

Countryside Fire Protection First District to Pass Single-Family Fire Sprinkler Ordinance

The Countryside Fire Protection District is the first district to adopt a new ordinance requiring residential fire sprinkler systems installed in all new construction homes. The fire sprinkler systems must be installed according to the NFPA 13D.

Under the direction of Fire Chief Jim Spiegel and Fire Marshal Mike McNally, the ordinance will affect all homes built in the unincorporated areas in the district. Approximately 25% of the district is unincorporated.

In preparing the ordinance, the district completed a study of the impact on residential fire sprinklers. It found that over the past seven years fire sprinklers controlled or extinguished fires in four homes preventing \$3 million in direct property loss.

During the same period there were 204 fires in buildings without fire sprinkler systems causing \$5.5 million in property loss. In addition 16 firefighters were injured fighting those fires.

According to McNally, a fire in a Hawthorn Woods house in April underscored the importance of having a residential fire sprinkler system. The family was not home when the fire occurred, so there were no injuries. The fire caused \$700,000 damage to the two-year-old home. Sixty-five firefighters from the Countryside Fire Protection District and neighboring fire departments fought the flames with an estimated 35,000 gallons of water.

The district provides service to a 24-square-mile area in central Lake County and serves portions of Long Grove, Hawthorn Woods, Indian Creek and Vernon Hills. Long Grove was the first municipality in Illinois to pass an ordinance requiring residential fire sprinklers in 1988. Today, more than 2,000 Long Grove homes are protected with fire sprinkler systems.

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