

Fire Safety Groups Recognize Chicago and Elgin Elected Officials for Increasing Life Safety

Chicago Alderman Burke Recognized for Efforts to Protect Lives in High-Rise Buildings and Nightclubs



(Pictured left to right is Tom Lia, IFIA President Todd Fonfara, Chicago Alderman Ed Burke, and Elgin Councilman Tom Sandor.)

Countryside, IL (Oct. 22, 2004) — The Illinois Fire Inspectors Association and the Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board presented Chicago Ald. Edward Burke and City of Elgin Councilman Thomas Sandor with “Life Safety” awards at the Annual Fire Prevention Luncheon.

Both were recognized for their mission of educating and informing their mayors, aldermen and council members and the citizens they serve about issues related to fire safety.

“Fire inspectors are, by definition, proactive when it comes to fire sprinklers and smoke alarms,” explains IFIA’s President, Todd Fonfara. “We are committed to making buildings safe before anything bad happens to them. That’s why IFIA supports fire-sprinkler legislation and why our group is happy to recognize political leaders like Alderman Burke and Councilman Sandor, who are proactive in their own fight on the sprinkler issue. Even in the face of political controversy and setback, both of these leaders have stayed positive, focused and proactive on behalf of sprinkler legislation. Their strong stance is absolutely critical to public safety.”

According to NIFSAB Executive Director Tom Lia, Ald. Burke was recognized because of two important ordinances he introduced to the Chicago City Council. Last year, following the deadly Rhode Island nightclub fire where more than 100 people died, Burke introduced an ordinance

requiring the installation of fire sprinkler systems in existing nightclubs with occupancy as low as fifty persons.

After the October 17, 2003 high-rise fire in the Cook County Administration Building where six people died, Ald. Burke introduced an ordinance requiring fire sprinklers in all high-rise buildings, both commercial and residential. Chicago's Mayor Richard M. Daley also introduced an ordinance, but it was limited to commercial buildings. Burke's ordinance met the recommendations of the two major studies conducted following the fire by Cook County's Mikva Commission and the state's James Lee Witt Report.

Councilman Sandor was recognized because he led the effort to educate the Elgin City Council on the benefits of fire sprinklers in the new "Western" Elgin.

According to Lia, both men were honored because they are truly dedicated and are passionate about protecting their citizens.

"Both have put so much time and effort into the research and background behind increasing life safety," Lia said. "Everyone here at the luncheon recognizes their efforts because they know first-hand the devastation of fire. They know how deadly fire can be to those who must fight fire and those who are in danger when they are occupants in a building that is not protected with a fire sprinkler system."

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