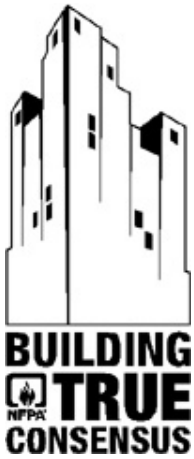
FIRE MARSHALS QUARTERLY

INTERNATIONAL FIRE MARSHALS ASSOCIATION • Summer 2000

NFPA Building Code™ to Be Issued in 2002

Part of Full Set of Codes and Standards for the Built Environment



In continued pursuit of its mission to reduce the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life, NFPA is developing the *NFPA Building Code*, rounding out its *Consensus Codes*™ set, a full set of codes and standards for the built environment.

"For some time now, we have been evaluating whether or not it would be necessary for NFPA to provide a full set of codes, and specifically a building code," said NFPA President George D. Miller. "We have heard from NFPA members, our other constituents, and legislative and agency officials that they want NFPA to develop a building code using our full, open consensus process."

At its March 2000 meeting, the NFPA Board of Directors voted unanimously to go forward and directed the NFPA Standards Council to establish a new project for a consensus building code at its April 2000 meeting. In addition, the Board also committed to addressing firefighter safety in the development of the code.

The *NFPA Building Code* will be issued in 2002. "Our position has been clear and firm from the very beginning," Miller continued. "We will not compromise NFPA's ANSI-approved, open consensus process, and we intend to work with our existing partners and other organizations to ensure their expertise forms the basis of each document in the *Consensus Codes* set."

The *NFPA Building Code*, one of two key documents or "bookends" of the *Consensus Codes* set (the other being the *National Electrical Code*®), will be developed in the NFPA consensus process and will be based upon the EPCOT Building Code, promulgated by Reedy Creek Improvement District, whose requirements cover everything from dwellings to public occupancies to power generation facilities. The EPCOT code was established nearly 30 years ago.

"The EPCOT codes provide a high level of safety and protection for the Reedy Creek Improvement District," said Gerald A. Ward, AIA, of HKS, Inc., an architect who is familiar with the EPCOT codes. "These codes have long served as a reference for other building codes in the U.S. and they are a solid foundation on which to establish the *NFPA Building Code*."

"Reedy Creek is delighted to be able to help in the development of this historic and important NFPA document," said Tom Moses, Reedy Creek Vice President of Administration. "Under the EPCOT code, our loss history has been extremely impressive. The EPCOT Building Code references numerous NFPA documents and is coordinated with the EPCOT Fire Prevention Code, which tracks closely with NFPA 1, *Fire Prevention Code*. We see this as an appropriate and highly credible foundation for NFPA's building code."

NFPA will continue to collaborate with its existing partners in development of the *Consensus Codes* set, including the American Gas Association (AGA), with whom NFPA jointly publishes NFPA 54, *National Fuel Gas Code*; the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO), with whom NFPA signed a cooperative memorandum of understanding (MOU) in August 1999; and the Western Fire Chiefs Association, with whom NFPA recently signed an MOU to produce a joint *NFPA 1/Uniform Fire Code*. Additional partnerships are being actively pursued.

"We are committed to NFPA's time-tested and proven open consensus process," said Miller. "True consensus is the cornerstone of NFPA's mission and it is essential to public safety. Today we take that mission into the new millennium."

IFMA Executive Board

Fire Marshals Quarterly

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Meet R. T. Leicht, a Director on the Executive Board

R.T. Leicht

"Whitey" was initiated into the fire service more than 30 years ago as a member of the volunteer fire company in his hometown. His fire service career has also included military service. In 1977 his fire prevention employment began in the insurance industry and in 1982 he became a part-time fire marshal. Whitey is currently employed by the State Fire Marshals Office in Delaware.

Whitey has served on four NFPA Technical Committees, and he represents IFMA as a principal on the NFPA 96, *Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations*, and NFPA 20, *Installation of Stationary Pumps for Fire Protection*, committees. He has been a member of the International Fire Marshals Association and NFPA since 1973. He is an active member of the Delaware Valley Fire Marshals Association, having served as president from 1991 to 1998, and he currently serves as the chapter representative.

He is also an active member of the International Association of Arson Investigators and the Society of Fire Protection Engineers. Whitey is certified as a fire inspector, a fire protection specialist, and a fire instructor, and he teaches fire protection and code enforcement classes at local community colleges in the tri-state area.

Whitey is married and enjoys traveling, history, and tutoring algebra and physical science.

NFPA and *This Old House* Construct Public Service Announcements for TV Viewers

Steve Thomas and Norm Abram

When we think of ways to improve our homes, projects come to mind like laying new carpet, painting the house, or even building an addition. These can be worthwhile improvements, but one of the best investments we can make doesn't cost anything, and that's to develop and practice a home fire escape plan. NFPA and the Emmy Award-winning PBS television series *This Old House* have recently teamed-up to develop public service announcements (PSAs) for television that focus on the importance of home fire escape planning and practice.

Based on NFPA's home fire escape guidelines, the PSAs feature *This Old House* Host Steve Thomas and Master Carpenter Norm Abram, and were filmed at their current construction project. There, Steve and Norm illustrate three basics that create a sound home fire escape plan—a working smoke alarm on every floor, knowing two ways out of every room, and picking a family meeting place outside. These concepts are presented in the same clear concise, and easy-to-understand manner that has made *This Old House* the most popular home improvement series on any television network.

"NFPA estimates that a family may have as little as two minutes to escape a home fire before conditions become deadly," says Meri-K Appy, NFPA vice president of Public Education. "With approximately 80 percent of fire fatalities occurring where people feel safest, in the home, a well-prepared home fire escape plan can mean the difference between life and death."

Ms. Appy couldn't be more right. Some 4,000 fire deaths occur each year in U.S. homes, and too often it's because people did not, or could not, get out of the burning home on time. Other factors to keep in mind when developing an effective home fire escape plan are to keep exits unobstructed, post an emergency telephone number ahead of time, and practice the plan at least twice a year with every member of the family.

"Norm and I have taken on a lot of projects, but working with the NFPA to keep people safe from fire may be one of the most rewarding," says Steve Thomas. "We really hope that people won't just watch the PSAs, but put the messages into action by developing and practicing a home fire escape plan."

The 30- and 15-second PSAs, which are geared toward everyone from children to senior citizens, are being distributed by NFPA to television stations throughout the U.S. Further information regarding NFPA and *This Old House* can be found at their web sites-www.nfpa.org and www.pbs.org/thisoldhouse.

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Seeks Fire Departments' Assistance in Collecting Fixed-Position Electric Heaters from Fire Incidents

From the USFA

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is requesting the help of all U.S. fire departments to identify, and in some circumstances, recover, fixed-position electric heaters involved in fire incidents for use in CPSC laboratory examination and testing.

Note that it is the fire department's responsibility to obtain the owner's consent before removing the heater. In addition, a heater should not be removed unless the fire department has confirmed that insurance agents do not need to examine the heater's original installation, or the heater itself, for possible civil litigation. In instances where the owner consents to the removal of the heater, the heater is not involved in litigation, and the fire department can provide the intact heater, CPSC is able to compensate fire departments up to $100 for each heater.

Examples of fixed-position electric heaters include hard-wired baseboard heaters, in-wall heaters, floor-insert and kickspace heaters, and radiant heaters often installed in bathroom ceilings. A two-year project to collect physical samples of these heaters and to follow up on fire incidents related to these heaters began in September 1999.

The CPSC staff is interested in obtaining fixed-position electric heaters from fire incidents where the fire originated in the heater. In a laboratory setting, it is often difficult to reproduce failure modes that have occurred in a consumer's home. It is possible that a heater may function safely throughout its product life until the effects of age and routine consumer usage cause the components to fail in a way that creates a fire hazard. Seeing how the heating elements, connectors, and safety features responded to these effects, and perhaps a rare event like a power surge, will yield more compelling data than conducting analytical studies under controlled conditions. As a rule of thumb, if the wiring is substantially intact inside the heater, CPSC staff would like to obtain the product. Heaters largely destroyed by a fire do not generally contain any useful clues as to the component malfunction responsible.

When circumstances indicate that a fire did not originate inside a fixed-position electric heater, but that the external surface was hot enough to ignite nearby combustibles, CPSC staff is not interested in obtaining the heater. However, staff would like to be notified of the incident in order to consider conducting an investigation and collect the scenario information. Although the heaters do not necessarily "fail" in these situations, such a common scenario is worth addressing through product design and consumer education.

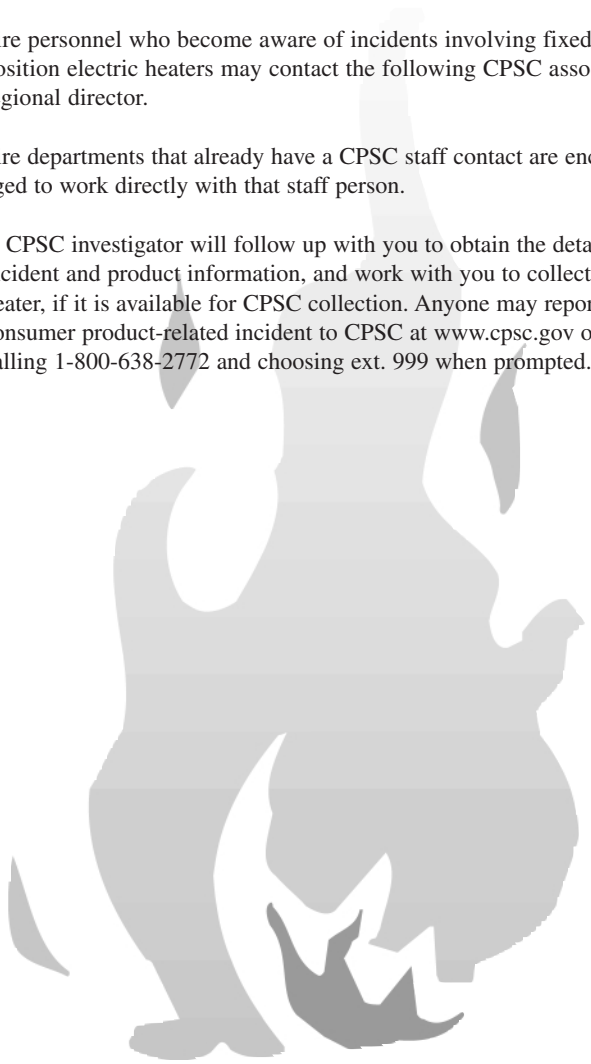
The CPSC staff is interested in obtaining the fire incident reports for all fires involving these types of heaters. In most cases, staff would also like to collect scenario information, including the nature of the material of any combustibles ignited, their proximity to the heater, how the consumer used the heater, and a description of the heater. CPSC staff collects this information via follow-up investigations that are voluntary. In certain cases, CPSC staff would like to obtain the heater involved in the incident.

