



The Voice of the Fire Sprinkler Industry

Contact:

Darcie Borden

R&J Public Relations

908-722-5757

DBorden@RandJpr.com

NATIONAL FIRE SPRINKLER ASSOCIATION RESPONDS TO HABITAT FOR HUMANITY'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIFE-SAVING FIRE SPRINKLERS

Monday, August 3, 2009, Patterson, New York – The National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA), the longest-tenured fire sprinkler advocacy organization in the U.S., delivered the following letter to Habitat for Humanity International CEO Jonathan Reckford, in response to that organization's campaigning against governmental adoption of the recently passed International Residential Code (IRC).

The new IRC requires fire sprinkler systems to be installed in all new one- and two-family homes in the U.S., starting in 2011. The code is in the process of being adopted at state and/or local jurisdictional levels across the country.

Following is the text of the letter sent by NFSA President John Viniello:

Dear Mr. Reckford,

Your organization's recent opposition to the fire sprinkler mandate in Michigan has not gone unnoticed. We at NFSA are extremely disheartened with your stand against the most valuable fire safety device a residence can contain. We fail to understand how an organization dedicated to helping humanity can take a stand against something proven to save lives, especially since many of the people waiting for Habitat for Humanity homes lost their original place of residence in a fire. There has never been a multiple fatality in any building with a properly operating fire sprinkler system. NEVER.

Personally, as President of the National Fire Sprinkler Association, I take great umbrage with your organization's stand against mandating home fire sprinkler systems. If your "habitats" are, as you say, for "humanity," wouldn't it follow that you would do all you could to protect the humans that are inhabiting the homes that you build?

Many of our members have donated, and continue to donate, materials and labor to your organization's cause, not, obviously, for profit, but to ensure the residents of your newly built homes are guaranteed a safe place to live. Fire sprinklers save lives, reduce property loss and can help cut homeowner insurance premiums. We at NFSA

believe that all people deserve this protection and our members work tirelessly, and often selflessly, to bring this invaluable safety resource to the general public.

Will our members profit if these mandates pass? Of course they will. The last time I looked there was nothing un-American about making a profit. As I'm sure you are well aware, homebuilders substantially mark-up bids from their sub-contractors. Do they make a profit or do they give the homes away? The difference here is that the product we represent has been proven to save lives and protect property.

Eight out of ten fire deaths occur in the home and most firefighter deaths result from fighting residential fires. Nationwide, nearly 3,000 people die in residential fires each year. To NFSA, these figures are unacceptable, especially when there is a proven solution to these tragedies. Fire sprinkler systems have been saving lives for over 100 years. We think every person deserves the right to be safe in their own home.

I think it's time that Habitat for Humanity felt the same way.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you further.

Sincerely,

John A. Viniello
President

About the National Fire Sprinkler Association

Established in 1905, the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) is the voice of the fire sprinkler industry. NFSA leads the drive to get life-saving fire sprinklers into all buildings; provides support and resources for its members – fire sprinkler contractors, manufacturers and suppliers; and educates authorities having jurisdiction of fire control matters. Headquartered in Patterson, N.Y., NFSA has regional operations offices throughout the country. www.nfsa.org.

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