



The Voice of the Fire Sprinkler Industry

Contact:

Joe Ferrary

R&J Public Relations

jferrary@randjpr.com

908-722-5757

Court Strikes Down Pennsylvania Builders Association's Bid to Keep Fire Sprinkler Systems Out of Homes

PATTERSON, N.Y. (August 25, 2010) – The National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA), the longest-tenured fire sprinkler advocacy organization in the U.S., applauds the decision made by the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania on August 25, 2010, that determines the process used to adopt the 2009 edition of the International Residential Code (IRC), including the residential fire sprinkler requirement, was constitutional.

This decision will allow the Commonwealth to continue enforcing the requirement that homebuilders must install fire sprinkler systems in all newly constructed townhomes built after January 1, 2010, and all newly constructed one- and two-family homes beginning on January 1, 2011. This decision reaffirms the vote of the Pennsylvania Independent Regulatory Review Commission, which voted on December 10, 2009, to adopt the 2009 IRC Code and Commonwealth Court Judge Johnny Butler's decision to deny the Pennsylvania Builders Association's (PBA) request for a primary injunction in March.

“We applaud the court's decision in determining that the process to adopt the 2009 edition of the IRC in Pennsylvania was constitutional and followed the procedures as outlined by the Pennsylvania Construction Code Act (PCCA),” said Tim Knisely, co-chair of the Pennsylvania Residential Fire Sprinkler Coalition. “The residential fire sprinkler requirement is a life safety regulation, which will protect both residents and fire service professionals from the dangers of lightweight construction.”

In the case between the PBA and the Department of Labor and Industry, the PBA argued that the process used to adopt the 2009 IRC Code was unconstitutional and did not provide interested parties the chance to voice their opinion about the requirements in the code. During the code adoption process, the Uniform Construction Code Review and Advisory Council, held four separate public meetings about the 2009 IRC Code at which time the PBA's testimony against the code and the residential fire sprinkler requirement was heard.

“The Commonwealth Court's decision is a great victory for the residents and fire service professionals in Pennsylvania as this life-safety regulation will protect people in the place

where they should feel the safest – their homes,” said John Viniello, president of the NFSA. “Pennsylvania was the first state in the nation to adopt the residential fire sprinkler requirement at the statewide level, in December 2009, and this decision will allow Pennsylvania to continue to serve as a model example in fire safety for the rest of the country.”

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.

###