



New Editions of International Codes Will Help Prevent Deadly House Fires

Orland Park, IL (February 16, 2010) — The deadly fire in Cicero where seven young people died this week is a sad reminder of why new codes were developed that will prevent these tragedies in all new construction homes where the code is adopted, said Tom Lia, Executive Director, Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board (NIFSAB).

The 2009 edition of the International Code Council's (ICC) International Residential Code (IRC) requires the installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system in all newly constructed townhouses immediately and all new construction one- and two-family homes effective January 1, 2011. The 2006 editions of NFPA 1, Uniform Fire Code; NFPA 101, Life Safety Code; and NFPA 5000, Building Construction and Safety Code also require automatic residential fire sprinklers in all new one- and two-family homes.

According to Lia, fire sprinklers provide a level of protection that no other fire protection technology can offer. Each sprinkler is individually activated by heat from the fire. Typically, only one sprinkler will activate, immediately responding to a fire while it is still small, controlling the spread of deadly heat, flames and toxic smoke.

Lia said Long Grove is the first municipality in Illinois to pass the 2009 Edition of the IRC. Long Grove was also the first to pass an ordinance requiring fire sprinkler systems in all new homes more than 20 years ago. Normal (IL) recently adopted the 2009 IRC with the sprinkler provisions to be effective January 2012. Normal is the first municipality outside of the Chicago area that will require fire sprinklers in all new homes.

Today, 63 Illinois municipalities and fire districts have adopted residential fire sprinkler ordinances. Illinois is second to California, which has more than 80 municipalities with fire sprinkler ordinances. California is also one of the first states to adopt the 2009 IRC at the state level, which means all new California homes will be protected with fire sprinklers.

“As the 2009 Edition is adopted more of our country's housing stock will be protected with fire sprinklers, Lia said. As more people are protected, we'll start to see a decline in deadly house fires and our firefighters will be protected.”

###

Source: Northern IL Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board.

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.