

National Fire Sprinkler Magazine

November-December 2023

No. 242



The Flagship Publication of The National Fire Sprinkler Association

Advancing the Industry

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Training the Next Generation
page 31

How to be a Code Official
page 15

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page 25



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Advancing Everyday

NFSA's staff wakes up everyday to advance and promote the fire sprinkler industry. NFSA members work everyday to produce, deliver, design, install, inspect, and maintain the most effective form of fire protection in the world. This is our mission today, and it was our "general purpose" when we were organized 119 years ago (November 1905), yes, it's our birthday on November 22nd.

Our members pour millions of dollars per year into promoting and enhancing this great industry. Our staff pour their heart, soul, and time into shaping codes, standards, regulations, and laws that will ensure more lives and property is protected by automatic fire sprinkler systems.

Rest assured, we are making advancements everyday. Also, realize we are under attack everyday. This dynamic requires a concentrated and coordinated effort to continually advance the industry. I work pretty hard at ensuring NFSA's efforts are vision driven and mission focused. With the amazing staff we have, there is very little internal work in making sure we are on task and mission focused. However, within our own industry, we can be our worst enemies. It is becoming more and more difficult, and it has always caused me to work harder when attempting to market our industry to ourselves.

Recently, I have spent more time on the road with our members and within the fire protection industry than in the nine years I have been blessed to be in this role. The one constant is change and turnover. I have observed this in companies, state fire marshals' offices, with local fire chiefs and fire marshals, and even within our own ranks.

"The constant change of people in our industry and within those who regulate and enforce us, requires more education and advocacy. This is the time when a consistent message and overall awareness helps."

Speaking of turnover, I wouldn't be a responsible leader if I didn't give a great big thank you and congratulations to NFSA's Senior Vice President of our Labor/Legal Department, Fred Barall. Fred has announced his retirement for the end of this year. Fred has been a committed member of the NFSA staff for 20 years, and has worked with all our members to advance this great industry. He has been one of the most trusted and loyal teammates I've ever had the pleasure to work with.

I cry as I write this part of the article. The inspiration for this came after speaking at a man's funeral service that would have wanted what is to follow said. There are a small group of people that I know in this industry that have invested like this man invested. I have never, in my nearly 20 years of involvement with the NFSA in some form or fashion, known a person who never said no to anything when it came to giving to this industry, and that is Wayne Gey. Wayne passed away in August 30, 2023 and it was an honor to represent the industry at his service. On behalf of the fire sprinkler industry and from the fullness of my heart, thank you Wayne and thank you to the entire Gey family.

I also, can't finish this column without saying thank you to a man who meant a lot to me and helped my career, Chief Ronnie Coleman. Chief Coleman passed away just before I wrote this. He is another inspiration as he wrote for years for the AFSA prior to me coming to NFSA. He and many icons in the fire service didn't understand the reason or difference between our associations, he just couldn't say no to the cause of automatic fire sprinklers. He lead the IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition and he, Jeff Shapiro, Jeff Hugo, and Vickie Pritchett, are the reason that over 25% of the fire sprinkler shipments in this country are residential.

The constant change of people in our industry and within those who regulate and enforce us, requires more education and advocacy. This is the time when a consistent message and overall awareness helps. The current status of NFSA, AFSA, IFSA, and all the independent associations within this industry around the country

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From the President's Desk

Shane Ray

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contributes to confusion within our own industry, therefore, you can imagine what it does to those outside our industry.

The political environment and the uncertain economic times constantly overshadow the great work people do everyday. The political divide and toxic attacks, often personal, over the past decade, have caused great divides, not only on Capitol Hill in D.C. or Statehouses and City Hall's across the country, but within industries, and even more sadly, within families.

I wish I was writing to say I had the answer, but I don't. However, I do know that if all of us within this great industry could come to the table, we could better utilize the over \$25 million our members invest in it. Well, with NFSA making up \$15 of that \$25, I know we exponentially give our ROI (return on investment). However, If we could all get on the same page and our members doubled the amount of money to \$50 million, it still wouldn't be 1/2 of 1% of what this industry is worth.

We will continue to give our heart; our passion, commitment, and dedication; and our time to advancing this great industry because we are vision driven; A Stronger Industry...A Safer World and mission focused; To save lives and protect property from fire through the widespread acceptance of the fire sprinkler concept.

I hope you stayed with me this entire time, even with a few diversions. This edition of the magazine is when our staff is the busiest with directly promoting this industry to the public. We conducted over 100 live fire demonstrations to thousands of people in the month of October and reach over a hundred million people with our marketing and advertising campaigns. This is thanks to our Manufacturers Council, our SAM Council, and our IP Committees. I hope you know who you are and how much I appreciate you.

A Humble Servant,



Shane Ray, President

Fire happens fast...thankfully, so does this.



U.S. fire departments respond to an average of one home fire every 86 seconds.

On average, seven people per day die in U.S. home fires where fire sprinklers are not present.

Fire sprinklers can control and may even extinguish a fire in less time than it would take the fire department to arrive on the scene.

In a home with sprinklers, the average property loss per fire is cut by about 70% compared to fires where sprinklers are not present.

Residential fire sprinkler systems cut the risk of dying in a fire by about 80%.



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Our Mission to Motivate

Good morning, good afternoon, or even, good evening, Sprinkler Industry, it's that time again! The options you have with this colorful, educational NFSA glossy magazine and the specific article within from your Chair are endless. You can choose to read it, or space out and just look at all the pictures. You can open it up and put your coffee cup right on my picture, a perfect desk coaster. You can write or draw anywhere on it with a pen, pencil or a broken red crayon. If you are busy, you can lose it under a stack of mail on your desk or leave it in the back seat of your car for the ride home. If it makes it home, you can recycle it, read it again, or even start a fire with it. What a tool, the ultimate educational sprinkler multi-tool. The best part, you can do all the tasks together any time of the day, how special is that?



Did I get your attention? Am I experiencing my "Jump-The-Shark" Fonzie Moment? Those of you less than say 50 years-old better Google it, it might make you smile. Then again you really need to know Fonzie first.

So, how fortunate are we to make a living working in the fire sprinkler industry? We all know we produce good and only good! No one is screaming at us for destroying the planet or overly warming the atmosphere. We do not produce and sell fossil fuels or expensive drugs in the pharmaceutical industry, if you do, you are under constant media attack. In our beautiful industry we protect lives and property from fire, primarily with water, and we do it well. Hooray, we are heroes!

