

Further Information

For further information on the NFPA codes and standards making process, please visit the NFPA homepage at www.nfpa.org or consult the current edition of the **NFPA Codes & Standards Directory**. The homepage and the Directory contain the Regulations Governing Committee Projects, updated schedules for processing documents for the Annual and Fall revision cycles, the Guide for the Conduct of Participants in the NFPA Codes and Standards Development Process, and other important codes and standards development related information.

To obtain general information on the process or to submit proposals or comments on NFPA documents, contact:

NFPA Codes & Standards Administration Department

One Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471 USA
Phone: 617-770-3000 (until 5:00 PM EST) Fax: 617-770-3500

Other general information on the NFPA can be obtained by contacting:

NFPA's Site on the World Wide Web

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): <http://www.nfpa.org>

NFPA Headquarters

One Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471 USA
Phone: 617-770-3000 (until 5:00 PM EST)
Fax: 617-770-0700

NFPA Customer Service/Membership

Phone: 800-344-3555 (until 7:00 PM EST)
Phone: 617-770-3000 (outside U.S. & Canada)
Fax: 800-593-6372 (from U.S. & Canada)
Fax: 617-984-7057 (outside U.S. & Canada)

NFPA International Department

Departamento Internacional - In Spanish / en español
Phone: 617-984-7700 Fax: 617-984-7777



An international nonprofit membership organization established in 1896 and dedicated to reducing the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life by providing and advocating consensus codes and standards, research, training and education.

Publishers of the National Fire Codes®, including the National Electrical Code® and the Life Safety Code®.



Codes and Standards for a Safer World

An introduction to the NFPA Codes
and Standards Development Process



Safety is Everybody's Business

Disasters can occur anywhere, and they often occur when we least expect them. Fortunately, **NFPA® codes and standards** are there to provide us with ways to prevent their occurrence, manage their impact and protect us. One of the most notable features about NFPA's codes and standards making process is that it is a full, open, consensus-based process. "Full Consensus" means that anybody can participate and expect fair and equal treatment. This is because **safety is everybody's business.**

NFPA's unique codes and standards development process incorporates a balance of interests, ensuring that all affected parties have a voice. ■

A Uniquely open process

Today's NFPA® codes and standards trace their origins to the nineteenth century development of automatic sprinkler systems. From the beginning, sprinklers performed well as extinguishing devices; however, they originally were installed in so many different ways that their reliability was uncertain.

In 1895, a small group of concerned citizens representing sprinkler and fire insurance interests gathered in Boston, Massachusetts, USA to discuss the different approaches. They knew that nine radically different standards for pipe sizing and sprinkler spacing could be found within 100 miles of the city. This installation nightmare had to be resolved.

The group eventually created a standard for the uniform installation of sprinklers. This standard, which eventually became NFPA 13, *Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems*, prompted the creation of NFPA as an organization and was NFPA's first safety document. Today NFPA develops some 300 safety codes and standards that deal with a range of subjects related to fire, electrical, building, and life safety.

NFPA codes and standards can be found in use throughout the world. Whether it's in a computer room in the Pentagon, a research station in Antarctica, a power plant in the Middle East, the space shuttle, or perhaps a historical library in Scotland, NFPA codes and standards are used to provide safety to life and protection of property.

What the NFPA Codes and Standards Process can do for you.

Who is the NFPA?

Founded in 1896, the NFPA grew out of that first meeting on sprinkler standards. The Bylaws of the Association that were first established in 1896 embody the spirit of the codes and standards development process and, in Article 2, state in part:

“The purposes of the Association shall be to promote the science and improve the methods of fire protection and prevention, electrical safety and other related safety goals; to obtain and circulate information and promote education and research on these subjects; and to secure the cooperation of its members and the public in establishing proper safeguards against loss of life and property.”

The NFPA mission today is accomplished by advocating consensus codes and standards, research, and education for safety related issues. NFPA's *National Fire Codes*® are administered by more than 250 Technical Committees comprised of approximately 7,000 volunteers, and are adopted and used throughout the world. NFPA is a nonprofit membership organization with more than 80,000 members from over 120 nations, all working together to fulfill the Association's mission.

What type of people are NFPA members? The NFPA membership is comprised of architects and engineers (8%); business and industry (20%); health care facilities (11%); fire service (24%); insurance (6%); federal, state and local government (7%); safety equipment manufacturers and distributors (6%); trade and professional associations (2%); and other fields and disciplines (16%).

