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## Upcoming Legislative Session Issues Ramping Up

Senate Bill 846 preempts the authority of the Florida Building Commission by removing fire sprinkler protection from the Florida Building Code. The International Residential Code (IRC) is the base document for residential construction in 48 states, including Florida. The IRC, and all national model codes, now recognize the critical need for fire sprinkler protection in all new residential construction in order to protect occupants and firefighters.

### ***Points why legislative action should not be taken:***

- The legislature created the Florida Building Commission to provide a public review process managed by builders, code officials and a wide range of experts. It makes no sense for the legislature to step in and target residential fire sprinklers as a single issue requiring legislative action while allowing all other health, safety, welfare and energy conservation code requirements to be adopted through the Florida Building Commission process.
- Fire sprinkler incentives help to offset the cost of the system. Incentives, such as reduced street width and property separations, fewer fire hydrants and smaller water mains, reduce infrastructure costs as compared to un-sprinklered communities. Developers can then pass these savings on to home buyers.
- Adoption of SB 846 will lead to increased insurance rates because rate penalties are assigned to communities that do not adopt the latest codes.

- Adoption of SB 846 will force a greater emphasis on local property taxes in order to protect citizens in lieu of the protection provided by residential sprinkler systems.
- Insurance companies reduce premiums on individual homeowner policies for homes equipped with fire sprinklers, providing a permanent and recurring financial benefit to the homeowners.

## A Couple of Interesting Florida Fire Statistics

According to the Florida State Fire Marshal's latest Annual Report:

- A Florida Fire Department responds every 15 seconds
- One actual fire occurs every 9 minutes and 6 seconds
- One vehicle fire occurs every 48 minutes and 5 seconds
- One outside/other fire occurs every 18 minutes
- One structure fire occurs every 30 minutes and 3 seconds
- One other emergency call occurs every 1 minute and 50 seconds
- One EMS/rescue call occurs every 20 seconds
- One false alarm occurs every 4 minutes

## High-Rise Retrofit Under Attack Again

Since the beginning of the requirement to retrofit high-rise condos more than 14 years ago, most associations prepared and saved for the capitol expense of sprinkler installation and have complied with the life-saving requirement. Still some delinquent and mismanaged associations continue the battle to extend the deadline for compliance and attempt to effectively "shelve" the issue. This is not a fair assessment to those associations who took fiscal responsibility and made sure their condos were brought up to code. Why did the other associations not get a cost analysis at the onset and then apply the future values so they could adjust their budgets for implementation. Is it better to ignore fire safety retrofits, adopted by legislators in the mid 1990's with multiple extensions and put their money into other "non-safety" places.

The job of the association is to assure that all laws are met in a timely manner and the "rogue" associations have counted on heavy handed politics to avoid compliance. One location was a fire at the Dolphin Cove Condominiums in Clearwater, which took the lives of 2 residents and permanently disabled 2 firefighters caught in a flashover during rescue operations. The building and their appointed condo board members ignored the law and the results of the

# REGIONAL REPORT

Florida Edition



ignorance resulted in the courts finding them partially accountable for the inaction to comply to the retrofit law. Clearwater shared the blame in that there was no water service to the closest fire hydrant, lack of inspections that would have found the building's fire pump inoperable, and no procedure to safely communicate between firefighters that were on the fire floor rescuing those trapped.

Pure and simple, it is time to finish the task that has been identified nationally as the "proper standard of care" for life safety. For those few high-rises yet to comply with the law. Quit spending time trying to skirt and law, plan, and get the sprinklers installed. We continue to lose lives and property without them.

## FFSA May Conference Finalized

Plans are finalized for the FFSA Spring Conference, which will be held May 11-14 at the Daytona Beach Hilton. This is one of the final opportunities for our contractors to receive the 32 credits needed to renew their licenses and will include the "Florida Mandated" business, safety, and worker's compensation courses.

Day 1-

IRC Vision, Clark Gey, Wayne Automatic and Buddy Dewar, NFSA  
Fire Sprinklers for Dwellings, Bob Kleinheinz, NFSA  
Challenges of NFPA 25 Inspections, Top Myers, Dave Haney, John Duffin, John Lake and Terry Victor

Day 2-

CPVC, Michelle Knight  
Underground Piping, Jeff McGaunn, Mueller Company  
FM Global's Changes for Sprinkler Protection of Storage Commodities, Dave Asplundh, Reliable Sprinkler

Day 3 -

Publicity ADS and Programs for your Company and Association, Tom Lia, NIFSA  
Financial Investments, Natasha Stefanik, Morgan, Stanley, Smith and Barney  
How Human Resources Can Help Lead During Turbulent Times, Jeanne Jewett, Wayne Automatic  
Newest Suppression Technologies, Jeff Trew, Viking Supply

Day 4-

Questions and Answers from the State Fire Marshal's Office, Casia Sinco, State Fire Marshal's Office

Social Media 101, Thomas Jelneck, On Target WebSolutions, Inc.

Worker's Compensation, Rick Coble, Ph.D., UF alumni, School of Construction

Workplace Safety, Rick Coble, Ph.D.

NFSA "The Voice of the Fire Sprinkler Industry", Dennis Coleman, Vice-Chair of the National Fire Sprinkler Association, Board of Directors

This conference will fill very quickly, so early registration is suggested. We were able to secure the Daytona Beach Hilton for the extraordinary price of \$99 per night. This is a great time to bring your family and get your 32 CEU's. See you in Daytona Beach.

## Business Thursday On-line Seminars First Half of 2010

Building on the success of the "Technical Tuesday" online seminars that the NFSA has been conducting for many years, we are pleased to announce its first half of 2010 schedule.

Aimed at the contractor or project manager rather than the technician, these seminars will follow the same format, starting at 10:30 am Eastern time and continuing for 1 to 1-1/2 hours. The schedule of dates and topics is as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Instructor</b>
March	The "State of the Economy" for the Fire Sprinkler Industry	Buddy Dewar
April	How to Use Sprinkler Save Information	Bob Kleinheinz
May	Working with the News Media	Dom Kasmauskas Bob Kleinheinz
June	Gathering Stakeholders and Building Bridges for the IRC Adoption	Bruce Lacair

You can attend a NFSA Seminar without traveling to a classroom.

## Sprinkler Save Information

We need your sprinkler save information. Getting that information out to those who seek it is one of the most beneficial ways we can communicate the fire sprinkler message. Every day fire sprinklers are saving lives and preventing property damage. We need to pass that information on.

Please send us your “sprinkler save” information either by emailing or by directly submitting on the “Sprinkler Save” page of the Florida Web Site at: [www.floridafiresprinkler.com](http://www.floridafiresprinkler.com)

While you are at the web site, don’t forget to check for the most current fire sprinkler information available.