

International Residential Code Fire Sprinkler Coalition

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Residential Fire Sprinklers Receive Unprecedented Support at Building Safety Hearing

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (May 23, 2007) – At a public hearing held yesterday by the International Code Council, the organization responsible for publishing the nation’s residential building code, there was an unprecedented level of support shown for residential fire sprinklers. A proposal to modify the International Residential Code in favor of fire sprinklers in single-family homes secured the support of well over half of the voting members present. Only because of a procedural requirement for a supermajority vote of two-thirds, as opposed to a simple majority, was the sprinkler proposal not adopted.

“Our level of support in Rochester was nothing short of astounding. I’ve been a proponent of residential sprinklers for many years, and to see what the IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition has accomplished in less than six months to rally this cause gives me great confidence in the future of residential sprinklers,” said Ronny J. Coleman, former California state fire marshal. “It’s now clear to me that the question is no longer if we’ll have a national requirement for residential sprinklers, but when, and I think it will happen soon.”

With the nation’s model building codes now requiring fire sprinkler systems to protect all multi-family residential occupancies, home fire sprinklers represent the final piece missing from the nation’s residential fire safety package.

“Eight out of ten fire deaths in America occur at home, where people feel safest,” said Meri-K Appy, President of the Home Safety Council. “Our path forward is clear. We must continue to educate code officials, home builders and others about the importance of residential fire sprinklers.”

Safety experts know that while smoke alarms are essential, only fire sprinklers have the ability to automatically put water on the fire, controlling or even extinguishing it completely. This is especially important in protecting children, older people and individuals who need extra time or assistance to escape from a burning home. The technology, already protecting families in hundreds of thousands of homes across the country, is proven to save lives and protect property.

Building on momentum leading up to the Rochester hearing, the IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition will continue to advance the cause of life-safety. In pursuit of its mission to convey facts and dispel myths about residential sprinklers, copies of an international Web cast on this topic aired by the Coalition on May 3rd and viewed by hundreds of download sites are now available on a free DVD which can be ordered at www.IRCFireSprinkler.org.

About IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition

Founded in 2007, the IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition has grown to include 82 international, national and regional organizations, with statewide associations representing 35 states, all of whom support the mission of promoting residential fire sprinkler systems. The Coalition was formed to educate public policymakers on the value of residential sprinklers and to support related legislation. More information can be found at www.IRCFireSprinkler.org.

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