In addition to implementing product recalls, which are manufacturer-specific, the CPSC staff also works closely with voluntary standards organizations, such as Underwriters Laboratories, to identify and recommend ways in which the standards can better address safety hazards. Often, the CPSC staff recommends performance requirements and, in some cases, identifies an alternative product design.

Fire personnel who become aware of incidents involving fixed-position electric heaters may contact the following CPSC associate regional director.

Fire departments that already have a CPSC staff contact are encouraged to work directly with that staff person.

A CPSC investigator will follow up with you to obtain the detailed incident and product information, and work with you to collect the heater, if it is available for CPSC collection. Anyone may report a consumer product-related incident to CPSC at www.cpsc.gov or by calling 1-800-638-2772 and choosing ext. 999 when prompted.



An Estimated 1,700 Fires Hit U.S. College Campuses Annually

From the USFA

With an estimated 1,700 fires hitting U.S. college campuses annually, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and the College Parents of America (CPA) are urging every college community to take time to focus on fire safety.

"The loss of the best and brightest of America's future is unacceptable," said FEMA Director James Lee Witt. "We must work together to prevent any future losses."

"Smoke alarms and automatic sprinkler systems have established an impressive fire prevention record, particularly in the hospitality industry," said USFA Administrator Carrye B. Brown. "Automatic sprinkler systems are now commonplace in hotels and motels, where they afford the travelling public with a high level of fire safety."

Over 90 percent of the reported fires in college dormitories, classroom buildings, fraternities and sororities occurred where smoke alarms were present. However, only 27 percent had sprinklers present. Within the dormitories, the number one cause of fires is arson or suspected arson. The second leading cause of college building fires is cooking, while the third leading cause is smoking.

"As part of the college evaluation, parents should make sure there are smoke alarms, sprinkler systems, and scheduled drills in their children's residential and classroom buildings," stressed Richard M. Flaherty, president of College Parents of America.

Parents and students also can contact their campus to view *Get Out and Stay Alive*, which was circulated this past August to colleges around the country as a component of USFA's campus fire safety training kit. The USFA video (USFA is a division of the Federal Emergency Management Agency) and its accompanying training kit are designed to educate college students about the importance of day-to-day fire safety and prevention measures in residence halls and off-campus housing.

For more information on campus fire safety, visit both the U.S. Fire Administration's web site, www.usfa.fema.gov/safety/college.htm, and College Parents of America's web site, www.collegeparents.org, and look under "Breaking News" for "Fire Safety Tips."

On-Line UL Listing and Product Category Information

You can now find UL's Listing Information System database with the click of a mouse on UL's Internet site at http://www.ul.com/database/indexns.htm. Powerful search engines enable web site visitors to access the most current information in the UL database by company name or geography, file number, product name, or guide information. The UL Internet site was designed to help visitors to www.ul.com navigate through its data-rich system.

In addition, UL recently added a web site with useful information on UL standards. It includes the list of all UL standards, along with the scope of each standard. This web site is located at http://ulstandardsinfonet.ul.com.

"Fire Drills: The Great Escape!" Is Theme for Fire Prevention Week 2000

According to NFPA, "Fire Drills: The Great Escape!" is the theme for Fire Prevention Week 2000, the final year of NFPA's three-year public safety campaign to increase the number of people who develop and practice a home fire escape plan. NFPA has been the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 75 years.

Each year, too many people fall victim to the perils of home fires because they are uniformed or ill-prepared. Through the collaboration of NFPA, fire departments, schools and other safety advocates throughout North America, "The Great Escape!" has been a powerful means of teaching and practicing home fire escape planning.

"Whether people reside in houses, apartments, or high-rise buildings, 'The Great Escape' applies to everyone," says Meri-K Appy, NFPA vice president of Public Education. "Because fire can strike at anytime, and anywhere, 'The Great Escape' program motivates people to develop their home escape plans before fires start. This is done by 'The Great Escape' participants identifying and practicing two ways out of their homes and establishing family meeting places outside."

With over half a million people in North America participating in "The Great Escape!" last October, in all 50 states, the positive response toward NFPA's public safety campaign has been overwhelming. One reason for this success is that "The Great Escape!" can serve as the foundation of fire departments' Fire Prevention Week activities, and still allow for departments to work with local businesses and schools to organize fun and informative community events.

"'Fire Drills: The Great Escape!' has already proven to be one of NFPA's most successful Fire Prevention Week campaigns, and we still have a year remaining," says Ms. Appy. "Based on the participation, the versatility of the program, and the ability for the campaign to reach people, 'The Great Escape' will definitely serve as a blueprint for Fire Prevention Week campaigns of the next millennium."

Question and Answer

Question: How do I interpret the *Report on Comments* (*ROC*)?

Answer: The *ROC* tells the reader may things. Much like the *ROP* the *ROC* contains nearly identical information. The *ROC* contains all the comments received on the proposals in the *ROP* and the action taken by the technical committee on those comments. The *ROC* has three distinct parts; first is the submitter's information and comment, second is the committee action, and third, the committee's ballot.

In Part I, the following information is provided. The first line (1) is the document number, (2) is the comment number, (3) is the reference section of the document, and (4) is the committee action. The log number is for NFPA use. In the example shown, the comment is for NFPA 231, *General Storage*. The comment number is 16 and the reference is to Section 6-2.2.6. The committee accepted the comment in principle. The rest of part I includes the comment submitter, the proposal the comment references, the recommendation of the submitter, and the submitter's substantiation for the proposed change.

Part II is the committee action on the comment. Under "Committee Action," which corresponds to (4) above, the committee accepted the comment in principle. The committee action was to revise the text to that shown. The committee statement is the committee's reason for the action taken.

Part III is the committee ballot on the comment. The number of committee members eligible to vote is shown, along with the vote of each eligible member. In this case, 28 members of the technical committee were eligible to vote, and 23 voted in favor of the committee action. Five failed to return their ballot. If any technical committee member were to vote against the comment, their reasons would appear here.

PART I

1 NFPA 231 – A98 ROC
(Log #32) 3 4
2 231 – 16 – (6-2.2.6): Accept in Principle
SUBMITTER: Southeast Regional Fire Code Dev. Committee
COMMENT ON PROPOSAL NO: 231-40
RECOMMENDATION: Revise 6-2.2.6 as follows: For metal bin boxes and metal closed shelves with a face area not exceeding 16 ft^2 (1.5 m^2), the area of sprinkler density application shall be permitted to be reduced by 50 percent, provided the minimum requirements of Chapter 5 are met.
SUBSTANTIATION: The context of the existing 6-2.2.6 would be lost.

PART II

COMMITTEE ACTION: Accept in Principle
Revise section 6-2.2.6 as follows:

6-2.2.6 For <u>metal</u> bin boxes with a face area not exceeding 16 ft^2 (1.5 m^2) and metal closed shelves with a face area not exceeding 16 ft^2 (1.5 m^2) the area application shall be permitted to be reduced by 50 percent, provided the minimum requirements of Chapter 5 are met.

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: The revised wording clarifies the ambiguity regarding the face area and to correct the Report on Proposals.

PART III

NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE: 28
VOTE ON COMMITTEE ACTION:
AFFIRMATIVE: 23
NOT RETURNED: 5 Bahadori, Gitto, Oliszewicz, O'Rourke, Underwood

NFPA President's Award Presented to Team of Michigan Fire Service Personnel

Ron Farr, Christy Baird, and Tony Sanfilippo

During the opening session of NFPA's World Fire Safety Congress and Exposition™ in Denver, Colorado, Ron Farr, Christy Baird, and Tony Sanfilippo were presented with the NFPA President's Award, the highest honor bestowed by NFPA staff. The award was presented in recognition of the team's work toward Michigan's adoption of NFPA 1, *Fire Prevention Code*®, NFPA 101®, *Life Safety Code*®, and the promotion of fire safety training and public education in their state.

"When this award was established last year, it was done with the intention of honoring individuals like Ron, Christy, and Tony," says George D. Miller, NFPA President and CEO. "The fact that this team overcame numerous obstacles, over nearly the last three years, and still succeeded in adoption of NFPA codes in Michigan is an outstanding contribution to the mission of the Association and to public safety."

Within recent years the Michigan State Fire Marshal's Office was restructured, making the Office of Fire Safety responsible for code adoption and enforcement. To maintain the progress made with NFPA 1 and 101 prior to the change, Fire Marshal Farr, Kalamazoo Township Fire Department; Mr. Sanfilippo, director of the Office of Fire Safety; and Ms. Baird, executive secretary of the Michigan State Fire Safety Board, continued the push for their state's adoption of the codes. While the codes were adopted last December, the team's work continues. Training sessions have been developed by NFPA, and will be offered at no cost to all Michigan code enforcers, making sure that Michigan is safe for all residents and visitors.

"The adoption of NFPA 1 and 101 by Michigan is a tremendous achievement that wouldn't be possible without the dedication of each recipient of the President's Award," says Russell Sanders, NFPA central regional manager. "From proposal to review, and enforcement to education, Ron, Tony and Christy worked as a team toward a single goal—to improve fire and life safety for the citizens of Michigan."

NFPA 1 provides the minimum requirements necessary to establish a reasonable level of safety and property protection from hazards created by fire and explosion. Its primary purposes are to address basic fire prevention requirements and to reference or extract the fire prevention and protection aspects of many other NFPA codes and standards, including NFPA 101. NFPA 101 provides minimum building design, operation, and maintenance requirements necessary to protect building occupants from danger caused by fire, smoke and toxic fumes. A key element of the *Life Safety Code* is the requirement that new and existing buildings allow for "prompt escape" or provide people with a reasonable degree of safety through other means.

Nominations for the NFPA President's Award are submitted by NFPA employees, based on the following criteria: advancement of NFPA safety information; contributions leading to the adoption or use of NFPA codes and standards; and technical contributions to NFPA's activities, programs and publications. The NFPA president determines final selection. The award consists of an engraved crystal sculpture that features two stars linked by a trail of light. The image symbolizes the bond between individuals and NFPA's mission.

Fire Investigation Summary: Dance Hall Fire

Gothenburg, Sweden
October 28, 1998

On Thursday evening, October 28, 1998, a fire occurred in a nightclub in Gothenburg, Sweden. A Halloween party was being held in the second floor hall, and officials estimated that there were approximately 400 people in attendance.