The Making of an NFPA Code or Standard

The NFPA Board of Directors has general charge of all of the activities of the NFPA. The Board of Directors issues all of the rules and regulations that govern the development of NFPA codes and standards. The Board also appoints a 13-person Standards Council to oversee the Association's codes and standards development activities, administer the rules and regulations and act as an appeals body.

Members of the Standards Council are thoroughly familiar with the codes and standards development functions of the Association and are selected from a broad range of interests. Appointed by and reporting to the Standards Council are the more than 250 Code Making Panels and Technical Committees that serve as the primary consensus bodies responsible for developing and revising NFPA codes and standards. In addition to acting on their own proposed changes, these technical committees and panels act on proposed changes to NFPA documents that can be submitted by any interested party.

To conduct their work, Committees and Panels are organized into projects with an assigned scope of activities. Depending on the scope, a project may develop one code or standard or a group of related codes and standards, and the project may consist of a single Technical Committee or multiple Committees and Code Making Panels coordinated by a Technical Correlating Committee that oversees the project to resolve conflicts and ensure consistency.

For more than one hundred years, NFPA has kept in step with the needs of the safety community, serving as an authoritative source for information, education, and timely research worldwide. ■

Rules and Participants

The primary rules governing the processing of NFPA codes and standards are the NFPA Regulations Governing Committee Projects.

Other applicable rules include the NFPA Bylaws, the Technical Meeting Convention Rules, the NFPA Guide for the Conduct of Participants in the NFPA Standards Development Process, and the NFPA Regulations Governing Petitions to the Board of Directors from Decisions of the Standards Council. All rules and regulations are available on request from the NFPA or can be downloaded from NFPA's website at www.nfpa.org. This pamphlet is intended to give general information on the NFPA's codes and standards development process. All participants, however, should refer to the actual rules and regulations for a full understanding of this process and for the rules that govern participation.

Participants in NFPA's codes and standards making system are as follows:

- Interested parties including the general public
- Technical Committees, Code Making Panels, Technical Correlating Committees
- NFPA Membership
- Standards Council
- NFPA Board of Directors

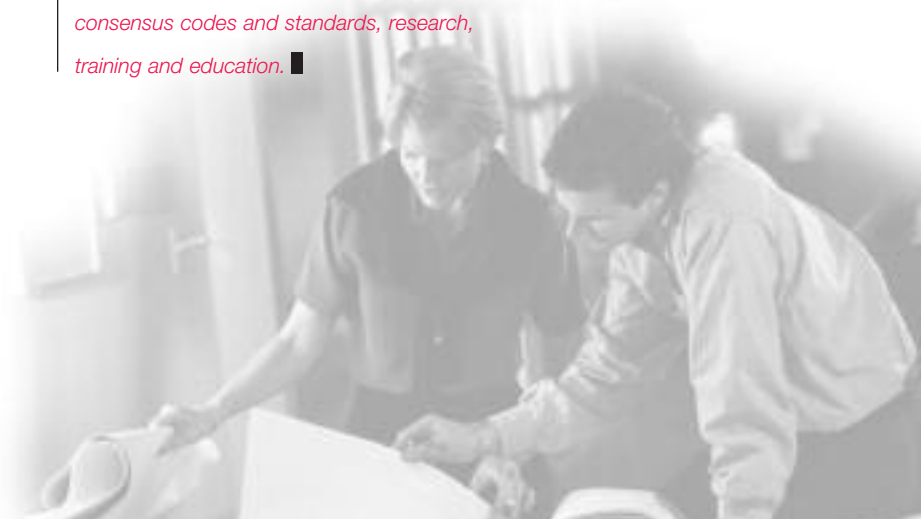
Starting a New Project

Anyone can submit a request for a project to develop a new code or standard in accordance with NFPA Regulations, provided the necessary information is submitted. The Standards Council reviews all requests and, if appropriate, directs that a notice be published in a variety of publications, including NFPA's membership newsletter, *NFPA News* and on the NFPA website (www.nfpa.org). This notice asks for:

- input on the proposed project;
- information on organizations that may be involved in the subject matter;
- a listing of available resource material; and
- an indication of who is willing to participate in the project if it is approved.

