

NFSA Engineering Department Assistance Evolves

For more than 100 years, the NFSA has been helping its members deal with the technical aspects of the many codes and standards that affect the fire sprinkler industry. The technical staff of the Association has always responded to requests for assistance that help to clarify the application of these codes and standards. Frequently, we are able to provide opinions as members of the committees that write these documents on the intent behind the words. Many times, this opinion is sufficient to settle a dispute between a sprinkler contractor and an Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) that helps the public by providing good fire protection and helps the AHJ and the contractor move on to other projects.

In recent years, the NFSA members have asked for this sort of assistance so frequently that it has become a significant portion of the responsibilities of the Engineering Department. In 2003, the NFSA made the commitment to having a member of the Engineering Department “on call” during the business day to do nothing but respond to the questions that came in. The title “Engineer of the Day” was assigned to this individual in the style of the military “Officer of the Day” and the name caught on as a catchy marketing device.

As the program has evolved, we have made continuous improvements to better serve our members. We are now implementing two big improvements, which should make this service even higher quality. The first change that we will immediately implement is to change the name of the program to “Expert of the Day.” This new name will more accurately describe the individual that you are being connected with. The value in this service is that you are being connected with an expert in the subject material of fire sprinkler systems, and this new name better reflects that value. The change also allows us to keep the EOD acronym that has become synonymous with access to knowledgeable NFSA staff.

The second change that we are implementing immediately will be to institute a mechanism for quality control. While most of the questions are answered within a few hours of being asked, there have been instances where the response to a request has been longer than what our membership considers optimal. To that end, we are instituting a series of checks and balances to insure that your request is answered as soon as possible.

You can help us by following one simple procedure. When you have a request that you want answered, please email your request to eod@nfsa.org or call the NFSA at (845) 878-4200 and ask for the Expert of the Day. That way, your request will go directly to the individual assigned the duty that day and we will have mechanisms in place to track it.

Since many of our staff travel extensively, they can't always respond in a timely manner to their individual voice mails and emails. To better serve you, when emailing your requests, please use our general email address, eod@nfsa.org, if calling in, please follow the prompt for, or ask to speak with, the expert of the day. Following these procedures will insure prompt responses to your questions. Thanks for all of your continued support.