Prior to the fire, the Gothenburg, Mölndal, Kungsbacka Fire Brigade had determined the maximum occupancy should have been 150 people. The hall where the party was being held measured 32 meters (105 feet) by 9.5 meters (31 feet). There were two exits located at each end of the hall. Each exit was equipped with a door that had an opening approximately 800 mm (31.5 in.) wide. The doors swung outward in the direction of travel and led to stairways that measured 1.5 m (4.9 ft) wide. The main stairway on the northwest end discharged directly to the exterior. The other stairway on the southeast end discharged into a corridor on the first floor that people would have had to travel through before reaching the exterior. A stage was located on the southeast end where a disc jockey had set up his equipment.

The building was constructed of a combination of concrete and masonry block. The ceiling was suspended acoustical tile, but the exact composition of the interior finish in the hall itself is unknown. Approximately 1.2 m (4 ft) of wainscoting was attached to the corridor wall leading into the hall. It was reported that there were decorations hung in the hall for the party and that there were a number of flags on the walls. There were no automatic fire sprinkler or fire alarm systems in the building. There were lighted exit signs at each end of the hall.

There were a series of eight windows on the northeast wall, six of which were in the hall itself. These windows measured 1.8 m by 0.8 m (5.9 ft by 2.6 ft) and the bottom of the windows were 2.2 m (7.2 ft) above the floor. On the southwest wall were five similar windows. These windows, however, were equipped with security bars to prevent intrusion.

Shortly before midnight, the disc jockey opened the door leading to the southeast stairwell. Smoke from a fire in the stairwell came into the hall. It is unknown if the door was closed again after the fire was detected. Because of the fire, this stairway was impassable and was not used during the evacuation. Using a mobile telephone, the disc jockey called the fire brigade. Realizing how crowded the hall was and that he would not be able to make it through the crowd, the disc jockey then broke out a window in the northeast wall and jumped out of the building. The dispatcher who received the call reporting the fire had some difficulty ascertaining the address of the fire because of the background noise. The dispatcher was eventually able to do so, and an initial response of an engine and a ladder with a total of eight fire fighters was dispatched.

The first fire brigade units arrived on the scene from a fire station located 2.2 km (1.4 mi) away. As they approached the complex from the far side, an officer reported light smoke visible and thought that it might be a container fire. As they turned the corner, they were able to see the building on fire and the officer realized that it was a major fire. He requested the dispatch of additional units, but the units had already been dispatched, based on additional telephone calls being received by the alarm room.

There were a large number of people blocking the fire apparatus access to the scene. The officer had to walk in front of the apparatus to get people to clear the way and allow the fire fighters to approach the building. As the officer approached the building, he observed a number of injured people lying on the ground who had jumped from the second story windows. Because of the injured people lying on the ground below the windows, fire fighters were unable to place ground ladders up to the windows on the northeast side of the building.

The officer and his fire fighters then attempted to enter the building through the main entrance at the northwest end. It was reported that the stairway was blocked with a tangle of injured people. These people had to be dragged outside before the fire fighters were able to proceed up the stairs. When they reached the top of the stairs, they were faced with a wall of bodies inside of the door to the hall. It was reported that the bodies were packed in tight, from the floor to the top of the doorway. The fire fighters started removing the bodies and quickly passing them down the stairs to the exterior of the building. As they removed the bodies from the pile in the doorway, others from inside the burning hall attempted to climb out through the openings that had just been created.

As water was being applied through one of the windows on the northeast side, a fire fighter in breathing apparatus entered the building through one of the windows, dropping 2.2 m (7.2 ft) to the floor. The fire fighter then continued to advance into the building. It was reported that people were pulling at him as he made his way in and that his mask was almost pulled from his face. He stated that the interior was dark, smoky, and hot, but that there was not any heavy fire involvement at this time.

A total of 63 people died in this fire, mostly from smoke inhalation. Their ages ranged from 14-to 20-years-old. One hundred eighty people were injured. The fire brigade estimated that they rescued 40 to 50 people. Based on NFPA's investigation and analysis of this fire, the following significant factors were considered as having contributed to the loss of life and property in this incident:

· Overcrowding
· Lack of a fire alarm system
· Ignition of combustible storage in a stairwell

For a complete report, please call NFPA's Fire Investigations Department at (617) 984-7263.

IFMA Merchandise Order Form

IFMA has a new line of merchandise to promote IFMA. They include a new 100% cotton white golf shirt with red and blue striped collar and sleeves and a blue nylon windshirt with hand pockets, both come with the IFMA logo on the left breast.

IFMA Order Form

Baseball Hat - $15.00 each, includes postage and handling

Number	Cost	Total Cost
_____	$15	_____

Golf Shirt - $30.00 each, includes postage and handling

Size	Number	Cost	Total Cost
❒ Small	_____	$30	_____
❒ Medium	_____	$30	_____
❒ Large	_____	$30	_____
❒ X-Large	_____	$30	_____
❒ XX-Large	_____	$30	_____

Lapel Pin - $3.00 each, includes postage and handling

Number	Cost	Total Cost
_____	$3	_____

Wind Shirt - $40.00 each, includes postage and handling

Size	Number	Cost	Total Cost
❒ Small	_____	$40	_____
❒ Medium	_____	$40	_____
❒ Large	_____	$40	_____
❒ X-Large	_____	$40	_____
❒ XX-Large	_____	$40	_____
		Grand Total	$ _____

❒ Check enclosed, *please make payable to IFMA*
❒ Charge my credit card. ❒ MasterCard ❒ Visa ❒ AmEx
Card #: _____
Card Exp. Date: _____
Signature: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

Please mail or fax to:

IFMA
Attention - Order
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02269
Fax 617-984-7056

Massive Effort to Improve Fire Investigation Skills Launched by National Public/Private Partnership

A top goal: To reduce death and property losses due to fire and arson

A national initiative to improve fire investigation skills and reduce fire losses has been launched by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the American Re-Insurance Company, the NFPA, and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA).

At the forefront of the effort is an interactive CD-ROM, interFIRE VR™. Created by the partnership organizations to improve the level of basic fire investigation procedures among fire investigators and related professionals, interFIRE VR™ allows users to search an actual fire scene while consulting top national experts. The program was designed to show a comprehensive and systematic investigative approach that can be applied to any fire scene, large or small.

By making basic fire investigation information more widely available, the program aims to help the nation's more than 31,000 fire departments, as well as police departments and insurance companies, conclusively investigate more fires. Currently, the causes of about a third of the two million fires reported annually are never positively determined, according to the NFPA.

Also a top goal: reducing arson. Of the two million fires reported each year, one in every four is estimated to be arson or arson related. These cause about $2 billion in property damage. Arson is the leading cause (29 percent) of nonresidential fires and the third-highest cause (13 percent) of residential fires.

Solving more arsons can also help shed light on other crimes because many arson fires are set to cover up crimes. In some cities, 20 to 25 percent of arson cases are linked to drug activity, according to a preliminary study by the U.S. Department of Justice. Better fire investigations will also ultimately yield better information about the causes of all fires. This can lead to better safety codes and safer product design.

According to NFPA, cooking and heating are the top causes of residential fires—22 percent and 15 percent, respectively. Of nonresidential fires, unspecified equipment (10 percent) and electrical distribution (9 percent) follow arson as the top causes. Fire experts point to soft data, such as the large share of fires attributed to unspecified equipment, as further evidence of the need for better investigations.

"The nation's ability to find answers in the ashes has just been greatly enhanced," said Brad Buckles, ATF director. "interFIRE VR™ reflects the innovation and partnership that will be the hallmark of effective enforcement in the next century." Although U.S. fire rates have fallen over the past 20 years, fire still annually kills more than 4,000 people, injures another 20,000 to 30,000, and destroys about $8 billion worth of property, according to NFPA.

Arson and suspected arson together kill more than 700 people, about one of every six people killed in fires.

As deaths and losses due to fire typically occur as isolated incidents, spread over a wide geographic area, it's easy to miss the cumulative effects and not see fire as either a national safety issue or an economic public concern.

interFIRE VR™ will be available to U.S. fire and police departments, prosecutors, insurance organizations, and others with a professional interest in fire investigation. In an effort to reduce deaths and property loss, the partnership's goal is to get interFIRE VR™ into the hands of every U.S. fire investigator by the end of 2000.

Historically, U.S. fire death rates have led most of the industrialized West. Between 1993 and 1995, the United States' fire death rate was 18.7 per million population, higher than such countries as Canada (15.0), the United Kingdom (13.6), Germany (10.4), Spain (8.6), and Switzerland (5.5). Hungary and Finland—at 32.9 and 24.6 per million, respectively—are among the very few industrialized countries with worse fire death rates than the United States, and the only ones identified in a September 1998 report issued by the London-based World Fire Statistics Centre.

"Despite enormous progress over the last century, we are nowhere near as safe as we can be or want to be in reducing the number of fires and resulting deaths, injuries, and property damage in the U.S. interFIRE VR™ is a tool that will help us move forward," said NFPA President George Miller.

A step-by-step guide, interFIRE VR™ is the first-ever CD-ROM to use photo-realistic virtual reality technology for fire investigation training purposes. Among the topics covered are:

- Fundamentals of fire scene examination
- Correct procedures for identifying, documenting, and collecting evidence
- Interviewing witnesses

"interFIRE VR™ forces the user to deal with all the issues that a seasoned fire investigator must face," said Carrye Brown, USFA director. "At the end of the day, this comprehensive step-by-step, interactive guide will help authorities make more accurate origin-and-cause determinations."

Better investigations may also lead to more successful prosecutions for arson. Annually, intentionally set fires—arson and suspected arson—account for nearly half a million fires or one quarter of all U.S. fires. Only two percent of those set fires ultimately result in conviction.

"More comprehensive fire investigations will mean better and fairer claims decisions which is in the best interests of both insurers and policyholders," said Edward J. Noonan, president/CEO, American Re-Insurance Company, who praised the interFIRE VR™ partners' efforts to make fire-investigation information widely available.

interFIRE VR™ is supported by a web site (www.interfire.org) that provides ongoing educational information related to proper fire investigation. To order a copy of interFIRE VR™, visit the web site or call toll free 1-877-interfire.

New Outreach Course Developed for Smaller Fire Departments

From the USFA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) United States Fire Administration (USFA) and its National Fire Academy (NFA) are ready to launch the NFA's first fire prevention course designed specifically for first responders at small fire departments. The Fire Prevention for Small Departments (FPSD) course is ideally suited for America's smallest departments, those in communities with populations of several hundred to several thousand.