Okay then, as heroes, why is it that everyone does not stand in line to get in? Working in our industry should be a mission, not just a job. Ask the advocates with Common Voices. They will tell you we are extremely important. In the last several years, all of us have hung outdoor signs, posted openings on social media, and attended too many job fairs, but we still have plenty of openings in our companies.

We do not need existing competitors constantly recycling employees among themselves. Instead, we must all recruit, train and motivate the next generation, and we need to do it now! I promise you we will need more help for manufacturing, designing, fabricating, and installing systems than you can possibly visualize today. I am not even talking about the inspection, testing, and maintenance of the hundreds of millions of sprinklers already in service. Just ask your favorite AI app...it will tell you. Our industry is growing and will continue to grow. We might see a few soft glitches in the next couple of years, but overall, get ready, because we really have seen nothing yet.

Recruit, train and motivate like it is a mission, the industry and the consumer need us. Don't be afraid to hire and train what you fear will be your competitor's future. I promise you after they read this article, stealing employees in our industry will never happen again, I am absolutely convinced of it. Unless of course my article has a coffee stain on it and it's about to start the barbeque.

Thanks for your continued support -Your Chair

Jim



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Fire is fast. Fire sprinklers are faster.

How to Make Your Business Stand Out in a Competitive Market

by Max Liew

To make your business stand out in a competitive market, you need to understand what a competitive market is. A competitive market is one in which many buyers and sellers of a particular product or service, and each has enough information about the others to make informed decisions.

So how to make your business stand out if so many other businesses sell the same product or service? If you want to make your business stand out, you need to differentiate it from the competition. This means that you need to make your business unique in some way.

In a competitive market, it is important to make your business stand out. There are several ways to do this:

1. Make sure your products or services are of the highest quality. This will ensure that customers keep coming back and recommend your business to others.
2. Offer something unique that your competitors don't. This could be a unique selling point (USP), such as a patented product or technology, or simply a different approach to customer service.
3. Make sure your branding is strong and consistent across all channels. Your brand should convey what makes your business special and should be instantly recognizable to potential customers.
4. Keep your prices competitive, but don't sacrifice quality or service to do so. Customers are often willing to pay slightly more for a better experience or product.
5. Find ways to get your products or services into the hands of your customers. This could be through an affiliate program, a referral program, or simply offering a money-back guarantee.
6. Look for cross-selling and upselling opportunities. You'll find that your customers are often willing to buy additional products or services from you.
7. Think about how you can expand the demand for what you sell. This could be through additional products, multiple delivery channels, or even through bundling with complementary products and services.
8. Watch for ways to create additional value for your customers. You can do this by providing valuable information, building brand loyalty, or adding more functionality to your product or service.
9. Look for ways to add more services and functions to your products or services.

In any business, big or small, you will face competition. It is an inescapable part of the business world. The key to success is

making your business stand out from the rest. Here are a few tips on how to do just that:

- Know your audience and target them specifically. Find a niche market and focus on it.
- Offer something unique that your competitors don't.
- Build a strong brand identity.
- Promote your business through effective marketing and advertising campaigns.
- Provide excellent customer service and build good relationships with your clients or customers.
- Stay up to date with industry trends and news.
- Constantly strive to improve and grow your business.

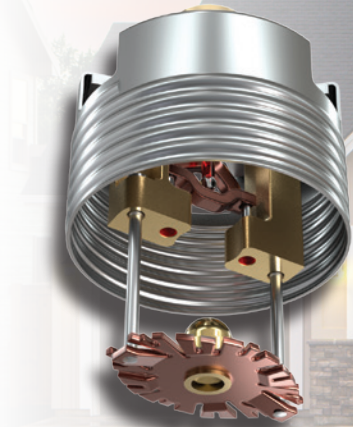
To make your business stand out in a competitive market, it is important to do your marketing research. This will help you to understand what your target market is looking for and how you can best reach them. There are a few key things to keep in mind when conducting marketing research:

1. Define your target market. Who are you trying to reach with your product or service? What are their needs and wants?
2. Research your competition. What are they doing that works well? What could they improve on?
3. Use data to make decisions. Collect data from surveys, customer feedback, social media, and other sources. Use this data to inform your marketing decisions.
4. Be flexible and adaptable. As the market changes, so should your marketing strategy. Regularly reevaluate your plan and make changes as needed.
5. Be prepared to adjust your marketing plan. Marketing is not a one-and-done activity. You must be willing to make changes as needed to adapt and compete in the marketplace.
6. Find a way to differentiate yourself and your product or service from others in the market.

There are a lot of benefits to making your business stand out, including:

1. Increased brand awareness. When you make your business stand out, people are more likely to remember your brand and what you offer. This can lead to increased sales and loyal customers.
2. Differentiation. If your business is just like every other business in your industry, it can be hard for customers to see why they should choose you over the competition. But if you make your business unique, it's easier for customers to see the value in what you offer.
3. Greater customer loyalty. When customers have a positive experience with your business, they're more likely to come back and recommend you to others. •

New K3.7 Concealed Residential Pendant



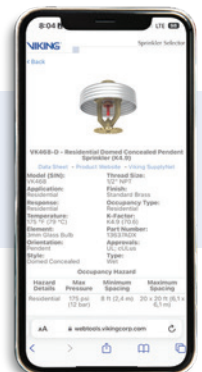
Provides the lowest flows and pressures at the 14' coverage area

Viking's new low-flowing K3.7 sprinkler, the VK495 Residential Concealed Pendant, is optimized at the 14' x 14' coverage area flowing only 10 gpm at 7.3 psi! The cULus Listed sprinkler rounds out the robust residential concealed sprinkler line from Viking, making it a one-stop-shop to find every residential protection solution needed.

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Viking's revolutionary Sprinkler Selector ensures that you can find the right sprinkler for the job — every time. Get started today by visiting webtools.vikingcorp.com/sprinklerselector.



Careers as a Fire Sprinkler Layout Technician

by Michael J. Joanis, P.E., **Chief Engineer**



Fire sprinkler systems play a vital role in safeguarding lives and property. The unsung heroes of the industry are the fire sprinkler layout technicians. These individuals are responsible for creating effective fire sprinkler system designs resulting in installations that make the difference between life and death. This article explores the intriguing career of a fire sprinkler layout technician, shedding light on the training required, certifications needed, and various career paths available in such a challenging and rewarding profession.

