



NASFM News

National Association of
State Fire Marshals

February 2014

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26th Annual National Fire & Emergency Services Dinner
May 1, 2014
Washington, DC

NASFM Annual Conference
July 28-30, 2014
St. Pete Beach, Florida

Quick Links

One Strong, United Voice for Fire Prevention

Calling All Attendees, Sponsors and Exhibitors!

Online registration is now open for the 2014 NASFM Annual Conference and 25th Anniversary Celebration, to be held at the Tradewinds Island Resorts in St. Pete Beach, Florida, July 28-30, 2014.

The link to the registration and additional conference details can be found on the NASFM website at

<http://www.firemarshals.org/events/events.html>.



State Cigarette Fire Safety Laws Remain Unaffected By Farm Bill

A provision in the House of Representatives version of the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act (also known as the Farm Bill), H.R. 2642, that could potentially have overturned existing cigarette fire safety laws in all 50 states, was removed by House and Senate negotiators working on the conference report for the bill.

The national fire service organizations, led by NASFM and the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI), raised concerns about the amendment in question, which intended to restrict states from placing standards on agricultural products. Many fire service organizations and State Fire Marshals were concerned that the provision could apply to the fire safety performance standards each state has placed on cigarettes, even though that was not the original intent of the amendment.

CFSI, NASFM and 20 other national fire and emergency services organizations sent a letter expressing concern with the provision to Senator Debbie Stabenow (MI), chairwoman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, and Congressman Frank Lucas (OK-3), chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. A delegation representing the fire service coalition also met with committee representatives. Committee members were receptive to the concerns, and the provision ultimately was removed from the final version of the bill in the last hours of conference negotiations.

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Find the National Association of State Fire Marshals page on Facebook and hit "Like"!



NASFM has entered the social media world of Twitter!

"Reduced ignition propensity cigarettes are a key tool in our fight to reduce fire deaths in this country," said NASFM President Bill Degan, New Hampshire State Fire Marshal. "I congratulate and thank our fire service representatives on Capitol Hill who led a successful educational effort on behalf of those of us who administer cigarette fire safety laws in our states. Thanks to them, our ability to uphold public safety was not hurt by an unintentional consequence of the Farm Bill."

ICC Call for Committees



The International Code Council is seeking volunteers to serve on Code Committees, the Code Correlation Committee and Code Interpretation Committees for the 2015-2017 Code Development Cycle. Both new and veteran committee members must complete an application. Applications for committee service are due by June 2.

Click here to apply for a committee:

<http://www.iccsafe.org/CC/Pages/calls.aspx>

This will be the only ICC call for committee applications for the next three-year cycle.

If you have questions about serving on an ICC committee or questions with the application, please contact Bruce Johnson, International Code Council, Toll-free: 888-422-7233 Ext. 7276, BEJohnson@iccsafe.org.

NASFM Opposes Life Safety Code Proposal on Hospital Smoke Compartment Size

A great deal of interest is being generated by a proposed change to the NFPA 101® Life Safety Code® that would nearly double the allowable smoke compartment size in hospitals. The following is a statement opposing the proposal submitted to the National Fire Protection Association by NASFM President Bill Degan with assistance from the NASFM Model Codes Committee. The proposal will be voted on at the NFPA conference in June.

The National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) is opposed to this proposal that almost exponentially increases the allowable smoke compartment in hospitals from 22,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet. There has been no introduction of scientific evidence or fire risk assessment to support their proposal. There are a range of fire assessment tools to choose from to prove the safety of their proposal, such as NFPA 551 Evaluation of Fire Risk Assessments, The SFPE Engineering Guide or ISO 16732-1 Fire Safety Engineering, but none have been submitted. The basis for this proposal appears to be based on marketing data and some assumptions anticipating efficiencies that have not been quantified. Health care facilities are one of the most regulated occupancies because they are so important to our communities and because patients are so vulnerable.

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Maintaining passive and active fire suppression design elements is a major cost of doing business, lowering the bar to eliminate maintenance costs by increasing compartment size with no engineering analysis to support their premise and doing so at the risk of patient safety is not the methodology NASFM would support in light of the justification provided for this proposal. The supporting statement mentioned analysis regarding the recommended size of the smoke compartments but it was not provided for public comment. There was reference to the limitation of smoke compartment size by the hospital construction guidelines. While most new hospitals in the US might comply with these guides, there are no provisions for their legal enforcement, particularly in all areas where the Life Safety Code is referenced by NFPA 5000.

NASFM believes the logic expressed in the statement of support is flawed. It assumes travel distance is linear, therefore doubling the square footage to support the travel distance is justified. However, travel distance is anything but linear but in fact is circuitous and roundabout. I predict that if 40,000 square foot smoke compartments are approved the proponent will be back asking for an increase in travel distance because of design limitations.

Although the limitations for travel distance to a smoke barrier door still apply, the increase in smoke compartment area would potentially expose a much greater number of patients to a single fire event. Even though the travel distance to the door is maintained, the movement of a larger number of patients to an adjacent compartment could take a much longer time, and potentially expose a larger number of patients to a fire for an extended period of time. There has been no adjustment in staff numbers to impact these emergency procedures. No maximum number of patients that could be present in any smoke compartment has been specified. Additionally, there has been no adjustment to the fire protection features (automatic detection, staffing levels, evacuation procedures, etc.) to accompany this increase in compartment size.

The proponent does not provide adequate justification through engineering analysis of their proposal and how it would impact patient safety. I respectfully request that the Technical Committee be overturned.

Home Fire Sprinklers: Ask for Them!



The nonprofit Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC) has launched new online content designed to help consumers learn about the life-saving benefits of fire sprinklers. For more information regarding the initiative, including a link to the online interactive guide, please click here: [HFSC_PR](#)

NEMA Guides Help in Evaluating Equipment Damaged in Fire

Two National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) guides are available at no cost on the NEMA website:

"Evaluating Fire- and Heat-Damaged Electrical Equipment"
(<http://www.nema.org/Standards/Pages/Evaluating-Fire-and-Heat-Damaged-Electrical-Equipment.aspx>) provides information on how to evaluate electrical equipment that has been exposed to heat and fire residue through fire, firefighting activities, or close proximity to a fire. It is designed for use by suppliers, installers, inspectors, and users of electrical products. Published date: Aug. 26, 2013.

"Evaluating Water-Damaged Electrical Equipment"
(<http://www.nema.org/Standards/Pages/Evaluating-Water-Damaged-Electrical-Equipment.aspx>) provides advice on the safe handling of electrical equipment that has been exposed to water. The guide outlines items that will require complete replacement or that can be reconditioned by a trained professional. Equipment covered includes electrical distribution equipment, motor circuits, power equipment, transformers, wire, cable and flexible cords, wiring devices, GFCIs and surge protectors, lighting fixtures and ballasts, motors and electronic products. Published date: Oct. 13, 2004.