"Never before in USFA's 25-year history has a course been developed for or specifically aimed at our nation's smallest fire departments," stated USFA Chief Operating Officer Ken Burris. "It is uniquely motivational and is all about helping create a passion for prevention."

Interest in the course has been so strong that so far this year, it is already scheduled to be presented 33 times around the country. Organizations and departments interested in hosting the course should contact their state fire service training agency to discuss potential FPSD course site locations.

Answers to Spring 00 Crossword Puzzle

Across		Down	
1.	FMANA	1.	Fifteen
3.	NFPA	2.	Quarterly
4.	Sawyer	5.	Four
8.	Association	6.	Miller
9.	Robison	7.	Quincy
10.	May		

2000–2001 Executive Board

The following were elected to the IFMA Executive Board by the membership at its May 16, 2000, Annual Business Meeting:
President Jim Crawford – Term Expires 5/01
1st Vice President Ron Farr – Term Expires 5/01
2nd Vice President John Bender - Term Expires 5/01
Secretary Paul Maldonado – Term Expires 5/01
Charles Altizer – Term Expires 5/02
R. T. Leicht – Term Expires 5/02
Jon Nisja – Term Expires 5/01
Steven Randall – Term Expires 5/01

President's Corner

Jim Crawford

It is an honor to serve as your president, and I will do my best to represent the interests of fire marshals and of IFMA during my tenure. The first order of business for me is to give you some idea of where IFMA stands and where we're headed. In basic terms IFMA is gaining strength, and working to provide good member services, but we need your help to realize our full potential.

Where is IFMA now? I'll start by explaining the relationship between NFPA and IFMA. NFPA exists to promote public safety in a variety of ways, and to serve as the neutral ground where others come together to achieve consensus in the code and standards development process. NFPA is also the "umbrella" organization that supports IFMA and the activities of other member sections that share the common goal of public safety.

IFMA exists to promote public safety, and to do so by serving the interests of its members. It was formed in 1906 and has been a member section of NFPA since 1927. IFMA's purpose is essentially the same as that of other fire service organizations. Basically, we try to improve the professional development of our members, we provide a forum for communication between members, and we attempt to coordinate the efforts of the collective body toward activities that promote public safety.

Our role in coordinating membership positions in the codes and standards development process is increasing. Recently, NFPA agreed to operate the regional code committees as a joint project with IFMA. We have also improved the communication process and operating guidelines between the Board of IFMA and our representatives on a variety of NFPA Technical Committees. Consequently, our ability to influence the process in a positive way has been increased. As an aside for those fearful of the NFPA consensus system, I would say that we can be an effective force for public safety when we properly organize ourselves and promote our arguments with technical documentation. The better we get at these two things, the more influence we will have within the system.

To promote communication between members and others with common interests, IFMA publishes this newsletter, *Quarterly*. In addition, we now have a web page and an electronic bulletin board where members can discuss issues of common concern. We also produce the membership directory and try to update it frequently enough to be useful.

To promote the professional development of our members, IFMA offers three specific courses developed for our audience. The first is the Fire Protection Engineering course. It is designed to give public code officials a working knowledge of the engineering principles involved in the construction and development process. The second is a Management Institute designed for fire prevention personnel in the public sector. It was developed to help current or potential prevention managers deal with the planning, evaluation, and political considerations of our job. The third course is a one-day session on performance codes, designed to help our members understand how performance codes will impact our practices as code officials.

Sponsoring a conference is another way we build professionalism and improve communication between fire marshals. IFMA now sponsors an annual conference specifically for public fire prevention officials, held in conjunction with NFPA's Fall Meeting. The support at NFPA has made this unique situation possible. For one registration fee, participants may attend the IFMA conference, the NFPA meeting, or both. In fact, the conference is designed to work harmoniously with the NFPA meeting, and we encourage our members to remain for the entire meeting so that they can vote at the technical sessions.

IFMA is also assisting with the harmonization between the *Uniform Fire Code* and NFPA 1. Once a draft document is developed, it will be sent through the NFPA process. It is there that our ability to influence the final outcome of the product will be most important.

There are other IFMA projects and products, but I'm sure you can see that a great deal is happening. So where are we headed? That's really up to us.

There are two new projects of major importance to our members. The first further promotes professionalism in our field. We are working to develop a national certificate of management, or even a certification process for fire marshals. The fire protection community has a number of specialized fields, each with specific educational requirements. The job of the fire marshal (or potential fire marshals) is no different. We believe the time has come to "raise the bar" on the professional development of our field. We are currently looking for the funding to make this project a reality.

The second involves an analysis of how we can improve our participation at the technical committee level in NFPA. We are currently evaluating the possibilities of an endowment fund, the proceeds from which would be used to pay for code official's participation in the NFPA system.

I realize that this is kind of fast and furious, but I hope you can see where we are headed. IFMA is the only organization in North America that exists to serve our member needs. How do we get better at what we do? That's where you come in.

We need new members. There is strength in numbers, and though I've heard fire marshals aren't "joiners"—it's critical that we grow as an organization. The funding we receive from NFPA to operate is not justified by our size. They support IFMA because of the critical interests we represent within the system. Though we currently have about 1,800 members—we should be far larger than that. There is a new affiliate membership that is less expensive, but it allows you access to the information IFMA produces. And, if you're already an NFPA member, your IFMA membership is FREE. As our organizational size grows, our influence does, too. So help spread the word, it's time to become a member of IFMA.

We need new Chapters, too. Most are fire marshal or prevention organizations that already exist in each State and Province. It takes a little paperwork to make sure your existing organizational by-laws will accommodate the relationship with IFMA, but it's worth the effort because Chapters also help make our organization stronger. We have an annual meeting between the Chapter representatives and the Board of IFMA to make sure we are communicating and headed in the right direction. That meeting is partially funded by IFMA, but the benefit of working with peers from around the country should be justification enough for local Chapters to support some of the costs.

We are always looking for people with the time and expertise to help IFMA achieve its goals. We survey the Chapters for recommendations to our Board positions. But we also seek those interested in helping IFMA realize its potential in other ways. There is much that has been done to improve IFMA in the past decade. I credit the efforts of previous Boards and presidents for that work. It is now time for others to "step up to the plate," and make IFMA one of the strongest and best-organized voices for the fire service.

Join. Get others to join. Form a new Chapter of IFMA. And do something positive for the benefit of the organization. In these ways we will leave behind a stronger IFMA, and we will have helped to improve public safety by doing so.

Errata Issued

The following errata have been issued. Copies of these errata (if not published here) are available from the NFPA Fulfillment Center, 11 Tracy Drive, Avon, MA 02322, by calling (800) 344-3555, or on the NFPA web site at www.nfpa.org/Codes/Current_Codes_and _Standards/Standards_Council/TIAs_Errata/tias_errata.html.

NFPA 13-1999
Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems
Reference: 6-4.5.8, 7-4.2.2.1.1(a), 7-4.4.2.3(e), A-6.4.6.1(a)
Errata No.: 13-99-1

1. *In Table 6-4.5.8 entitled* Maximum Horizontal Loads for Sway Braces, *change "l/r* = 200" to "*l/r* = 100*", in the second column, of the row entitled* Pipe (Schedule 40).

2. *In Figure 7-4.2.2.1.1(a) entitled* Sprinkler System Design Curves – 20-ft (6.1-m) high rack storage – Class I nonencapsulated commodities – conventional pallets*, the curve identified as "G" needs to be changed to "F," and the curve identified as "F" needs to be changed to "G."*

3. In Figure 7-4.4.2.3(b) under the heading Single- and double-row racks 0.45 gpm/ft^2 per 2000 ft^2 (18.3 mm/min per 186 m^2), *revise the phrase* See 7-4.4.2.3 *to read* See 7-4.4.3.3.

4. *In Figure 7-4.4.2.3(e)* entitled 20-ft (6.1-m) storage; 5-ft to 10-ft (1.5-m to 3.1-m) ceiling clearance*, make the following changes*:

In the figure title, delete (See Note 2).
In the figure pertaining to 0.45 gpm/ft^2 per 2000 ft^2, the phrase See Notes 1 and 2 *should read* See Notes 1 and 5.
In the figure pertaining to 0.30 gpm/ft^2 per 2000 ft^2, the phrase See Notes 1 and 2 *should read* See Notes 2 and 3.
Add a new note 5 to read as follows:

5. Where 5/8-in. (15.9-mm) orifice sprinklers listed for storage use are installed at the ceiling, the in-rack sprinklers shall not be required, provided the ceiling sprinkler discharge criteria is increased to 0.6 gpm per ft^2 /2000 ft^2 (24 L/min per m^2 / 186 m^2) and the ceiling height in the protected area does not exceed 27 ft (8.2 m).

5. *In Figures 7-4.4.2.4.4(c) through 7-4.4.2.4.4(f,) delete the phrase* and uncartoned expanded plastic *in the figure titles, and add the word* and *between the terms* cartoned plastic *and* uncartoned unexpanded plastic.

6. *In Figures A-6-4.6.1(a) through A-6-4.6.1(d*), *change the term* seismic bracing wire *to* seismic restraint wire *throughout*.

NFPA 20-1999
Standard for the Installation of Stationary Pumps for Fire Protection
Reference: 7-5.2.3
Errata No.: 20-99-2

1. Paragraph 7-5.2.3 (formerly 7-5.2.2 in the 1996 edition) was inadvertently omitted from the 1999 edition and should read as follows.

7-5.2.3 Fire Protection Equipment Control. Where the pump supplies special water control equipment (deluge valves, dry pipe valves, etc.) it may be desirable to start the motor before the pressure-actuated switch(es) would do so. Under such conditions the controller shall be equipped to start the motor upon operation of the fire protection equipment. Starting of the motor shall be initiated by the opening of a normally closed contact on the fire protection equipment.

2. *Renumber existing paragraphs 7-5.2.3, 7-5.2.4 and 7-5.2.5 as paragraphs 7-5.2.4, 7-5.2.5 and 7.5.2.6, respectively.*

NFPA 54–1999
National Fuel Gas Code
Reference: Various
Errata No.: ANSI Z223.1/NFPA 54-99-1
(Available from the NFPA Fulfillment Center or on the NFPA web site at www.nfpa.org/Codes/Current_Codes_and _Standards/Standards_Council/TIAs_Errata/tias_errata.html)

NFPA 72–1999
National Fire Alarm Code®
Reference: Various
Errata No.: 72-99-2
(Available from the NFPA Fulfillment Center or on the NFPA web site at www.nfpa.org/Codes/Current_Codes_and _Standards/Standards_Council/TIAs_Errata/tias_errata.html)

NFPA 2001-2000
Standard on Clean Agent Fire Extinguishing Systems
Reference: 1-6.1.3
Errata No.: 2001-00-01

1. Revise 1-6.1.3 (b)(1)to read as follows:

(1) The space is normally occupied.