What is a layout technician? These types of positions are commonly referred to as engineering technicians or designers and not layout technicians. Because the professional engineering community has taken a position that the use of the words “design” and “engineering” are reserved for professional engineers, the NFSA uses the term layout technician. Regardless of the title, layout technicians play a vital and significant role in the engineering and design of fire sprinkler systems.

The Role of the Fire Sprinkler Layout Technician

Fire sprinkler layout technicians are professionals who specialize in the design and layout of fire protection systems. Their primary responsibility is to design effective systems that will quickly detect and control fires. They are critical members of a fire sprinkler contractor’s organization. It is impossible to bring a fire sprinkler system installation project to a successful and profitable completion without talented and proficient layout technicians.

The layout technician’s goal is to produce unambiguous plans that result in the lowest installation cost of a fire sprinkler system, consistent with project contract documents, applicable codes and standards, and quality for the customer. The following are the most common activities and responsibilities to achieve this goal:

- Examine and compare the contract documents, sales estimate, and applicable codes and standards.
- Consider system layouts that produce the most efficient installation. Factors include building structure, type of materials, expertise of installation personnel, company standards, and coordination with other trades.
- Produce shop drawings that effectively communicate the entire scope of work and serve as instructions on how to

install a system. They must be complete and independent so that each person who views them has all the information required to complete their job. The installer needs to know how and where to hang and join the pipe. Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)’s need to be able to understand system features, spacing, devices, and calculations. Other building trades must know where the sprinkler piping is being installed. See NFPA 13, *Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems*, 2022 edition, Section 28.1.3 for a complete list of information required on shop drawings.

- Establish contact with the fire and building code officials before layout begins to verify specific project requirements. Be available to answer their questions during the review and approval process.
- Coordinate and/or field-check all project equipment before stock listing and fabrication.
- Maintain communication with field personnel to address any questions they may have.
- Prepare as-built drawings as the system is being installed.
- Maintain project records and files including contract documents, contract addendums, change order requests, field changes, and coordination drawings from other trades.

This is certainly not a complete list. Each client, owner, building, occupancy, hazards, water supply, design criteria, and system layout will be unique. That is what makes the role of a layout technician challenging and exciting each day. The sprinkler company’s organization will affect these roles and responsibilities as well. For example, some layout technicians will work closely with sales and estimating personnel providing technical assistance prior to contracting a project. This ensures the sales estimate is technically accurate and complete.

Layout technicians can expect added responsibilities as their experience and knowledge expands. They will often start their career with a basic knowledge of two-dimensional computer aided drafting. However, there are many additional computer-based skills they will acquire such as hydraulic calculations, three dimensional drawings, electronic coordination, and building informational modeling.

The scope and complexity of the projects they are assigned will

continued on page 12



increase as well. They may start with simple field surveys and drafting responsibilities. You can expect this will be expanded to include tenant fit out projects, new construction projects, fire pumps, high rise buildings, storage occupancies, and/or special hazard systems. Typically, senior layout technicians will also train and supervise newer employees and may eventually take on the role of managing the entire design department for their company. This makes these positions dynamic and provides an opportunity to constantly increase responsibility while adding value to the company.

Required Training and Education

To embark on a career as a fire sprinkler layout technician, one needs a combination of education and practical experience. Here are the key steps and training requirements:

- **High School Diploma or Equivalent:** The journey typically begins with a high school diploma or GED.
- **Bachelor's Degree in Engineering or Related Field:** Although not always mandatory, a bachelor's degree in engineering or a related field such as fire protection engineering, mechanical engineering, or civil engineering can provide a solid foundation for this career. It is important to note that some employers may accept candidates with relevant associate degrees or vocational training. The Society of Fire Protection Engineers provides a listing of known fire protection degree programs at this link <https://www.sfpe.org/career/students/universityprograms>.
- **Design Software Proficiency:** Fire sprinkler layout technicians must become proficient in computer-aided design (CAD) software and other design tools used in the industry. This involves coursework or training in CAD programs like AutoCAD, Revit, and Navisworks.
- **Fire Protection Courses:** Enrolling in courses specifically related to fire protection systems is essential. These courses cover topics such as fire sprinkler system design principles, hydraulic calculations, and NFPA (National Fire Protection

Association) standards. The National Fire Sprinkler Association provides these courses. They can be found at this link <https://nfsa.org/training/>

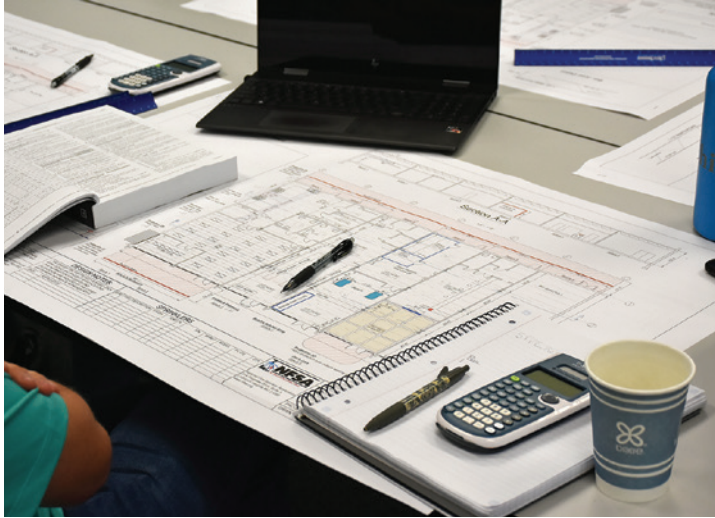
- **Apprenticeship or Entry-Level Positions:** After completing education and training, aspiring fire sprinkler layout technicians often start as apprentices or in entry-level positions within fire protection companies. Here, they gain hands-on experience under the guidance of experienced professionals.
- **On-the-Job Training:** Fire sprinkler layout technicians refine their skills through practical experience, which involves working on design projects, conducting site surveys, and collaborating with engineers and architects.