The Standards Council reviews all input and information it receives about the proposed new project and, if the Standards Council determines the proposed project should proceed, it either assigns the project to an existing Technical Committee or Panel, or establishes a new one.

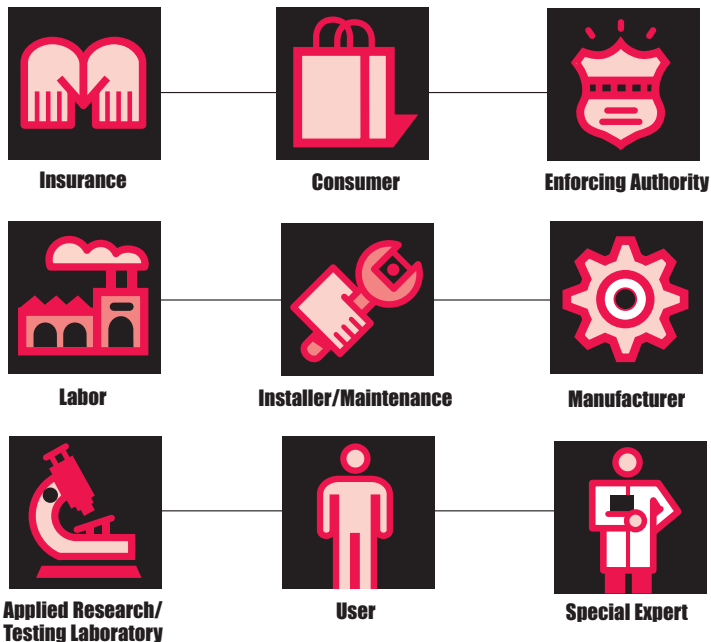
The mission of the nonprofit NFPA is to reduce the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life by providing and advocating consensus codes and standards, research, training and education. ■



Establishing the Consensus Body

In the NFPA codes and standards development process, NFPA Technical Committees and Code Making Panels serve as the principal consensus bodies responsible for developing and regularly updating all NFPA codes and standards. Committees and Panels are appointed by the Standards Council and typically consist of no more than thirty voting members representing a balance of interests. NFPA membership is not required in order to participate on an NFPA Technical Committee, and appointment is based on such factors as technical expertise, professional standing, commitment to public safety and the ability to bring to the table the point of view of a category of interested people or groups. Each Technical Committee is constituted so as to contain a balance of affected interests, with no more than one-third of the Committee from the same interest category. The categories generally used by the Standards Council to classify Committee members are summarized below. The Committee must reach a consensus in order to take action on an item.

Classification of Committee Members



The Codes and Standards Development Process

The NFPA process encourages public participation in the development of its codes and standards. All NFPA codes and standards (also referred to here as NFPA “Documents”) are revised and updated every three to five years in Revision Cycles that begin twice each year and that normally take approximately two years to complete. Each Revision Cycle proceeds according to a published schedule that includes final dates for all major events in the process. The process contains five basic steps as follows:

- 1 **The Call for Proposals;**
- 2 **Report on Proposals (ROP);**
- 3 **Report on Comments (ROC);**
- 4 **The Association Technical Meeting;**
- 5 **Standards Council Consideration and Issuance.**

Codes and Standards Development Facts

- Codes and Standards are updated every three to five years.
- More than 7,000 volunteers serve on NFPA Technical Committees.
- Technical Committees and Code Making Panels represent a variety of balanced interests.
- Approximately 250 different Technical Committees and Code Making Panels are responsible for document development.

Step 1 The Call for Proposals

When the development of a new or revised NFPA code or standard begins, it enters one of two Revision Cycles available each year. The Revision Cycle begins with the Call for Proposals; that is, a public notice asking for any interested party to submit specific written proposals on an existing document or a committee-approved new draft document. The Call for Proposals is published in *NFPA News*, the *U.S. Federal Register*, the American National Standards Institute's *Standards Action*, on NFPA's website, and other publications as appropriate. A proposal form is available on NFPA's website and in every published code and standard.

Step 2 The Report on Proposals

Following the Call for Proposals period, the responsible Technical Committee or Panel holds a meeting to consider and act on all the submitted Proposals. The committee or panel may also develop its own Proposals. A document known as the Report on Proposals, or ROP, is prepared containing all the Public Proposals, the Technical Committees' action on each Proposal, as well as all Committee-generated Proposals. The ROP for the document in question is submitted for the approval of the responsible Technical Committee or Panel by a formal written ballot. If the ROP does not receive approval via written ballot in accordance with NFPA rules, the Report is returned to the committee for further consideration and is not published. If the necessary approval is received, the ROP is published in a compilation of Reports on Proposals issued by NFPA twice yearly for public review and comment, and the process continues to the next step.