NFPA Committee Announcements

Call for Members

The **Committee on Emergency Power Supplies** is seeking members in the following interest categories: manufacturer and installer/maintainer. This committee is responsible for NFPA 110, *Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems*, and NFPA 111, *Standard on Stored Electrical Energy Emergency and Standby Power Systems.*

The **Committee on Fire Doors and Windows** is seeking members in the enforcer, user, and installer/maintainer interest categories. This committee is responsible for NFPA 80, *Standard for Fire Doors and Fire Windows,* and NFPA 105, *Recommended Practice for the Installation of Smoke-Control Door Assemblies.*

The **Committee on Health Care on Piping Systems** is seeking members in the enforcer category. This committee is responsible for NFPA 99, *Standard for Health Care Facilities*, Chapter 4.

The **Committee on Incinerators and Waste Handling Systems** is seeking members in all interest categories. This committee is respon-

sible for NFPA 82, *Standard on Incinerators and Waste and Linen Handling Systems and Equipment.*

The **Committee on Industrial Trucks** is seeking members in all interest categories. This committee is responsible for NFPA 505, *Fire Safety Standard for Powered Industrial Trucks Including Type Designations, Areas of Use, Conversions, Maintenance, and Operation.*

The **Committee on Internal Combustion Engines** is seeking members in all interest categories, especially manufacturers. The committee is responsible for NFPA 37, *Standard for the Installation and Use of Stationary Combustion Engines and Gas Turbines*.

The **Committee on Laboratories Using Chemicals** is seeking members in the enforcer interest category. This committee is responsible for NFPA 45, *Standard on Fire Protection for Laboratories Using Chemicals.*

The **Committee on Loss Prevention Procedures** is seeking members in all interest categories except user and special expert. This committee is responsible for NFPA 600, *Standard on Industrial Fire Brigades*, and NFPA 601, *Standard for Security Services in Fire Loss Prevention*.

The **Committee on the Manufacture of Organic Coatings** is seeking members in all interest categories except special experts and manufacturers. This committee is responsible for NFPA 35, *Standard for the Manufacture of Organic Coatings*.

The **Committee on Record Protection** is seeking members in the insurance, installer/maintainer, and enforcer categories. This committee is responsible for NFPA 232, *Standard for the Protection of Records,* and NFPA 232A, *Guide for Fire Protection for Archives and Records Centers*.

The **Committee on Water Additives for Fire Control and Vapor Mitigation** is seeking members in the following interest categories: enforcer, installer/maintainer, research and testing, and insurance. This committee is responsible for NFPA 18, *Standard on Wetting Agents.*

Coming Events

August

13–25 Committee Week, Baltimore, MD
18 Emergency Power Supplies
Health Care Facilities Projects
14 Laboratories
15–16 Electrical Equipment
17 Electrical Systems
21–23 Piping Systems
24 Gas Delivery Systems
24 Administration
25–26 Hyperbaric and Hypobaric
21–25 Building Code
21–22 Fire Service Occupational Medical and Health

21–22 Northcentral Regional Fire Code Development Committee, St. Louis, MO

September

16–18 Fire Service Occupational Safety Committee, San Francisco, CA
19–20 Western Regional Fire Code Development Committee, Portland, OR
26–27 Northeastern Regional Fire Code Development Committee, Baltimore, MD

October

3–4 Southern Regional Fire Code Development Committee, New Orleans, LA
23–26 Management Institute for Fire Marshals, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

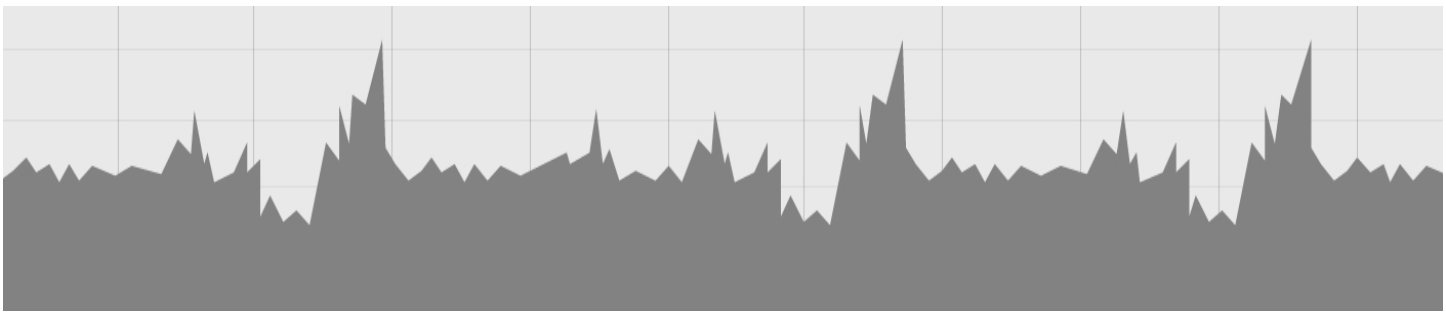
Committees Soliciting Proposals

The committees for the following documents are planning to begin preparation of their respective reports. In accordance with the *Regulations Governing Committee Projects*, committees are now accepting proposals for recommendations on content for the documents listed below. Proposals received by 5:00 p.m. EDST on the closing date indicated will be acted on by the committee, and that action will be published in the committee's report. Proposals must be submitted to Codes and Standards Administration on proposal forms available in the back of all NFPA documents or from NFPA headquarters. (NOTE: For information on specific committee meeting dates, contact Codes and Standards Administration, NFPA.) Please note that for **new documents (P*),** a draft copy of the **new document** on which to submit proposals will be available. Copies of **new document (P*)** drafts are available from Codes and Standards Administration, NFPA, 1 Batterymarch Park, P.O. Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101, or they may be downloaded from NFPA's web site at http://www.nfpa.org/procom/document.html. If you need a current edition of a document, please contact NFPA Fulfillment Center, 11 Tracy Drive, Avon, MA 02322, or call (800) 344-3555.

Document No./ Edition	Proposal Title	Meeting Closing Date	Reporting
NFPA 11–1998	*Low-Expansion Foam*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 13–1999	*Installation of Sprinkler Systems*	11/3/2000	A2002
NFPA 13D–1999	*Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes*	11/3/2000	A2002
NFPA 13R–1999	*Installation of Sprinkler Systems in Residential Occupancies up to and Including Four Stories in Height*	11/3/2000	A2002

NFPA 17–1998	*Dry Chemical Extinguishing Systems*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 17A–1998	*Wet Chemical Extinguishing Systems*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 20–1999	*Installation of Stationary Pumps for Fire Protection*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 32–2000	*Drycleaning Plants*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 51B–1999	*Fire Prevention During Welding, Cutting, and Other Hot Work*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 52–1998	*Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Vehicular Fuel Systems Code*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 55–1998	*Storage, Use, and Handling of Compressed and Liquefied Gases in Portable Cylinders*	7/6/2001	F2002
NFPA 57–1999	*Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Vehicular Fuel Systems Code*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 61–1999	*Fires and Dust Explosions in Agricultural and Food Products Facilities*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 69–1997	*Explosion Prevention Systems*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 72–1999	*National Fire Alarm Code®*	11/3/2000	A2002
NFPA 79–1997	*Electrical Standard for Industrial Machinery*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 86–1999	*Ovens and Furnaces*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 86C–1999	*Industrial Furnaces Using a Special Processing Atmosphere*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 86D–1999	*Industrial Furnaces Using Vacuum as an Atmosphere*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 97–2000	*Standard Glossary of Terms Relating to Chimneys, Vents, and Heat-Producing Appliances*	7/6/2001	F2002
NFPA 101B–1999	*Code for Means of Egress for Buildings and Structures*	9/15/2000	A2002
NFPA 130–2000	*Fixed Guideway Transit and Passenger Rail Systems*	7/6/2001	F2002
NFPA 211–2000	*Chimneys, Fireplaces, Vents, and Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances*	7/6/2001	F2002
NFPA 225–**P***	*Manufactured Home Sites, Communities, and Setups*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 232–1995	*Protection of Records*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 252–1999	*Fire Tests of Door Assemblies*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 260–1998	*Cigarette Ignition Resistance of Components of Upholstered Furniture*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 261–1998	*Mock-Up Upholstered Furniture Material Assemblies to Ignition by Smoldering Cigarettes*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 262–1999	*Flame Travel and Smoke of Wires and Cables for Use in Air-Handling Spaces*	7/6/2001	F2002
NFPA 265–1998	*Evaluating Room Fire Growth Contribution of Textile Wall Coverings*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 272–1999	*Heat and Visible Smoke Release Rates for Upholstered Furniture Components or Composites and Mattresses Using an Oxygen Consumption Calorimeter*	7/6/2001	F2002
NFPA 285–1998	*Evaluation of Flammability Characteristics of Exterior Non-Load-Bearing Wall Assemblies Containing Combustible Components Using the Intermediate-Scale, Multistory Test Apparatus*	12/28/2001	A2003
NFPA 318–2000	*Protection of Cleanrooms*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 415–1997	*Airport Terminal Buildings, Fueling Ramp Drainage, and Loading Walkways*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 480–1998	*Magnesium Solids and Powders*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 485–1999	*Lithium Metal*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 501–2000	*Manufactured Housing*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 501A–2000	*Fire Safety Criteria for Manufactured Home Installations, Sites, and Communities*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 505–1999	*Powered Industrial Trucks Including Type Designations, Areas of Use, Conversions, Maintenance, and Operation*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 651–1998	*Machining and Finishing of Aluminum and the Production and Handling of Aluminum Powders*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 705–1997	*Field Flame Test for Textiles and Films*	1/5/2001	A2002
NFPA 750–2000	*Water Mist Fire Protection Systems*	7/6/2001	F2002
NFPA 1122–1997	*Code for Model Rocketry*	1/5/2001	A2002

P* Proposed NEW drafts are available from NFPA Codes and Standards Administration, 1 Batterymarch Park, P.O. Box 9101, Quincy, MA 02269-9101, or they may be downloaded from NFPA's web site at http://www.nfpa.org/procom/document.html.