Certification Required

Certifications are a crucial aspect of a fire sprinkler layout technician's career. They validate one's expertise and knowledge in the field, demonstrating a commitment to safety and professionalism. Some essential certifications for fire sprinkler layout technicians include:

- **NICET Certification:** The National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET) offers certification programs specifically designed for fire protection professionals. NICET certification levels range from Level I to Level IV, with each level representing a higher degree of expertise and responsibility. <https://www.nicet.org/certification-programs/>.
- **NFPA Certification:** The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) offers various certifications related to fire protection, including the Certified Water-Based Systems Professional (CWBSPP). <https://www.nfpa.org/Training-and-Events/Certification/Certification/Certified-Water-Based-Systems-Professional>
- **Professional Engineering Certification:** The engineering profession is regulated by licensing boards in each US state & territory that set the standards for professional engineers

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to protect the public. State laws may require projects be overseen by a professional engineer. Registration is based upon written examination, college education, and professional experience. For more information about engineering certification, visit the NCEES website at <https://ncees.org/>.

Career Paths

A career as a fire sprinkler layout technician offers several exciting and rewarding paths for advancement and specialization:

- **Junior Layout Technician:** Entry-level positions as junior layout technicians involve assisting senior layout technicians with tasks such as drafting, hydraulic calculations, and system design. This role allows individuals to gain valuable experience and develop their design skills.
- **Senior Layout Technician:** With experience, senior layout technicians take on more complex projects and have greater responsibility for the design and coordination of fire sprinkler systems. They often serve as mentors for junior layout technicians.
- **Project Manager:** Some fire sprinkler layout technicians transition into project management roles, where they oversee the entire design and installation process. This role requires strong organizational and leadership skills.
- **Consultant:** Experienced fire sprinkler layout technicians can become consultants, offering their expertise to architectural and engineering firms or acting as independent consultants. They provide design reviews, code compliance assessments, and expert advice on fire protection systems.
- **Code Compliance Specialist:** Specializing in fire code compliance, these professionals work closely with local authorities and fire departments to ensure fire protection systems meet all relevant codes and regulations.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Some fire sprinkler layout technicians choose to start their own design or installation firms. This

path allows for greater autonomy and the opportunity to take on diverse projects.

A career as a fire sprinkler layout technician is a vigorous and fulfilling journey that requires a combination of education, hands-on experience, and certifications. These professionals play a critical role in ensuring the safety of individuals and property by designing effective fire protection systems. Whether you choose to work for an established firm, become a consultant, or even start your own business, the opportunities for growth and impact in this field are boundless. So, if fire safety is your passion, and you are committed to making a difference, I encourage you to pursue a career as a fire sprinkler layout technician. •

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How to be a Code Official

by Jeffrey M. Hugo, CBO, Vice President of Codes, Standards, and Public Fire Protection



Fire sprinkler contractors and designers are often interacting and communicating with the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) or code official, either through the fire sprinkler shop drawing plan review, permits, acceptance testing and more. Being an AHJ is often

applied to the code officials enforcing the locally adopted codes and standards. Depending on where the jurisdiction is and how it is managed, a sprinkler contractor may just deal with a fire prevention office/bureau, but in other cases, they will need to get approval from the building department or other departments within the jurisdiction. Code officials usually come from their respective trades, for example a builder becomes a building inspector, a sprinkler layout technician would be a fire inspector or a fire plans examiner.



Examples of Code Officials

Fire marshal: the position that manages the jurisdiction fire prevention department. Responsible to enforce adopted fire codes and their referenced standards. Usually, the fire marshal oversees all fire plan reviewers and fire inspectors and reports to the fire chief.

Building official: the position that manages the jurisdiction building department. Responsible to enforce adopted building, plumbing, mechanical, and electrical codes, and their referenced standards. Usually, the building official oversees all plan reviewers and inspectors.

Building, fire, plumbing, mechanical and electrical inspector: These positions conduct the day-to-day plan reviews and inspections in the field.

Plan reviewer or plans examiner: The position that reviews all construction documents, including fire sprinkler shop drawings, manufacturers data sheets, and hydraulic calculations.

Experience and Education

Code officials are one of the key stakeholders in new and existing construction. They enforce the locally adopted codes and standards throughout the construction in new and existing buildings. Many local jurisdictions have minimum hiring requirements and

continuing education requirements, similar to being a licensed sprinkler contractor. Code officials can often be trades people who have the design and field experience and prefer working for local communities versus a contractor. Some code officials are retired from a trade and choose to work the “other side” as a second job or career. Here are some examples of hiring requirements for code officials across the United States:

- **A class III deputy fire marshal in a city located in Oregon:** Four years of full-time paid experience in firefighting and/or fire prevention, fire and life safety plans review, fire suppression and detection systems plan review, or equivalent experience. An associate degree in Fire Science may substitute for two years of experience.
- **A fire inspector in a city located in Indiana:** A bachelor's degree in Fire Science or related field or an associate degree in Fire Science with three years fire service experience or prior experience in the design, installation, testing, and/or maintenance of fire sprinkler and alarm systems.
- **A building inspector in Michigan:** Some mini-max states, like Michigan, have a statewide code official registration. To work as a code official locally, the person must be registered

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with the state. The minimum requirement to be registered for enforcing a code(s) is six years of experience in the field trades, architecture, or engineering.

Continuing Education

As part of their position, code officials are often required to obtain continuing education. On many occasions, NFSA training and education courses are attended by both the fire sprinkler industry professionals and code officials. This makes for a well-rounded education experience for all. Every NFSA training is registered with the ICC Preferred Provider Program and are applicable to state and NICET continuing education requirements. Here are a few examples of continuing education requirements:

- **A fire inspector in Florida:** Needs 54 hours in a four-year renewal period, eight hours must be the changes to NFPA 1 and NFPA 101 (Florida Fire Prevention Code changes) in the renewal cycle.
- **A plans examiner in Virginia:** Needs 16 hours in a two-year renewal cycle.
- **A plumbing inspector in Michigan:** Needs 34 hours in specific state approved courses in a three-year renewal period.

Code Officials are Professionals

Being a code official is a solid and rewarding job. Individuals will get very familiar with construction styles and practices and make sure they conform to the minimum codes and standards. As noted above, every code official is required to meet several years of education and/or experience. Each code official will then need to obtain several hours of continuing education per year. This is applied to either a state or local level position, as well as positions that require ICC or NFPA certifications to be maintained.

Interested in code official positions? Several NFSA staff were code officials in former professional careers and are open to discuss the ins and outs of being a code official, please reach out to training@nfsa.org. Need continuing education? Look no further than www.nfsa.org/training.