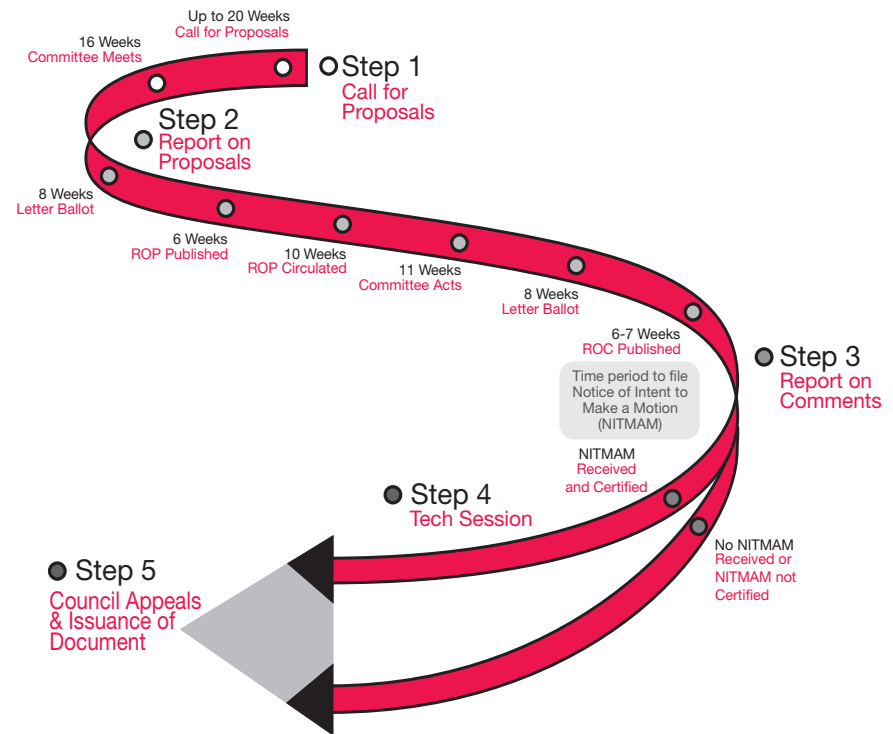
The Reports on Proposals are sent automatically free of charge to all who submitted proposals and each respective committee member, as well as anyone else who requests a copy. All ROPs are also available for free downloading at www.nfpa.org.

Step 3 Report on Comments

Once the ROP becomes available, there is a 60-day comment period during which anyone may submit a Public Comment on the proposed changes documented in the ROP. The committee or panel reconvenes at the end of the comment period and acts on all public Comments. This committee or panel may also develop its own comments.

As before, approval obtained via written ballot in accordance with NFPA's Regulations is required on all committee and panel actions. All of this information is compiled into a second Report, called the Report on Comments (ROC), which, like the ROP, is published and made available for public review for a seven-week period.

Codes and Standards Making Process



Notes

- Time periods are approximate; refer to published schedules for actual dates.
- It takes approximately 104 weeks for Annual revision cycle documents and Fall revision cycle consent documents.
- It takes approximately 141 weeks for Fall revision cycle documents receiving certified motions.

Step 4 The Association Technical Meeting

The process of public input and review does not end with the publication of the ROP and ROC. Following the completion of the Proposal and Comment periods, there is yet a further opportunity for debate and discussion through the Association Technical Meeting that takes place at the NFPA Conference & Expo each June.

The Association Technical Meeting provides an opportunity for the NFPA membership to amend the Technical Committee Reports (i.e., the ROP and ROC) on each proposed new or revised document. The specific rules for the types of amending motions that can be made and who can make them are set forth in NFPA's rules which should always be consulted by those wishing to bring an issue before the membership at an Association Technical Meeting. The following presents some of the main features of how motions to modify a Report are handled.

