

## **NFSA Offers Free On-line Seminar on IRC Code Issues**

For the first time in the history of the International Residential Code, there is a real possibility that mandatory sprinkler requirements for one- and two-family dwellings could become a part of that code. The International Residential Code (IRC) is the official document in most states that lays out the requirements for the construction of new one- and two-family dwellings. Proposals to put mandatory sprinkler requirements into the IRC have been submitted for many years without success, but this year, there is a very real chance that the proposal will be accepted.

The proposal to sprinkler all new one- and two-family dwellings was not given a favorable recommendation by the Code Development Committee for the IRC at their Committee Hearings last year. But the decision of the committee can be over-ruled by a two-thirds (67%) majority of the voting members at the IRC Final Action Hearing, which will be held on May 21-26, 2007 in Rochester, NY.

NFSA members have been requesting information regarding the status of the code change proposal and asking what they can do to help. Many members have expressed interest in going to Rochester to show their support for the fire sprinkler concept.

However, the NFSA is not recommending that members plan on going to the Rochester meeting. Industry representatives are not allowed to vote at the IRC hearings and our presence there in force might be viewed by some as intimidation, trying to force the vote in our favor by sheer numbers. Instead the NFSA has developed a three-part strategy to get our members involved in helping to get this code change proposal accepted into the IRC.

Since the only people who can vote at the IRC hearings are public code officials (Building Officials, Fire Officials, Plumbing Inspectors, etc.), then we need to lobby these people on a local level and convince them to go to Rochester and support the fire sprinkler concept. As such, our three-part plan is to:

- 1) Educate our members on the IRC development process and the reasons why mandatory sprinkler requirements for all new one- and two-family dwellings are important and necessary. This education will need to include all of the arguments that are used against the sprinkler requirement and data and statistics to overcome these arguments.
- 2) Convince our members to set up meetings with their local code officials to convince these code officials to go to Rochester and vote in favor of the sprinkler requirement.
- 3) Have NFSA staff members in Rochester to act as facilitators who can answer any final questions and make sure that the code officials that come to vote know when the vote will occur and when to speak up and be counted.

In order to meet the first point in this plan, the NFSA will be hosting a free on-line seminar on March 9, 2007 at 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time. The seminar will be presented by Jeff Hugo, NFSA's North Central Regional Manager and former fire official and Ken Isman, NFSA's Vice President of Engineering and former Manager of Codes and Education.

Every person in the fire sprinkler industry (member of the NFSA or not) is highly encouraged to sign up and participate in this seminar. Once the seminar is over, everyone is highly encouraged to make appointments with their local fire and building officials and convince them of the importance of going to Rochester and voting in favor of the mandatory sprinkler requirements in the IRC.

The seminar will be free to all of the people that want to participate; however, we do ask that you sign up in advance for a password so that we know how many connections there will be. There is a limit to the number of simultaneous connections that we can have at any given time, so we will need to monitor the number of participants.

As with all NFSA on-line programs, listeners will have an opportunity to ask questions of the presenters via e-mail and all of the questions that come in during the seminar will be answered live during the broadcast.

For people that are not familiar with the NFSA on-line broadcasts, all you need is a computer and speakers along with a program such as Real Player that will allow you to listen to streaming audio. The participant will be directed to a website with a title slide (screen) and will be directed to go to the next slide (screen) by the presenter(s).

To sign up for the seminar, please contact Dawn at the NFSA via one of the following means with your name, company, phone number and e-mail address:

- Phone: (845) 878-4200 x133
- Fax: (845) 878-4215
- E-mail: [dawn@nfsa.org](mailto:dawn@nfsa.org)

We hope that you will join us for this exciting new initiative!

Yes, please sign me up for the IRC Code Information Seminar:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_