The logo for the National Fire Sprinkler Association is centered. It features a blue water drop shape containing the text 'FIRE SPRINKLERS BUY TIME' and 'TIME BUYS LIFE'. Below the drop is the text 'NATIONAL FIRE SPRINKLER ASSOCIATION'. To the left of the logo is the text 'You can fix wet.' and to the right is 'You can't fix burnt.'. At the bottom of the graphic is the slogan 'FIRE SPRINKLERS SAVE LIVES'.



by Vickie Pritchett,
Vice President of Advocacy and Outreach

Reflections

This edition of the NFSM brings us to the close of another year, a time that we are filled with anticipation for the new year, and a time for reflection on this year.

Team NFSA has spent this year very focused on our mission; *To save lives and property from fire through the widespread acceptance of the fire sprinkler concept*, and our vision; *A Stronger Industry... A Safer World*. With a mission and vision like those, it's easy for us to give our all and champion for our cause. We are saving lives with our work, and we are making a difference. Those two facts make getting up and engaging for the day easy for all of us who are blessed to be part of Team NFSA! We appreciate the support of our Board and our members; we couldn't do what we do without you. This truly is a team effort!

There is no better person for me to speak about than Wayne Gey

in regard to promoting the industry and advancing our cause. Wayne passed away on August 30, 2023, and, for a lot of us, our world dimmed. However, it didn't take long for us to realize that the lessons he taught us prepared us for what's next. That "next" includes a challenge for all of us. Wayne and I formed a friendship in the early 2000s that strengthened during his role as Chair of the NFSA Board of Directors. We worked side-by-side when NFSA first developed a marketing plan - it was a time of discovering how to best promote the fire sprinkler industry, and how to best understand our members and their needs. What an honor it was to learn from him. When his family asked me to speak at his funeral, I was honored to say yes, and I'd like to share parts of what I said during Wayne's celebration of life on September 8, 2023. •

W *Wonderful.* Wonderful is better than good, it's even better than great. That's Wayne Gey.

A *Amazing. Grace.* Wayne's faith inspires us all, and it's authentic. That's Wayne Gey, and thank you Peyton for such a beautiful Amazing Grace today, he loved you dearly and you did awesome.

Y *You're my best friend.* Think of how many of us felt this! That's Wayne Gey.

N *Noteworthy – significant – Minutes Matter.* Cause. So many noteworthy accomplishments. His leadership made WAFS noteworthy and then some! That's Wayne Gey.

E *Excellence. Exceptional.* The best at all that he did. That's Wayne Gey.

Wayne was a founding member of Common Voices and his vision for this non-profit is awe inspiring to this day. Wayne, as a successful businessman, didn't have to study and worry about "paying it forward," but he did just that. His vision, his challenge for this group of advocates— all who have lost a loved one to fire or are a burn survivor themselves... —this group has made so many differences, and lives will be saved because of their work.

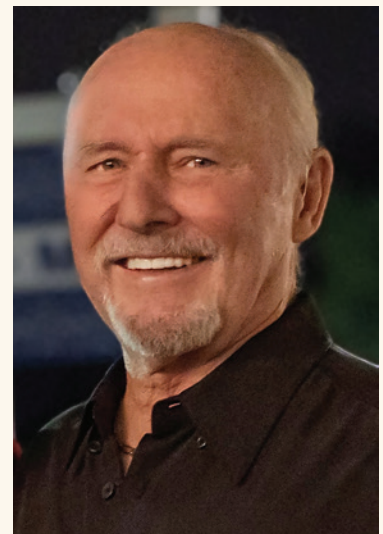
Today I challenge you to listen to Wayne, and to honor Wayne

with your support of the Common Voices advocates, we're honored today to have Pam Elliott and Jenna Pritchett with us... he sure did love y'all, and through your work he lives on... and he forever will.

Those of you in this front row know how special you are to have had his unconditional love. And, to those of you in all the rows, you know that he loved you too. As we all share our stories and heal our broken hearts with remembering all the things he taught us, we truly do celebrate his life. To the WAFS family, know that he loved you all BIG, believed in the cause, and dared anyone to argue that Minutes Matter, enough so that he did indeed tattoo it on his body! Keep that flag flying high and keep making him proud!

For the grandkids, you will never get tired of hearing great things about your grandpa, and the good news is, you will never stop hearing them.

For Clark and Melodie, no one will ever take your Daddy's



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place, you'll miss him every day, but he will guide you every day. Promise. It just works that way. Clark, early in my friendship with Wayne, he described you to me as the one "who only knows one speed, and that's wide open..." You made him proud, and you'll keep making him proud as you continue his legacy through Wayne Automatic Fire Sprinklers. Pedal to the medal my friend, wide open! And, Lisa, I know that you & Wayne had so many good times together, thank you for being by Clark's side as he makes his way without his Daddy.

And Annie, thank you so much for bringing Wayne such comfort, joy, and faith. Joy of my life was just perfect.

To the family as a whole, thank you for choosing this place, Wayne's well-loved ranch, as the place for us to gather and celebrate his life. So many of my personal memories with Wayne are right here on this land, it just feels perfect for today.

Wayne, we love you, we miss you, we will always remember all you have shared with us all. Rest in peace, we'll take it from here. You've poured into us so that we can, and WE WILL!



If that's not a way to celebrate 2023 and look forward to 2024, I don't know what is! SO many lessons here. I hope that you all enjoy the most magical holidays with your families, friends and companies.... Let's give our all every single day and keep advancing the fire sprinkler industry that we all love!

Until Next Time,

Vickie

The Truth Burns

Common Voices advocates set the stage for why a focus on the impact of fire is worth a glance. Pause and think about our instinct to survive and ask yourself why do we become complacent when it comes to fire safety? The myth “it’ll never happen to me”... sometimes, the truth burns.

In 2022, Common Voices launched a bold plan to capture the stories of all Common Voices advocates. The dream/plan is to have these stories provide the inspiration for a streaming service to create a Docu-series and/or a documentary called “The Truth Burns.” We believe that these stories are courageous, and that they can make a difference and prevent others from suffering similar tragedies. We hope you will join us in our efforts, share the links via all social media platforms, join our coalition with a donation. Working together, we can save lives, and we thank you for believing in our cause, supporting our advocates, and joining our movement for a Fire Safe America.

