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Fire Sprinkler Group Says LaSalle Bank Fire is A Wake Up Call for Chicago Building Committee To Immediately Pass High-Rise Sprinkler Ordinance

Orland Park, IL (December 7, 2004) – The Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board (NIFSAB) said it's imperative that the Chicago Building Committee pass a fire sprinkler ordinance at their meeting this Friday for the life safety of Chicago's high-rise occupants and firefighters.

“It has been 59 weeks since the deadly fire at the Cook County building,” said Tom Lia, NIFSAB executive director. “That’s too long for Alderman Stone and his committee to wait. The fire tonight at the LaSalle Bank building is a wake up call that further proves how vulnerable high-rise buildings are when they are not protected with fire sprinklers,” he said.

Lia said the LaSalle Bank high-rise fire is another example of how quickly fire and deadly smoke can spread. “If the building had a fire sprinkler system, the heat would have activated one or two sprinklers, keeping the fire in control until the fire department arrived,” Lia said. “Flashover would have never occurred.”

“Alderman Stone’s building committee has all the facts. Millions of dollars have been spent on two separate investigations by Cook County and the State of Illinois. The ordinance should have been passed and the city should be moving forward,” Lia said.

“It’s unfortunate that it takes devastating fires like this before the necessary action is taken. Hopefully Alderman Stone and the Building Committee will make the right decision for the safety of Chicago’s high-rise occupants and firefighters,” Lia said.

“Our thoughts are with those who were injured and who experienced such devastation,” Lia said.

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NIFSAB is a non-profit organization composed of fire officials, contractors, building officials, suppliers, architects, engineers, and manufacturers. NIFSAB is dedicated to educating and informing the public and elected and appointed officials of the vital role that fire sprinklers play in fire protection.

For more information visit www.firesprinklerassoc.org.