Outgoing President's Report

John S. Robison

The IFMA Board held its annual meeting with Chapter representatives on May 13, during the NFPA World Fire Safety Congress and Exposition™ in Denver, CO. Presentations were given by representatives from Illinois, Utah, North Carolina, Florida, Alberta, South Carolina, West Virginia, Minnesota, Michigan, Alabama, Arizona, Texas, Tennessee, and Delaware Valley. Chapter reports indicate an aggressive approach by Chapter leadership to meet the needs of their members and to keep abreast of the changing environment in which we all work.

The following are among the interesting and timely items from Chapter reports: the hiring of a part-time Chapter director; continued residential fire sprinkler installation objectives; involvement with Kids Safe Homes; fund raisers for burn centers and camps; and continued college dormitory/fraternity/sorority fires and fire prevention issues.

IFMA currently has 17 active Chapters, with one new application (Oregon) pending and four additional states (Georgia, Mississippi, Washington, and Virginia) showing interest in establishing Chapters. We encourage local leaders to move forward with each of these endeavors and to grow their local organizations.

The Executive Board met on May 14 in Denver, at which time individual board members submitted reports. We discussed old and new business and developed plans to pursue various objectives and goals of the association. The Annual Business Meeting was held on May 16, at which time the new officers were sworn in.

We would like to congratulate Walter (Walt) Smittle III, past president of FMANA and Retired West Virginia State Fire Marshal, for being chosen as the recipient of the Paul C. Lamb Award during the Opening Session of the NFPA World Fire Safety Congress and Exposition.

For your board to better serve you, continued participation by IFMA in the code development process; participation in the Fire Service Leadership Summit; and expansion of the International Fire Marshals Conference are vital. Likewise, continued communication/inter-action with other fire service organizations concerning issues affecting the code enforcement community will serve to provide representation for each of you as important decisions are reached.

As your president, I have enjoyed numerous opportunities to meet and work with fire inspectors and marshals throughout the country, as well as others from abroad, during the past two years. This has been a humbling experience and I deeply appreciate the friendships established during this time.

The continuing debate over building and fire codes development, the use of NFIRS, and the establishment of 1-800 FIRE LINE in every state pose numerous challenges and opportunities for everyone associated with fire prevention and investigation. Weapons of mass destruction preparedness and response; reduction in civilian and firefighter injuries and deaths; and performance-based standard versus prescriptive code issues confront us daily. Additional important issues and projects involving IFMA will be forthcoming. We must be ready to meet the associated challenges.

Although this will be my last letter for the President's Corner, my interest and love for this organization will not change. The new slate of officers is highly capable to lead IFMA as it grows, not only in size but in responsibilities in the international arena. I wish each of you the best and hope you will not hesitate to contact me whenever I can be of assistance.

Executive Secretary's Report

Steven F. Sawyer

I would like to thank outgoing President John Robison, Executive Board Member Lewis Lee, and Immediate Past President Robert Melton for their years of dedicated and devoted service to IFMA. During their years of service they have assisted IFMA in becoming the organization it is today, and we know they will continue to assist IFMA. I also would like to welcome our new President Jim Crawford and Board Members Charles Altizer, Jon Nisja, and Steven Randall. I know they will continue in their predecessor's footsteps and continue to make IFMA the international organization it really is.

I would also congratulate IFMA members Walter Smittle, who received the Paul Lamb Award, and Christy Baird, Ron Farr, and Tony Sanfilippo, who received the NFPA President's Award.

This year's Chapter President Meeting was very productive, with 12 Chapters represented. They will assist IFMA in developing and implementing their goals and objectives.

The Annual Meeting activities kept IFMA members very active all week. I would like to thank all those members who assisted with booth duty and with moderating sessions. Our Association held the Chapter Presidents, Executive Board, and Business Meetings and we also offered four educational sessions and the IFMA Codes and Standards Forum. We continue to meet with other fire service related organizations. Planning is complete for the 2nd Annual International Fire Marshals Conference, to be held in conjunction with the NFPA Fall Meeting from November 11 to 15, 2000, in Orlando, FL. Please make plans to attend.

The USFA has published the *America Burning* recommissioned panel's *Principal Findings and Recommendations*. I would suggest that all of you obtain a copy of this report and provide additional comments, if you feel they are needed.

I wish all of you a safe summer!! If there is anything we can do for you, please feel free to contact us.

New Members of the International Fire Marshals Association

UNITED STATES

ARIZONA

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Assistant Fire Marshal
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San Diego, CA 92101

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San Francisco, CA 94143

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Altamonte Springs, FL 32701

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The Great Escape Saves!

By Deputy Chief Judy Thacker, East Naples Fire Department

Robert Levi lay sleeping, lost in the splendor of hitting home-runs and actually becoming a Pokemon® master. The safety and comfort of dreamland is a place where most eight-year-old boys journey. But on November 23, 1999, at about 6:00 a.m. his adventures were dramatically squelched. Robert was awakened by the sound of his parents screaming to get out and by the pungent odor of toxic smoke.

Robert, confused, afraid, and choking from the toxic gas, made his way to the window. He tried to open it, but as his panic and fear grew, his shaking hands could not open the lock. Just over his head, flames rolled across the ceiling, and pure terror engulfed the heart of this child. Confusion and despair controlled his thoughts and as the ceiling fell down on his shoulders, pushing him to the floor, HE REMEMBERED!!!

He remembered "Stay Low—Have Two Ways To Go!" a mnemonic learning technique that Detector Casey had taught him during Fire Prevention Week. Detector Casey is the main character in our fire safety drama. The East Naples Fire Department has been performing fire safety dramas in our local elementary schools for nearly 10 years. Detector Casey is a smoke detector incarnate (turned man), if you will. It's his job to "sniff out" trouble and to warn people of the dangers of Flash Flame, Smugly Smoke, Mad Match, and Bad Battery, all characters in our play.

In 1991 Wayne Bryan, Rob Griffin, Domingo Chinea, Gayland Moore, and myself began developing fire safety dramas, each set to the theme of a mystery. It is Detector Casey's duty to solve the mystery and teach proper fire safety behavior in the process. Our first production, "The Case of the Tempting Torch," dealt with children playing with matches and lighters. In 1992, we developed "The Case of the Snoozing Sniffer," explaining that battery-operated smoke detectors had to be maintained. Then in 1993 we created "The Case of the Great Escape," which taught the importance of a home fire escape plan.

It was "The Case of the Great Escape," (also NFPA's theme for the last two years) that Robert Levi, along with several hundred classmates at Manatee Elementary, saw on October 8, 1999. Our story does have a happy ending. Robert managed to escape by crawling on his hands and knees to the front door. Though Robert's mother and brother escaped without injury, his father received second-degree burns on his forearm trying to enter a bedroom window to rescue Robert. As excited as we, the developers of the program, were to learn of this escape, we knew a lot went wrong that morning. The family had not developed a home fire escape plan as our program advocated, and their smoke detectors did not work. We knew this was a victory, but a very narrow one.

Then a few months later, again in the early hours of dawn, a fire occurred at the home of the Gourley family. The Gourley children, Colin, 11, Kyle and Kara, 8-year-old twins, are students at Poinciana Elementary School. They saw the Great Escape on October 7, 1999. The children went home that very day and insisted that their family develop a home fire escape plan. The entire family worked through our activity booklet step by step, developing escape routes, making sure windows were operable, establishing a meeting place, and installing extra smoke detectors in their two-story home. Everything was done to ensure that each person knew just what to do.

At about 4:00 a.m. on January 23, 2000, they put that plan in action! Fire ripped through the attic area of the second floor, smoke filled the bedrooms and hallway. Kara woke up first and made her way downstairs to wake up her parents. Kara and her mother went outside to the meeting place while dad raced upstairs to help Kyle and Colin. The intense heat and smoke had increased so rapidly that using the stairs was no longer an option. The three had to escape from a second-floor window. They climbed out the window, stepped onto a landing, and then jumped about eight feet. Eric Gourley, the father, received second-degree burns on his back, neck, and arms while he endured the intense heat helping his boys out the window onto the landing. One of the boys was treated for minor smoke inhalation. The home was a total loss.

In each situation, the family lost everything and credits their lives to our fire prevention program. What an honor! If you would like additional information about our program, please call me at (941) 774-2800.

The original creators of the Detector Casey Series were Wayne Bryan, Gayland Moore, Robert Griffin, Judy Thacker, and Domingo Chinea. The 1999 cast consisted of John Obst, Yolanda Inabnitt, Rob Griffin, Bill Burkhardt, Nick Biondo, Steve Riley, and Judy Thacker.

U.S. Dormitory Fire Statistics

The information below has been compiled from the following NFPA reports: *School, College, and University Dormitories, and Fraternity and Sorority House Fires*, *U.S. Experience with Smoke Alarms*, *and U.S. Experience with Sprinklers*. Please contact Nancy Schwartz in NFPA's One-Stop Data Shop at (617) 984-7450 or E-mail osds@nfpa.org for information or to order complimentary copies of the reports.

How often do fires occur in school, college, and university dormitories and fraternity and sorority houses?
In 1997, the latest year for which national fire statistics are available, an estimated 1,500 structure fires occurred in school, college, and university dormitories and fraternity and sorority housing. These fires resulted in no deaths, 47 injuries, and $7 million in direct property damage. Between 1993 and 1997, there were an estimated average of 1,600 structure fires per year, resulting in no deaths, 66 injuries, and $8.9 million in direct property damage per year.

Note that these are statistical estimates from records on a sample of fires. Because deaths are very rare, it is possible for the estimate to show no deaths in a year when a fatal fire did occur and is on NFPA's list of fatal campus fires. In particular, the sample omitted eight fatal fires known to NFPA, representing a total of 16 deaths over the five years of 1993–1997. Half of the fires and three-fourths of the deaths were in fraternity or sorority houses.

Between 1980 and 1997, the estimated annual average was 1,800 structure fires, 1 death, 69 injuries, and $8.1 million in direct property damage. (The separate list of fatal fires known to NFPA averaged 2 deaths per year during this period.)

These figures show a generally declining fire problem.

How many fires occur specifically in fraternity and sorority housing?
Between 1993 and 1997, an annual average of 154 structure fires occurred in fraternity and sorority houses, resulting in no deaths, 18 injuries, and $2.9 million in direct property damage per year.

What are the most common causes of fires at school, college, and university dormitories and fraternity and sorority housing?
The leading cause of fire in these types of occupancies is incendiary or suspicious causes. The second and third leading causes of these on- and off-campus housing fires are cooking and smoking, respectively.