Our landing page for *The Truth Burns* can be found here:

<https://fireadvocates.org/the-truth-burns/>

 CommonVoices1

 CommonVoices1

fireadvocates.org

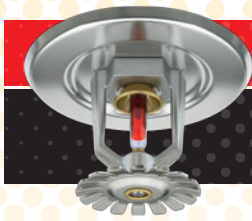
Fire Sprinklers Save Lives



Courageous stories that can make a difference and prevent others from suffering similar tragedies...



<https://fireadvocates.networkforgood.com/projects/125513-main-giving-page>



FIRE SPRINKLERS IN ACTION

Editor's note: The following saves were submitted by our members. If you have a save you'd like to see featured, use this QR code or email me at genadio@nfsa.org. Please include photos if available!



ARKANSAS

Single Fire Sprinkler Contains Fire at Assisted Living Facility

Thanks go to Rogers, AR Deputy Building Official William Rumsey for sending us this sprinkler save!

On September 12th, the Rogers Fire Department was alerted to a fire at a Rogers, AR senior living facility. The fire, which was caused by oil-soaked rags in a clothes dryer, was contained by a single fire sprinkler.



The facility staff was able to evacuate all residents safely. Firefighters finished the extinguishment. There were no reports of injuries due to the fire.

COLORADO

Sprinkler System Contains Vehicle Fire

Thanks to South Adams County Fire Department, CO Fire Prevention Specialist Jaeger Luke for reporting this sprinkler save.

On the morning of September 9th, South Adams County Fire Department crews responded to a vehicle fire inside a trash transfer station building.

The fire started after the operator had put the heavy equipment in reverse. After coming to a complete stop, the vehicle engine bay erupted in flames. Luckily, the operator was able to escape completely unharmed. Shortly after multiple fire sprinklers operated, containing the fire until crews arrived. Crews were able to quickly extinguish the remaining flames.



I would like to preface that this building was built on a site where the previous trash transfer station had completely burned down a few years prior. A couple things of note about this building are that the building was designed with a 24hr. continuous misting system to help mitigate flammable dust, and the second being since trash is not listed as a commodity, a compromise had been made to have the sprinkler density between Ordinary II and Extra Hazard I. On many occasions we do not get to see when solutions to problems are put to the test, however, it is excellent to see when they are and they work.

Single Fire Sprinkler Saves Sporting Goods Store

Thanks to Loveland, CO Battalion Chief Carie Dann for sending in this great save.

Loveland Fire Rescue Authority responded to a water flow alarm at a 250,000sqft sporting goods store. Firefighters arrived on scene to see flames coming from a large trash compactor. The compactor is on the exterior but is connected to the store by fire doors so that employees can discard rubbish in the container without going outside. The compactor is located under a covered loading dock protected by a dry-pipe sprinkler system.



The fire was suppressed by the single dry sidewall sprinkler protecting the interior of the container. Firefighters deployed a "fog nail" to further control the fire and moved the compactor away from the building for extinguishment and overhaul.

Store staff reacted quickly to evacuate shoppers and closed interior doors to limit smoke spread. The sprinkler system, fire pump and fire alarm system were back online within three hours and the store reopened the following morning.

"Without this one sprinkler, we could have lost lives, jobs, and a building and merchandise valued in the tens of millions of dollars," LFRA Fire Chief Tim Sendelbach said.

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Single Fire Sprinkler Saves Apartment Complex

Thanks to South Adams, CO County Fire Department Division Chief of Fire Prevention/Fire Marshal Brittany Brown for sending us this great news.

This is a great example of success. Fast and effective fire department response along with an effective fire sprinkler activation minimized damage and saved lives. Also, the great relationship between owner, fire sprinkler contractor, and fire department allowed for minimal disruption and displacement for the owner and occupants. Lives and property saved, that's partners in progress.



South Adams County Fire Department responded to a water flow alarm at a three-story apartment complex. A family was cooking something in oil on the stove. When the oil got too hot, they removed the pan from the stovetop and put it in the sink and poured water on it. This resulted in a grease fire and activation of the sprinkler system, which put out the fire with one sprinkler and minimal damage to the apartment building.

The fire sprinkler contractor for the building was contacted to replace the activated sprinkler head and the system was put back in service in less than three hours after the event.

FLORIDA

Single Sprinkler Extinguishes Apartment Cooking Fire

Thanks to Beau Gardner, Division Chief of Fire Safety and Inspections with the Port Orange, FL Fire Department for sending in this sprinkler save!

A homeowner became distracted while heating grease on the stove top. A single fire sprinkler controlled and extinguished fire. This was a ground-floor unit of a three-story, 24-unit apartment building. Minimal damage overall!



ILLINOIS

Single Sprinkler Contains Apartment Fire

Thanks to Wauconda, IL Fire Marshal Mike DaValle for sending in this sprinkler save.

On July 27th, the Wauconda Fire District responded to an apartment complex for a structure fire. Crews arrived in three minutes and found a fire being kept in check by an activated fire sprinkler in a unit on the second floor.

The fire was quickly extinguished by the first arriving crew, while other crews worked to clear the other apartments within the facility. In total five people were transported with nonlife threatening injuries.

The importance of the sprinkler system in this case is vital as it did not allow the fire to grow and aided in the assistance of extinguishing the fire. The cause of the fire is related to cooking.

MARYLAND

Single Sprinkler Saves University of Maryland Lab

Thanks to University of Maryland Fire Marshal Alan Sactor for sending us this sprinkler save.

On June 28th, we had a fire in a chemistry laboratory that was extinguished by one fire sprinkler. The laboratory is used for research with small amounts of combustible metals.



TEXAS

3 Consecutive Fire Sprinkler Success Stories in 3 Different Multi-Family Occupancies.

Thanks to Pflugerville, TX FD Assistant Chief Daniel Berger for sending in these saves!

On Sept. 1st, shortly after midnight, a fire occurred on a 2nd-story balcony of a 3-story building. Our crews found a single piece of patio furniture was ignited by discarded smoking materials. The fire was contained by the activation of a single sprinkler.

Also on Sept. 1st, around 8:40pm, a fire occurred on a 3rd-story balcony of a 3-story building. Again, our firefighters found a fire that was caused by discarded smoking materials and contained by a single sprinkler activation.

The last of this series of fires occurred on Sept. 2nd, shortly after 5:00pm. Crews again were dispatched to a Box Alarm at an apartment complex. They arrived to find a fire in the living room of a unit located on the first floor of a 3-story building. This fire was determined to be caused by an unattended child playing with

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Fire Sprinklers in Action

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a lighter. Like the others, it was contained by a single sprinkler activation.

