



2007

Position Paper on Residential Fire Sprinklers

Looking at the last three years, an average of 48 North Carolinians are killed as the result of hostile fires each year. A high percentage of those deaths occur at home in a residence. It is disturbing that the one place most people feel safest is actually the deadliest at risk from unwanted fires. The real threat of fire is the rapid spread potential and deadly smoke in most cases. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, family escape plans, fire resistive construction and plenty of easily accessible ways out in an emergency are all helpful to save lives and reduce injuries in a fire. However, the single most effective way to protect the life of family and friends in a residential fire is to have a fire sprinkler system. There has never been a multiple loss of life from fire in a structure with a working fire sprinkler system. The local fire department, no matter how fast they arrive or how effective they perform cannot assure your rescue from a burning home. Residential fire sprinklers save lives! There is no debating that fact.

Therefore it is the position of the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs Board of Directors that all homes, regardless of size or construction or type should be protected by a residential fire sprinkler system. The Association recognizes that the economic realities of trying to retrofit existing homes with fire sprinkler systems can be prohibitive but the NCAFC advocates for fire sprinkler systems in all new construction and encourages those with the financial ability to retrofit their homes. Firefighters in several communities around North Carolina have installed fire sprinkler systems in Habitat for Humanity homes and those systems have proven their effectiveness in several incidents by saving the families in those homes. Fire sprinkler systems work, even in affordable housing!

The North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs will work with any group, team with any association, support any legislative body and assist any agency in the effort to educate our citizens, promote, require and apply fire sprinkler technology in the homes and businesses across our great State. Our goal is simple; **REDUCE THE LOSS OF LIFE IN HOSTILE HOME FIRES.**