What Amending Motions are Allowed. The Technical Committee Reports contain the Proposals and Comments that the Technical Committee or Panel has acted on. The motions allowed by NFPA rules provide the opportunity to propose amendments to the text of a proposed code or standard based on these published Proposals, Comments and Committee actions. Thus, the list of allowable motions includes motions to accept Proposals and Comments in whole or in part as submitted or as modified by a Technical Committee action. Motions are also available to reject an accepted Comment in whole or part. In addition, Motions can be made to return an entire Technical Committee Report or a portion of the Report to the Technical Committee for further study.

The NFPA Conference & Expo, also referred to as the NFPA Annual Meeting, takes place in June of each year. The NFPA Association Technical Meeting is held once each year at the Annual Meeting in June. ■

Who Can Make Amending Motions. Those authorized to make motions are also regulated by NFPA rules. In many cases, the maker of the motion is limited by NFPA rules to the original submitter of the Proposal or Comment or his or her duly authorized representative. In other cases, such as a Motion to Reject an accepted Comment, or to Return a Technical Committee Report or a portion of a Technical Committee Report for Further Study, anyone can make these motions. For a complete explanation, NFPA rules should be consulted.

The filing of a Notice of Intent to Make a Motion. Before making an allowable motion at an Association Technical Meeting, the intended maker of the motion must file, in advance of the session, and within the published deadline, a Notice of Intent to Make a Motion (NITMAM). A Motions Committee appointed by the Standards Council then reviews all notices and certifies all amending motions that are proper. The Motions Committee can also, in consultation with the makers of the motions, clarify the intent of the motions and, in certain circumstances, combine motions that are dependent on each other together so that they can be made in one single motion. A Motions Committee report is made available in advance of the Association Technical Meeting listing all certified motions. Only Certified Amending Motions, together with certain allowable Follow-Up Motions (that is, motions that have become necessary as a result of previous successful amending motions) will be allowed at the Association Technical Meeting.

Consent Documents. There will be those documents which receive no controversial proposed changes, and therefore, no Notices of Intent to Make a Motion are filed. In some cases, NITMAMs are submitted on documents up for revision, but none of the NITMAMs are certified as proper by the Motions Committee. In both these cases where no NITMAMs are submitted or no NITMAMs are certified as proper for a specific document, the document is not placed on the agenda for the Association Technical Meeting, but is instead sent directly to the Standards Council for issuance. Such documents are referred to as Consent Documents.

Action on Motions at the Association Technical Meeting.

In order to actually make a Certified Amending Motion at the Association Technical Meeting, the maker of the motion or their designated representative must sign in at least one hour before the session begins. In this way a final list of motions can be set in advance of the session. The presiding officer in charge of the session opens the floor to motions on the Document from the final list of Certified Amending Motions as sequenced by the Motions Committee followed by any permissible Follow-Up Motions. Debate and voting on each motion proceeds in accordance with NFPA rules. NFPA membership is not required in order to make or speak to a motion, but voting is limited to NFPA members who have joined at least 180 days prior to the session and have registered for the meeting. At the close of debate on each motion, voting takes place, and the motion requires a majority vote to carry. In order to amend a Technical Committee Report, successful amending motions must be confirmed by the responsible Technical Committee or Panel, which conducts a written ballot on all successful amending motions following the meeting and prior to the Document being forwarded to the Standards Council for issuance.

Step 5 Standards Council Issuance

One of the primary responsibilities of the NFPA Standards Council, as the overseer of the NFPA codes and standards development process, is to act as the official issuer of all NFPA codes and standards. When it convenes to issue NFPA documents it also hears any appeals related to the Document. Appeals are an important part of assuring that all NFPA rules have been followed and that due process and fairness have been upheld throughout the codes and standards development process. The Council considers appeals both in writing and through the conduct of hearings at which all interested parties can participate. It decides appeals based on the entire record of the process as well as all submissions on the appeal. After deciding all appeals related to a Document before it, the Council, if appropriate, proceeds to issue the Document as an official NFPA code or standard. Subject only to limited review by the NFPA Board of Directors, the Decision of the Standards Council is final, and the new NFPA code or standard becomes effective twenty days after Standards Council issuance.

The illustration on page 9 provides an overview of the entire process.

Sequence of Events Leading to Issuance of an NFPA Committee Document

Step 1 Call for Proposals

- ▼ Proposed new Document or new edition of an existing Document is entered into one of two yearly revision cycles, and a Call for Proposals is published.