All in all, no one was displaced, no one was injured and the damages to property and contents was estimated to be \$17,000 for the three incidents combined. This is an average of \$5,666 in damage per incident.

Recently, we completed a study of fires in our jurisdiction for a five-year period (2018-2022). In looking back at that time frame, we knew we experienced several fires that started on balconies in multi-family occupancies. An examination of that data from that time period confirmed we experienced seven fires in unsprinklered multi-family occupancies that began on balconies. These fires caused \$5.1M in total damages, for an average of \$566,666 per incident.

If we were to subtract the damages from the recent Sept. 2nd fire that began in a living room, the total damages resulting from the two recent balcony fires in sprinklered multi-family occupancies was estimated to be \$6,000, for an average of \$3,000 per incident.

I understand there are limits with this data and there is not a large sample set to compare, but to me those numbers are staggering and provide further evidence to why we will always be huge advocates for fire sprinkler systems.

TEXAS

Single Fire Sprinkler Extinguishes Kitchen Fire

Thanks to Addison, TX Fire Inspector Sheri Baldwin for sending in this sprinkler save.

A grandmother was cooking dinner for her family when she stated flames suddenly came out from the bottom of the air fryer. One fire sprinkler in the kitchen area extinguished fire. All safe!



Single Sprinkler Contains Balcony Fire

Thanks go to Farmers Branch, TX Fire Inspector Brandon Laird and Fire Marshal Tim Dedear for reporting this sprinkler save.

On September 19th, the Farmers Branch Fire Department was dispatched at approximately 9:27am for a structure fire. Crews arrived on scene with smoke showing from the second floor balcony.

The fire sprinkler on the balcony was activated and contained the fire damage to the contents on the balcony. Fire damage was not observed inside the apartment and water damage was minimal. Origin of fire was a plastic trash can next to a couch on the balcony. Cause of the fire is most likely discarded smoking materials. •





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Advancing the Technician

by Vince Powers, *Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance Specialist*



It seems that every fire protection contractor in the nation is looking for good help. What is good help? “Good” could mean many things. A good worker can have many levels of knowledge or possibly no industry knowledge at all, just a good worker willing to show up and learn. Many times, employers will post ads stating competitive pay for qualified individuals, but what is competitive pay? Pay is typically based on knowledge, ability, and certifications, if any.

Certifications are great, but just because someone is certified does not necessarily mean they are qualified. Sometimes these two terms are used interchangeably but they can mean something quite different.

NFPA 25, The Standard for Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems, states that for someone to be able to conduct inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) of these water-based fire protection systems they must be qualified.

NFPA 25 2023, definition of qualified.
 3.3.35 Qualified: *Competent and capable individual(s) having met the requirements and training for a given field acceptable to the AHJ.*

The 2023 edition of NFPA 25 also added some clarification of who meets the definition of qualified.

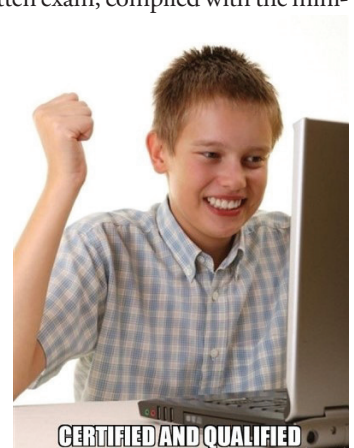
4.1.1.3.1
 Qualified personnel shall meet at least one of the following qualifications:

- (1) Meets the requirements and training for a given field acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction
- (2) Is certified by a nationally recognized fire protection certification organization acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction
- (3) Is registered, licensed, or certified by a state or local authority to perform inspection, testing, and maintenance of water-based fire protection systems

In some states, for an inspection and testing technician to obtain a certification, they must meet specific requirements. As an example, for a tech to achieve certification they must have a minimum number of hours worked in the field followed by in-

class training courses and pass an exam. Let us assume that this certification will allow them to conduct all inspection and testing requirements of NFPA 25 within their state. For this example, we will assume the technician has never tested a fire pump.

If the technician passes a written exam, complied with the minimum amount of work hours and classroom training, the technician is certified in their state to test a fire pump, but does that mean they are qualified? Technically speaking, yes, again in the definition of qualified, all the technician must do is meet the requirements acceptable to the AHJ. Assuming they have no other fire pump training, this technician should not be testing a fire pump because they have no practical experience or training. Not saying this happens, but it does meet the requirements of the law.



There is a long-time debate regarding technicians that have a certification not necessarily being qualified to conduct inspection, testing, and maintenance of water-based fire protection systems. On the other hand, how does one determine that another is qualified? There are some grey areas when it comes to verification of qualifications, specifically when it comes to conducting ITM.



Does a 1-, 2- or 3-day in-class training certify that someone is qualified? How would someone determine that another person is qualified without some level of testing to determine their qualifications? Who determines that the person ensuring someone

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else is qualified for a job is qualified to make that determination themselves? Certifications ensure technicians have demonstrated some level of capability and understanding of the application of codes and standards. This does not mean they know everything but know where to find the answer, if needed. In the definition above, the AHJ determines who is certified to conduct ITM.

Unfortunately, sometimes unqualified technicians are conducting ITM that they should not. When this happens, the building owner is not receiving the quality work they are paying for and in many cases, this goes unchecked. If every state were to adopt a certification requirement for ITM, there would not be enough certified technicians to do the work. There are many qualified and certified ITM technicians in the industry; some of those that do not hold a certification are some of the most knowledgeable technicians in the industry. As an industry, we need to ensure the technicians are qualified for the tasks they are performing. It can take significant time for a technician to become qualified for a specific task. This of course depends on several things, such as the person's ability to learn and what we do not think about often is the lead technician's ability to teach. I have heard many times that it costs money and time to properly train a person which equates to lost revenue. Well, what are the costs associated with an untrained employee?