How often are smoke or fire alarms and fire sprinklers present in dormitory fires?
In 1997, smoke or fire alarms were present in 93% of all dormitory fires, but sprinklers were present in only 28% of these fires. These figures apply only to properties where fires occurred; the overall fraction of properties with these active systems is probably higher. On average, direct property damage per fire is 36% lower in dormitory fires where sprinklers are present compared to those where sprinklers are not present.

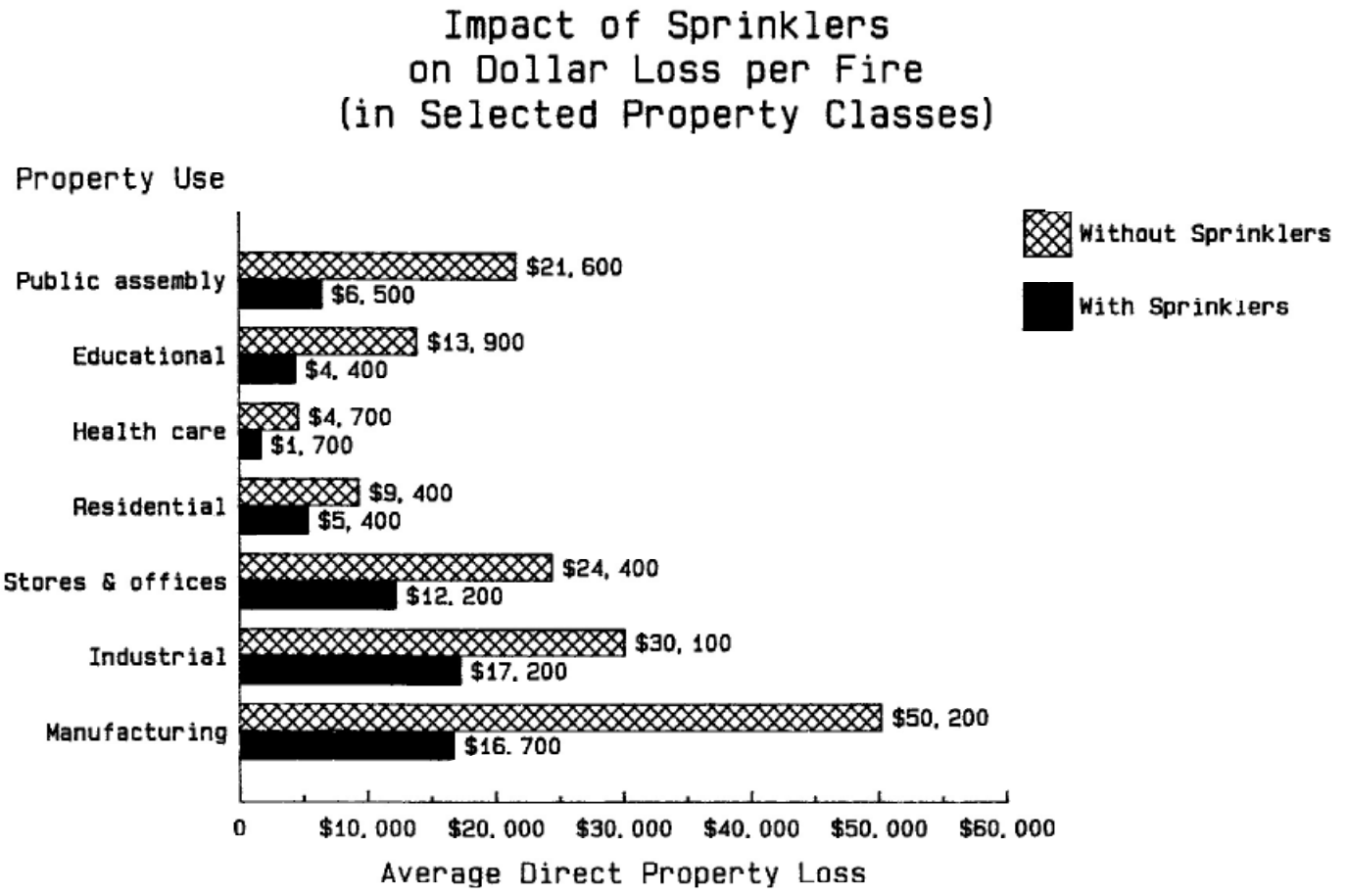
Just how effective are sprinklers?
Properly installed and maintained sprinklers prevent deaths outside the area of origin in all but a few unusual situations. In fact, NFPA has no record of a fire killing more than two people in a completely sprinklered public assembly, educational, institutional, or residential building where the system was working properly. More generally, sprinklers typically reduce your chances of dying by one-half to two-thirds is any kind of property where they are used.

The following table consists of fatal college/university fraternity and sorority house fires known to NFPA from 1990 to 2000. The list was last updated in May 2000. Note that the civilian casualty figures differ from the statistical estimates, which come from records on a sample of fires.

Date	Location	Civilian Deaths	Civilian Injuries	Property Loss
09/09/90	Fraternity House, Berkeley, CA	3	2	$2,100,000
12/08/90	Fraternity House, Erie, PA	1	4	Not Reported
02/13/92	Fraternity House, California, PA	1	0	$70,000
10/24/93	Sorority House, LaCrosse, WI	1	2	Not Reported
10/21/94	Fraternity House, Bloomsburg, PA	5	0	$70,000
05/12/96	Fraternity House, Chapel Hill, NC	5	3	Not Reported
10/19/96	Fraternity House, Deleware, OH	1	0	$175,000
01/03/97	Dormitory, Warrensburg, MO	1	0	$45,000
01/10/97	Dormitory, Martin, TN	1	5	$68,000
02/20/97	Dormitory, Brooklyn, NY	1	0	Not Reported
12/09/97	Dormitory, Greenville, IL	1	0	Not Reported
09/18/98	Dormitory, Murray, KY	1	15	Not Reported
02/13/99	Fraternity House, Rolla, MO	1	0	$1,000,000
02/16/99	Fraternity House, Geneseo, NY	1	0	Not Reported
05/08/99	Fraternity House, Columbia, MO	1	0	Not Reported
01/19/00	Dormitory, South Orange, NJ	3	62	Not Reported

U.S. Experience with Sprinklers

The following executive summary is from the January 2000 report, *U.S. Experience with Sprinklers*, by Kimberly R. Rohr. Please contact Nancy Schwartz in NFPA's One-Stop Data Shop at 617-984-7450 or E-mail osds@nfpa.org to request a complimentary copy of the complete report.



Source: National estimates based on 1988–1997 NFIRS and NFPA survey.

Automatic sprinklers are highly effective elements of total system designs for fire protection in buildings. When sprinklers are present, the chances of dying in a fire and the average property loss per fire are both cut by one-half to two-thirds, compared to fires where sprinklers are not present. What's more, this simple comparison understates the potential value of sprinklers because it lumps together all sprinklers, regardless of type, coverage, or operational status, and is limited to fires reported to fire departments. If unreported fires could be included and if complete, well maintained, and properly installed and designed systems could be isolated, sprinkler effectiveness would be seen as even more impressive. Every property class examined showed less than 10% of fires extinguished by sprinklers, and only manufacturing properties showed more than 5%.

When measured by the average number of civilian deaths per thousand fires from 1988–1997 (and with the limitations cited above), the reduction associated with automatic suppression equipment is 49% for manufacturing properties (from 1.9 to 1.0 deaths per thousand fires), 67% for stores and offices (from 0.8 to 0.3 deaths per thousand fires), 69% for selected health care properties that care for the aged or the sick (from 5.9 to 1.9), and 91% for hotels

and motels (from 8.7 to 0.8). Public assembly and educational properties show no deaths in reported fires in sprinklered properties from 1988–1997, but for educational properties, this was true of unsprinklered properties as well. The estimated impact of residential sprinkler systems in homes is a 73% reduction in death rate, therefore proving that a policy of encouraging or requiring greater use of residential sprinklers needs to be adopted nationally.

Examining the type of construction, it goes from fire-resistive to less fire-protected types to unprotected wood frame and the proportion of fires where sprinklers are present declines. The majority of fires, by property class and construction type, were in sprinklered properties for: (a) fire resistive and protected noncombustible buildings in public assembly, health care, and manufacturing properties; (b) protected ordinary-construction buildings in those three property classes and stores; (c) unprotected noncombustible buildings in public assembly properties; and (d) heavy timber buildings in manufacturing properties.

When measured by the average number of dollars lost per 1988–1997 fire (and again with the limitations cited above), reductions associated with automatic suppression equipment are illustrated by the following: 50% for stores and offices (from an average of $24,000 to an average of $12,200 per fire), 64% for selected health care properties that care for the aged or the sick (from $4,700 to $1,700 per fire), 67% for manufacturing properties (from $50,200 to $16,700 per fire), and 70% for public assembly properties (from $21,600 to $6,500 per fire).

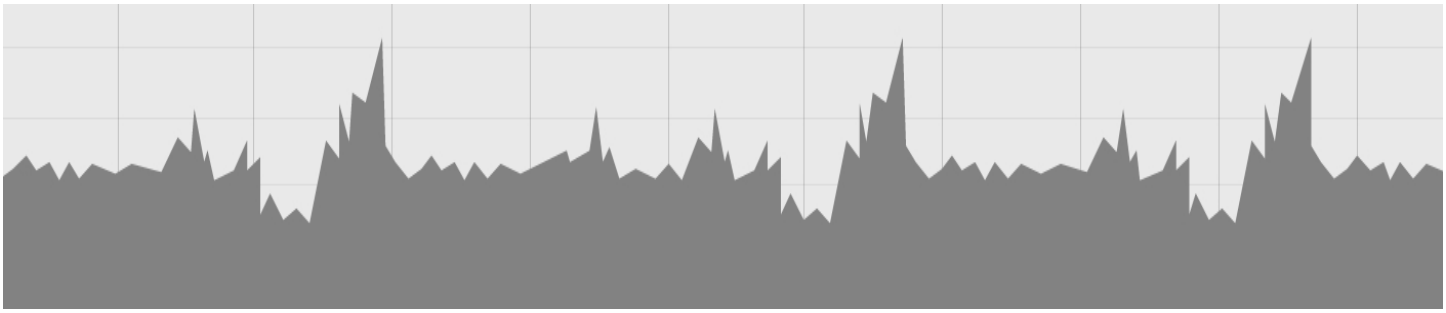
It's clear that having automatic suppression equipment present during a fire is a smart choice. That's why they continue to grow in popularity across the country.