Step 2 Report on Proposals (ROP)

- ▼ Committee or Panel meets to act on Proposals, to develop its own Proposals, and to prepare its Report.
- ▼ Committee votes by written ballot to approve its actions on the Proposals. If approval is not obtained, the Report returns to Committee.
- ▼ If approved, the Report on Proposals (ROP) is published for public review and comment.

Step 3 Report on Comments (ROC)

- ▼ Committee or Panel meets to act on Public Comments, to develop its own Comments, and to prepare its report.
- ▼ Committee votes by written ballot to approve its actions on the Comments. If approval is not obtained, the Report returns to Committee.
- ▼ If approved, the Report on Comments (ROC) is published for public review.

Step 4 Association Technical Meeting

- ▼ "Notices of intent to make a motion" are filed, are reviewed, and valid motions are certified for presentation at the Association Technical Meeting. ("Consent Documents" bypass the Association Technical Meeting and proceed directly to the Standards Council for issuance.)
- ▼ NFPA membership meets each June at the Association Technical Meeting and acts on Technical Committee Reports (ROP and ROC) for Documents with "certified amending motions."
- ▼ Technical Committee(s) and Panel(s) vote on any amendments to the Technical Committee Reports made by the NFPA membership at the Association Technical Meeting.

Step 5 Standards Council Issuance

- ▼ Notification of intent to file an appeal to the Standards Council on Association action must be filed within 20 days of the Association Technical Meeting.
- ▼ Standards Council decides, based on all evidence, whether or not to issue the Document or to take other action.

NFPA Offers Resources to Support its Codes & Standards Development Process and Improve Public Safety

NFPA Documents are constantly evolving based on extensive public input and the dedicated involvement of highly qualified committee and panel volunteers. NFPA Technical Committees and others work to keep their Documents current with the latest knowledge and technologies. In addition to the time and resources contributed by the thousands of dedicated volunteers, the Association helps facilitate the work of the Technical Committees and otherwise promotes the NFPA's public safety mission with these important resources:

1. Statistical Data - The Fire Analysis and Research Division's **One-Stop-Data-Shop** (OSDS) produces a large range of annual reports and special studies on the aspects of the nation's fire problems. The data from the OSDS may be requested by Technical Committees regarding a specific fire hazard or safety issue. The data is compiled using the NFPA survey, the United States Fire Administration's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and various other fire data resources.

2. Event Analysis - The **NFPA Fire Investigations Department** conducts on-site investigations of disasters or near-disasters occurring all around the world in order to provide new information and learn lessons that can assist NFPA Technical Committees and others. The department's reports analyze significant events (e.g., fire or explosion) focusing on how NFPA codes and standards were utilized, and how NFPA codes and standards might have provided additional protection in cases where the documents were not followed.

3. Research - The **Fire Protection Research Foundation** (FPRF) is an important resource for the NFPA codes and standards making process. The FPRF conducts independent research on specific topics of relevance to NFPA's technical committee and code-making panel projects. Research reports are published and are utilized by Technical Committees as a resource for pertinent up-to-date information. From time to time, Committees will directly seek specific research to be done regarding the subject covered by their document. The FPRF will determine whether or not the specific study has been done before, and if it has not, they can facilitate obtaining the needed information from research, testing, consulting, or other sources.

4. Empowerment Through Education - The **NFPA Public Education Division** is the source of fire and other hazard information to reduce residential fire deaths, injury, and property loss. The division focuses on three objectives:

- Increase dissemination of audience appropriate materials with current information and technology.
- Expand accessible training opportunities using a full range of technology and media.
- Implement a revision schedule for updating public education programs.

Activities within the division include **outreach** to local fire departments and schools through fire safety campaign kits and an annual Scholastic project, **networking** with state/provincial fire safety educators, **web site** information on nfpa.org and sparky.org, **training** opportunities at the NFPA Conference & Expo, and maintaining the technically correct fire safety **messaging** through the Educational Messages Advisory Committee. High-risk outreach activities reaching the very old, very young, urban and rural poor, and people with disabilities are an integral part of NFPA's public education efforts. These activities include outreach to urban communities, older adults, people with disabilities and Latino populations. NFPA's public education programs include the *Learn Not to Burn® Preschool Program*, *Remembering When™: A Fire and Falls Prevention Program*, and *Ready for Risk Watch®* – an unintentional injury prevention program.

