



**Northern Illinois  
Fire Sprinkler  
Advisory Board**

www.firesprinklerassoc.org

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**Fatal Fire on Chicago's South Side Proves That Thousands of  
Chicago High-Rise Residents Are Still Not Safe From Fires**

Orland Park, Ill. (January 22, 2013) — This morning's fatal fire that killed two residents and injured one resident and one firefighter in the unsprinklered 16-story high-rise at 6730 South Shore Drive continues to call into question the effectiveness of the City of Chicago's 2004 high-rise fire safety ordinance. In addition to not having fire sprinklers, reports say the building was not even equipped with a PA communication system like the ordinance requires.

The City of Chicago's ordinance requires all residential high-rise buildings built prior to 1975 that do not have fire sprinklers to pass a City of Chicago Life Safety Evaluation (LSE). According to Tom Lia, executive director of the nonprofit Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board (NIFSAB), the Chicago LSE program falls well short of the national standard of safety, NFPA 101: Life Safety Code, which is the code referenced by the James Lee Witt Report following the deadly Cook County Administration Building high-rise fire of 2003. NFPA 101 requires fire sprinklers in all high-rise buildings in excess of 75 feet and has been adopted by the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal. Chicago's LSE is essentially a "watered down" version of NFPA 101 and does not address all of the key issues in high-rise fire safety.

"If this building would have complied and installed a fire sprinkler system prior to the original deadline to comply on January 1, 2012, this fire would not have been an issue today. Fire sprinklers would have controlled it or put it out on the spot, and residents would not be left out in the cold," he says. "Fire after fire in these unsprinklered buildings proves that Chicago high-rise residents are not safe when building owners choose to forgo fire sprinklers when complying with the Chicago LSE. What else is it going to take?"

This latest high-rise fire fatality is also a tragic reminder of another fatal fire from last year. This fire comes just two weeks after the one-year anniversary of the deadly fire that killed 32-year-old Shantel McCoy in the high-rise building at 3130 N. Lake Shore Drive.

**For more information about Chicago's Life Safety Evaluation, visit [HighRiseLifeSafety.com](http://HighRiseLifeSafety.com).**

**About the Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board**

The Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board (NIFSAB) is a Not-for-profit 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](http://www.firesprinklerassoc.org).

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