International Residential Building Code in the weeks ahead. Franklin must periodically update its building code requirements and now uses the 2006 code. Aldermen will have a special session devoted to fire sprinklers sometime later this summer and will adopt that measure separately from the larger code.

"It's a board decision and a community dialogue," said Eric Stuckey, city administrator.

The 2009 International Residential Building Code is the first time that fire sprinklers are a requirement in the main body of the code. However, Franklin can adopt its own building codes to be either tighter or looser.

"We still have city rights to make our own standards and codes," said Fire Marshal Andy King.

Cost adds \$1.12 a square foot. In the past, homebuilders and developers have complained about installing fire sprinklers. Typically, the cost of adding sprinklers adds about \$1.12 per square foot, or 1 percent or more of the building cost for a new home, officials have said.

Nolensville is the only city in the county to require sprinklers in all of its new-home construction. Spring Hill leaders discussed a sprinkler ordinance last year.

Rather than focus on new homes, which already have tighter smoke detector requirements, city officials should address how to make older homes safer, said John Sheley, executive vice president of the Home Builders Association of Middle Tennessee.

"It's not the new home they're planning to add more regulations to," Sheley said. "It's the old homes that they're not going to do anything about."

Franklin requires sprinklers in any commercial building that's 5,000 square feet or larger, among other requirements.

South Carolina – Governor Signs bill to keep sprinklers in Townhouses and will require sprinklers in One & Two Family Home starting January 1 2014

Building Codes Council to promulgate certain regulations; regulation mandating installation of automatic residential fire sprinkler system in certain dwellings ineffective before certain date

SECTION 2. Chapter 9, Title 6 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

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"Section [6-9-55](#). (A) The council shall promulgate as regulations, in accordance with the procedure and requirements contained in Article 1, Chapter 23, Title 1, any provision of or amendment to any building code that would affect construction requirements for one-family or two-family dwellings. No building code provision that would otherwise become effective after the effective date of this section concerning construction requirements for one-family or two-family dwellings shall be enforced until the effective date of the regulations required to be promulgated by this section.

(B) Notwithstanding subsection (A), a regulation mandating the installation of an automatic residential fire sprinkler system in one-family or two-family dwellings shall not become effective at any time before January 1, 2014."

Fire sprinkler system tap fees; Public Service Commission and Office of Regulatory Staff may not regulate or interfere with certain local public utilities

SECTION 3. Section [58-5-390](#) of the 1976 Code, as added by Act 357 of 2008, is amended to read:

"Section [58-5-390](#). (A) A publicly or privately owned utility may not impose a tap fee, other fee, or a recurring maintenance fee of any nature or however described for the installation and maintenance of a fire sprinkler system that exceeds the actual costs associated with the water line to the system.

(B) For purposes of this section, actual costs include direct labor, direct material, the necessity of increased capacity, and other direct charges associated with the separate fire sprinkler line. The direct costs must be documented by either an invoice or work order that specifically assigns the costs to the separate fire sprinkler line. Nothing in this section may be construed as requiring a utility to provide service to support a private fire protection system.

(C) Nothing in this section shall give the commission or the regulatory staff any power to regulate or interfere with public utilities owned or operated by or on behalf of any municipality, county, or regional transportation authority as defined in Chapter 25 of this title or their agencies."

Sprinklers put out apartment blaze in North Charleston South Carolina

A fire that broke out in a North Charleston apartment Monday night was quickly extinguished by a sprinkler system, officials said.

Shortly after 10:30 p.m., the North Charleston Fire Department was dispatched to Silvana Oaks Apartments at 8439 Dorchester Road for a report of an apartment fire, said Bianca Sancic, fire public information officer.

When the first engine arrived a few minutes later, the fire had been extinguished and the building was evacuated, Sancic said. Damage was limited to a small area of the bathroom in one apartment.

This is why the fire sprinkler law that has been signed into law in South Carolina is so important

Viking Announces National Partnership with Toll Brothers

Hastings, MI, USA – Viking Group, a global leader in fire protection and life safety systems, is proud to announce that Toll Brothers has selected Viking as its partner to provide fire suppression materials through out the USA. The new agreement, which is effective immediately, includes VIKING sprinklers, CPVC pipe, and related products for residential fire sprinkler systems.

With this new partnership, Viking SupplyNet will supply Toll Brothers' network of preferred installers with fire protection products from the company's integrated distribution network, which includes over 30 U.S. locations. In addition to supporting Toll Brothers' product needs, Viking will provide technical information, training programs, marketing initiatives, and model home support.

Viking Corporation President Mike Bosma states, "We are excited to be partnering with an industry leader like Toll Brothers, who shares our commitment to the highest level of innovation and quality." Phil Kenyon, Viking National Sales Manager-Residential, adds, "With the recent adoption of residential sprinkler requirements in states such as California, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, it is more important than ever to form strategic partnerships within our respective industries."

Viking is a global leader in the manufacture and distribution of innovative fire protection products and life safety systems. Since 1921, the Company's products and services have protected lives and property worldwide from the devastating effects of fire. For more information, please visit www.vikinggroupinc.com or call 800-968-9501.

Toll Brothers, Inc. is the nation's leading builder of luxury homes. The Company began business in 1967 and became a public company in 1986. Its common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "TOL". The Company serves move-up, empty-nester, active-adult and second-home home buyers and operates in 20 states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.

Textbook Inventory Reduction Sale! More than 50% off!

The NFSA's textbook, ***Layout, Detailing and Calculation of Fire Sprinkler Systems***, is the most complete text ever written for the fire sprinkler engineering technician, and it's on sale! **While supplies last**, get it for only \$60 plus shipping and handling for members or \$90 plus shipping and handling for non-members. This text makes an excellent self-study guide for the NICET Automatic Sprinkler Layout and Detail certification program and covers all of the work elements necessary to achieve Level 2 certification and many of the elements needed to achieve Level 3 and Level 4 certification.

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."

Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act of 2009

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We need your help in getting our Senators to sign up as a co-sponsors, please use the Cap Wiz program on the NFSA Web Site.

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