NFPA is the official sponsor of **Fire Prevention Week** each year to increase public awareness of the importance of fire safety education. Fire Prevention week is held throughout the U.S. and Canada during the week of October 9, to commemorate the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire. For more than 85 years, NFPA has established the theme and developed the proclamation signed by the President of the United States each year. NFPA also devotes resources to a campaign of theme-related products and materials to help communities promote local programs related to Fire Prevention Week.

5. Literature Archives - The Charles S. Morgan Technical Library is one of the main resources used by Technical Committees to obtain both current and archival information pertinent to NFPA codes or standards. Library staff can assist committee members in tracing changes to codes, in providing previous substantiation and supporting documents and in researching the origins of an article or paragraph. The library contains the largest fire science collection in the United States, with more than 24,000 books, technical reports, videos, journals, and non-NFPA codes. Unique to the collection are Proceedings from NFPA and NBFU annual meetings, papers presented at NFPA annual meetings, original NFPA and NBFU standards going back to 1896, older technical committee reports and comments, and copies of NFPA publications.

6. Member Conferences - NFPA's Conference & Expo takes place each June, and is one of the premier events of its kind. The Conference & Expo entails both the NFPA Annual Meeting and the Association Technical Meeting where NFPA proposed codes and standards are brought to the NFPA membership for debate and voting. It also features guest speakers and hundreds of educational programs as well as the country's largest exposition on fire and life safety products and services.

7. Worldwide Communications - NFPA Public Affairs

Department oversees the corporate communications activities of the Association, and coordinates public awareness and media inquiries, especially following highly publicized fire incidents and other disasters when the news media and others look to NFPA for information.

8. Technological Outreach - One of today's most important communications tool is the **NFPA Website**, which provides direct support for the codes and standards process including the on-line submission of proposals and comments. Simply contact the NFPA website at www.nfpa.org, and from NFPA's home page, click on the "Codes and Standards Home" hyperlink.

9. Community Partnerships - To better serve the safety community, other constituents, and its members, NFPA has established **Regional Offices** throughout North America, and an **International Operations Department** which has offices in Asia, Europe and Latin America. NFPA endeavors to reach every audience with necessary safety information, and publishes a wide range of handbooks, reference books, textbooks, videos, field guides, and training manuals.

10. Advisory Service - NFPA's 40-person **Technical and Engineering Staff** serve as the staff liaisons to the NFPA Technical Committees that develop the codes and standards. These staff members are available to answer questions about the codes and standards as well as to provide information on other fire, electrical, and life safety issues. Each year, the staff handles tens of thousands of inquiries.

11. Higher Learning - The **Professional Development Department** conducts specialized training seminars and workshops on NFPA codes and standards, and other safety-related subjects. These popular sessions are offered to the general public but are often held for a particular audience. Training seminars and workshops occur regularly around the world, and provide the latest information on the application of NFPA codes and standards as well as other state-of-the-art safety related technology.

12. Certification - NFPA's **Certification Department** presently offers four recognized certification programs designed to document the minimum competency of and offer professional recognition to those individuals within the specified field of practice. Based on NFPA codes, standards, and technical publications, the programs include Certified Fire Protection Specialist, Certified Fire Inspector I and II, and Certified Fire Plan Examiner. Information for each of the programs is available at www.nfpa.org/certification.

How NFPA Codes & Standards are Used

NFPA codes and standards are widely adopted and used as a basis for safety regulation by government agencies as well as for private use and guidance by insurance companies, industry, and professionals and others in the areas of fire, electrical, building, and life safety. For example, NFPA aviation documents are referenced by airports throughout the world. As a further example, in the United States scores of NFPA codes and standards have been referenced by the federal government's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Veterans Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Defense, and other federal agencies.

NFPA develops "full consensus" codes and standards — codes and standards built on a foundation of maximum participation and substantial agreement by a broad range of interests. This philosophy has led to the production of reasonable, usable codes and standards that promote public safety, yet do not stifle design or development. NFPA prides itself in supporting a flexible system that depends largely on volunteers and therefore produces timely, high quality, consensus based safety codes and standards at no cost to taxpayers. Safety is everybody's business. Everyone deserves to be heard when it comes to safety. That's why, after more than 100 years, the NFPA codes and standards process has evolved into one of the fairest and most effective technical document development systems the world has ever seen.

Codes and Standards Development Facts

The Life Safety Code® and National Electrical Code® are in use in all 50 states in the U.S. and in numerous other countries.