

Ninety Communities in Illinois Now Have Home Fire Sprinkler Requirements with Additions of Hazel Crest and Niles

Orland Park, IL (April 15, 2013) – The State of Illinois has reached a fire safety milestone with 90 communities now requiring fire sprinklers in new construction one- and two-family homes. The number was reached after the villages of Hazel Crest and Niles recently passed home fire sprinkler requirements that will result in safer homes for residents and firefighters.

Long Grove was the first community in Illinois to pass a fire sprinkler ordinance in 1988. In the 2000s, a surge of communities began upgrading their codes to include home fire sprinkler ordinances. With California and Maryland having adopted statewide codes for fire sprinklers in new construction homes, Illinois is the leading state for the number of communities that have such requirements.

In fact, Illinois State Fire Marshal Larry Matkaitis' goal is to require fire sprinklers statewide in Illinois. He seeks to update the state's current edition of NFPA 101 Life Safety Code to the 2012 edition. The code update would require fire sprinklers in new construction one- and two-family homes and townhomes across Illinois.

Fire service leaders from communities across Illinois and the U.S. assert that life safety for both residents and firefighters is the main motivation for requiring home fire sprinklers. They cite National Fire Protection Association studies, which report that 84% of all civilian fire deaths in the U.S. occur in homes¹ — the place where people tend to feel safest. The U.S. Fire Administration has begun the “Fire is Everyone’s Fight” campaign that aims to reduce the number of home fires, and the resulting deaths, injuries and loss of property through fire prevention. Home fire sprinklers are an instrumental part of the fire prevention needed.

Tom Lia, executive director of the nonprofit Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board (NIFSAB), says that requiring home fire sprinklers in communities not only make sense in terms of life safety, but also financially for residents and the communities themselves. Due to the protection they provide, home fire sprinklers reduce insurance rates for homeowners. Communities that do not stay current with new editions of national model codes from the International Code Council and National Fire Protection Association that include home fire sprinklers begin losing grading points from the Insurance Services Office (ISO) and pay more for insurance.

“We congratulate the building, fire and elected officials in Hazel Crest, Niles and all previous communities for adopting the latest codes and standards for new construction homes and recognizing the life safety that home fire sprinklers offer,” adds Lia.

About the Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board (NIFSAB)

NIFSAB is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting progressive legislation, raising public awareness, and educating code officials and governmental policy makers by demonstrating the proven performance of fire sprinklers in saving both lives and property. For more info, visit www.firesprinklerassoc.org.

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¹ Karter, Jr., Michael J., *Fire Loss in the United States During 2011*, National Fire Protection Association, September 2012.