When sprinklers do not produce satisfactory results, the reasons usually involve one or more of the following: (1) partial, antiquated, poorly maintained, or inappropriate systems; (2) explosions or flash fires that overpower the system before it can react; or (3) fires very close to people or to sensitive, valuable property such that fatal injury or expensive damage, respectively, can occur before a system can react. "Poor maintenance" refers primarily to the problem of valves being shut off and inadvertently left shut off. "Inappropriate" systems are systems whose design is not adequate for the current level of hazard in the building.

Except for health care and correctional facilities, hotels and motels, department stores, and high-rise general office buildings, sprinkler usage is still rare in properties with large potential for life loss. While the public may hear more about the spectacular fires in office buildings or places of public assembly, the truth is that the most dangerous place to be, with respect to fire, is in your home.

Most of our statistics capture only sprinkler usage in properties that have fires reported to fire departments, so they will tend to understate sprinkler usage. For example, in 1997, only 34.0% of reported hotel and motel fires were shown as occurring in properties with automatic suppression equipment, but an industry-sponsored survey in 1988 showed sprinklers in guest rooms of 45% of hotels and motels. If only high-rise hotels and motels are considered, 67.4% of 1997 fires were in properties with automatic suppression equipment.

The highest levels of sprinkler usage in other high-occupancy properties appear to be in facilities that care for the aged (73.9% of 1997 fires reported as occurring in facilities with automatic suppression equipment), facilities that care for the sick (71.7%), were reported for high-rise hotels and motels (67.4%), and high-rise general office buildings (62.3%). High levels of usage also department stores (53.0%) and manufacturing properties (51.3%). However, sprinklers were cited in only 28.9% of reported fires in general warehouses, 25.9% of educational properties, 25.6% of public assembly properties, 22.2% of stores and offices, 7.7% of apartments (and 35.6% of high-rise apartment buildings), and 0.7% of dwellings and duplexes. Sprinkler usage is growing in most properties, but most fires still occur in properties without sprinklers. There is considerable potential for expanded use of sprinklers to reduce the loss of life and property to fire.



Understanding the Performance-Based Design Process—A Workshop for the Enforcement Community

Presented by the Society of Fire Protection Engineers in collaboration with FEMA, the USFA's National Fire Academy, the International Code Council, and the International Fire Marshal's Association

With the emergence of the performance-based design option as a state-of-the-art tool for building design, members of the enforcement community need tools to be able work in this new environment.

Performance-based design concepts are not new. Alternatives to a strict application of prescriptive code requirements are often proposed by designers and reviewed by authorities having jurisdiction. The performance-based design option takes this common practice and provides a well-documented framework. This framework can help both those who seek alternatives when a particular building design does not strictly match prescriptive code requirements, and the authorities having jurisdiction who are faced with these new designs.

This one-day workshop will review in detail the performance-based design *process* and will introduce some of the technical details of that process. One of its objectives is to provide the National Fire Academy with information to design future in-depth courses on the technical details of performance-based design for authorities having jurisdiction.

Among the subjects covered:

- The principle differences between prescriptive and performance-based design options
- Defining fire safety goals and objectives and performance criteria for a specific building
- The selection of design fire scenarios
- Developing and evaluating trial designs
- The role of documentation in the design process
- Practical case studies

The workshop is intended for fire and building officials who have responsibility for performing plan review functions. Workshops are free of charge for fire and building officials.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) – the Society of Fire Protection Engineers will award 0.6 Continuing Education Units to those attending.

Locations and Dates:

• Emmitsburg, MD	August 23
• Hartford, CT	August 29
• Orange, CA	August 29
• New York City	September 12
• Forsyth, GA	September 12
• San Antonio, TX	September 25
• Overland Park, KS	September 28
• North Washington, CO	October 10
• Chicago, IL	October 12

Instructors:
Eric Rosenbaum, P.E., Dean Wilson, P.E., Brian McGraw, P.E., Hughes Associates, Inc.
Edward Prendergast, P.E., Chicago Fire Department, retired
Michael O'Hara, P.E., Mountainstar Enterprises
Andrew Valente, P.E., Rolf Jensen and Associates, Inc.
Cynthia Geir, P.E., Henderson Engineers, Inc.
Eric Mayl, P.E., Schirmer Engineering, Inc.
Gregory Jakubowski, P.E., Merck and Company
Jay Fleming, Paul Donga, P.E., Boston Fire Department

Registration
Pre-registration is required no later than two weeks prior to the workshop. Registration is limited so please register early. Fax your registration to SFPE at (301) 718-2242. Your registration confirmation and detailed information on location and times will be sent to you.

Name_____ Title _____

Address _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Seminar Location _____

Workshops are offered free of charge for fire and building officials. Lunch is not included in the registration.

For information, please contact the Society of Fire Protection Engineers at 7315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1225W, Bethesda, MD 20814,

Walter Smittle Retires

After 26 years of service as West Virginia's State Fire Marshal, Walter Smittle III announced his retirement effective December 31, 1999. During his tenure, Mr. Smittle gained many national and state awards recognizing his contribution to fire code development and enforcement, as well as his commitment to fire and life safety education. Recent achievements include the "State Fire Marshal of the Year" award from the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM), acceptance as a "Knight of the Order of Life Safety" by Operation Life Safety (Residential Fire Safety Institute), and the American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) Meritorious Services Award.

Mr. Smittle completed the longest tenure of any State Fire Marshal in the United States. He has elected to take early retirement in order to pursue personal and professional opportunities outside the agency.

The State Fire Commission has named Sterling Lewis, Jr., as State Fire Marshal, effective May 1, 2000. Mr. Lewis has been a teacher in the Raleigh County School system for 26 years and has been a member of the Beaver Volunteer Fire Department from 1984 to the present. He served as a captain with the department from 1988 to 1990, and from 1990 on has held the position of chief.

Mr. Lewis has been a two-term member of the West Virginia House of Delegates, and during regular legislative sessions, he has been an assistant to House Speaker Bob Kiss, D-Raleigh. His other accomplishments include his current roles as a West Virginia fire service instructor, as the president of the Raleigh County Fireman's Association, and as a member of the American Red Cross Board of Directors, Raleigh County.

Walter Smittle III Named Recipient of Paul C. Lamb Award, NFPA's Highest Honor

Walter Smittle

Walter Smittle III, retired fire marshal for the State of West Virginia and IFMA past president, has been selected by NFPA as the 2000 recipient of the Paul C. Lamb award; the Association's highest honor. This prestigious award, named for the late Paul C. Lamb, whose 35 years with NFPA set the benchmark for dedicated service, was bestowed upon Fire Marshal Smittle during opening general session of the NFPA World Fire Safety Congress & Exposition™ held in Denver, Colorado, on May 15, 2000.

"Walter's commitment to his profession, coupled with his achievements, personal attributes, and impact upon fire safety are truly inspiring," said NFPA President George D. Miller. "After reviewing his nomination form, the selection committee didn't question whether he was deserving of the award, but rather, where he found the time to accomplish so much."

Through his 35 years of dedicated service, Fire Marshal Smittle has become a driving force in West Virginia's fire service. For more than 25 years, Fire Marshal Smittle has also been a vital member of NFPA with his involvement in the Standards Council, technical committees (NFPA 1, *Fire Prevention Code*®, and NFPA 101®, *Life Safety Code*®), and as a presenter of technical sessions. In 1988, Fire Marshal Smittle was elected president of the Fire Marshal's Association of North America. Fire Marshal Smittle's enthusiasm as a leading proponent and advocate of fire and life safety code enforcement has given him a place among the national leaders in fire and life safety issues. As a pioneer in implementing public education, Fire Marshal Smittle was instrumental in making *Risk Watch*™, NFPA's comprehensive injury prevention curriculum, an official part of the West Virginia Board of Education's list of approved curricula. In 1995, Fire Marshal Smittle was awarded the NFPA Standards Medal, the highest honor bestowed by NFPA's Standards Council. Two years later, the National Volunteer Fire Council named Fire Marshal Smittle "Firefighter of the Year."

The Lamb Award Selection Committee comprises the NFPA Board along with representation from the Standards Council. The selection criteria for the award are based on the following six categories: impact of the individual's service on NFPA's goals; the extent to which that service represents a broad range of responsibility and achievement; how that service has been significant on different levels of NFPA activity; the duration of that service; the individual's achievement in fire safety; and the personal attributes of the individual.

Model Fireworks Law

The NFPA Standards Council has revised and reviewed the IFMA Model Fireworks Law for consistency with the policies of NFPA. The NFPA Board of Directors transferred the Model Fireworks Law to IFMA in 1988. If you are interested in receiving a copy, please contact Steven F. Sawyer, IFMA Executive Secretary, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02269; phone (617) 984-7423; fax (617) 984-7056; or E-mail ssawyer@nfpa.org.

House Approves $100 Million for Fire Service Amendment to FY 2000

Supplemental Appropriations Bill Passes 386-28

From NVFC Government Affairs

In an unprecedented vote on March 30, the House of Representatives approved an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2000 Supplemental Appropriations bill, dedicating $100 million to the fire and emergency services. Representatives Curt Weldon (R-PA), Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), Nick Smith (R-MI), and Rob Andrews (D-NJ), all long-time advocates for the fire service, introduced the amendment, which easily passed the House by a vote of 386-28. The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) and the other major fire service organizations strongly support the federal government's first step in recognizing its role in supporting America's first responders.

"This is a major victory for the fire service and demonstrates that the federal government does have a role in supporting firefighters and EMS personnel in this country," said NVFC Chairman Fred G. Allinson. "However, it is only the first step toward our final goal which is passage of the FIRE Bill."

Everyday, firefighters, 75 percent of which are volunteers, put their lives at risk responding to all types of emergencies. Most volunteer departments serve small, rural communities and are quite often the only line of defense in those communities. Unfortunately, these departments are woefully underfunded and struggle to provide adequate protection for their citizens. In addition, the federal government has shown little commitment to the fire service over the years. In fact, the federal government annually spends about $11 billion a year on law enforcement programs, but only about $50 million to address the nation's fire problem.

Fire department grants, $80 million: This funding will also be distributed in the form of 50/50 matching grants administered by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), going directly to volunteer, combination, and paid departments. The funding can be used for turnout gear; breathing apparatus; communications equipment; wellness and fitness programs; computer and technology improvements for record keeping and training purposes; training in firefighting, emergency response, and arson prevention; improving the enforcement of fire codes; and modifying fire stations and fire training facilities to protect the health and safety of the firefighter personnel. This addresses many of the needs within the fire service that the NVFC expressed to Congressman Weldon at their Legislative Committee Meeting on February 10.

INTERNATIONAL FIRE MARSHALS ASSOCIATION SECTION NEWSLETTER

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