It is the duty of the fire protection contractors to ensure their technicians are qualified to conduct ITM tasks and encourage them to become certified. Implementing quality assurance pro-

gram could be a way of ensuring this. Technicians should always strive to improve in the industry by becoming qualified and certified. Keeping up with the changes in the industry and training is an easy way to achieve this. There is a ton of information and training available through many different resources such as NFSA's in-person and virtual seminars. Training and education are necessary for our industry to continue to advance and keep up with changing technologies which helps ensure the ITM world is protecting life and property through qualified and certified technicians. •



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Career Fairs - A Great Way to Advance the Industry

by Abbie Gunnells, *NFSA Membership Relations & Outreach Coordinator*

For over a century, the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) has been advocating for a stronger industry and a safer world by promoting fire sprinklers. Our mission is simple: *“To protect lives and property from fire through the wide-spread acceptance of the fire sprinkler concept.”* To further our commitment to the fire sprinkler industry, and to connect with aspiring professionals, NFSA has been actively participating in career fairs, hosting an internship program, and finding ways to promote careers in the industry. In addition, NFSA is proud to announce the launch of a brand-new career webpage on our website. In this article, we will delve into NFSA’s dedication to nurturing talent and promoting the fire sprinkler industry.

NFSA’s Career Fair Appearances:

NFSA’s participation in career fairs at educational institutions, job fairs, and industry-specific events serves as a testament to our commitment to the industry and to fostering the growth of young talent. At these events, NFSA representatives provide invaluable insights into the fire sprinkler industry, while emphasizing the significance of fire sprinkler systems in saving lives and safeguarding properties. Moreover, we explain the diverse career opportunities within the industry; spanning design, installation, inspection, and maintenance.

During different career fairs and industry-specific events, NFSA highlights the broad range of rewarding career paths within the fire sprinkler industry. Through these presentations and conversations, we demonstrate the potential for career growth, job security, and the opportunity to make a positive impact on communities. The aim is to inspire students and job seekers to consider careers in this vital sector.

As we continue to visit and speak with members, we understand one of the most pressing challenges faced by fire sprinkler companies is the shortage of skilled professionals. NFSA is actively addressing this issue by encouraging young talent to pursue careers in fire sprinkler design, installation, and maintenance. Our participation in high-school career fairs actively engages with the younger generation to inspire them to pursue careers within the industry. We realize many students do not know the fire sprinkler industry exists, and we hope our engagement in career fairs and industry-related events plays a crucial role in bridging the skills gap and ensuring the industry’s long-term sustainability.

NFSA attending these different events provides a valuable

platform for us to connect with educational institutions, industry partners, and potential employees. These connections foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the recruitment of passionate individuals who share NFSA’s dedication to the fire sprinkler industry.

NFSA Internship Program:

The NFSA Internship Program is a dynamic and educational initiative designed to provide aspiring professionals with a comprehensive understanding of the fire sprinkler industry. The program offers numerous benefits:

- **Real-World Experience:** Interns are immersed in the day-to-day activities of the fire sprinkler industry. They gain hands-on experience, working alongside industry experts on projects related to design, installation, inspection, and maintenance.
- **Technical Skill Development:** NFSA’s internship program offers technical training and skill development opportunities. Interns learn about the latest technologies and practices in fire sprinkler systems, enhancing their proficiency in the field.
- **Mentorship:** Interns have the chance to learn from seasoned professionals who are passionate about fire safety. This mentorship fosters professional growth and provides invaluable insights into the industry.
- **Networking:** The program encourages interns to connect with industry leaders, fellow interns, and NFSA staff. These connections help build a strong professional network and open doors for future career opportunities.
- **Educational Resources:** NFSA provides interns with access to educational resources, certifications, and training programs that further enhance their knowledge and skillset.

Our Internship Program has a far-reaching impact on the fire sprinkler industry by filling the skills gap, promoting innovation, and building advocates. Through this program, NFSA not only equips emerging professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in their careers, but also fosters a brighter future for fire safety in communities across the United States. The NFSA Internship Program is a transformative experience that leaves a lasting impact on interns and the industry, ultimately working towards safer lives and protected properties.

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The New NFSA Career Webpage:

In addition to our active participation in career fairs and the internship program, NFSA is thrilled to announce the launch of our new career webpage on the NFSA website. This webpage serves as a comprehensive resource for individuals interested in pursuing a career in the fire sprinkler industry. Key features of the webpage include:

- **Career Pathways:** Information on various career options within the fire sprinkler industry.
- **Educational Resources:** Links to educational programs, certifications, and training.
- **Contact Information:** A direct line to NFSA for inquiries and further assistance.

We invite you to explore the recently launched webpage, convey-

niently located in the NFSA website's footer under the "Careers" section. Your valuable feedback is highly encouraged as it will play a vital role in our ongoing efforts to enhance this resource further.

NFSA's active participation in career fairs and internship programs reflects our unwavering commitment to promoting the fire sprinkler industry and ensuring safer communities across the United States. By educating and inspiring soon-to-be professionals, addressing the industry's skills gap, and building valuable industry connections, NFSA plays a pivotal role in nurturing talent and advancing fire sprinklers.

The launch of NFSA's new career webpage represents another significant step in this journey. Aspiring professionals and job seekers now have access to a wealth of resources and information that will guide them in pursuing fulfilling careers dedicated to the protection of lives and property through fire sprinkler systems. NFSA remains dedicated to the cause and invites all those interested to explore the new career webpage and join in the mission to make the world a safer place through fire safety and prevention. •



In The Trenches with an Inspector: Building Owners

by Mike Giannott, CFPS, CET

“The fire marshal said I need to have an inspection; did you hang a tag?” How many of us have heard this statement? In my experience, it may be one of the most frustrating statements to hear. Generally, the facility has a monumental number of deficiencies, but that doesn’t matter to the owner, “*did you put a tag on it?*” That is the main concern. NFPA 25 (2020 Edition) clearly states in 4.1.1 “Responsibility for Inspection, Testing, Maintenance, and Impairment. The property owner or designated representative shall be responsible for properly maintaining a water-based fire protection system.” So, why are we even here? NFPA 25 goes on further to state: 4.1.1.2 “Inspection, testing, and maintenance shall be performed by qualified personnel.” That is where we come in.

My focus is to educate the owner. Let’s be realistic, many owners or representatives generally have no idea how their system works or what it does. What they do know is that the alarm panel is “beeping all the time” or the air compressor “runs all the time and it’s loud and annoying.” I once had a boss that would say “explain the why to me,” and to this day I always try to keep that in mind when dealing with the owner. I keep it simple and to the point. They don’t need to know about the K-factor of the sprinkler heads or the differential ratio of air to water on the dry system. What they need to know is the answers to these questions: Will this system put wet stuff on hot stuff? Will all the little lights come on in the building and go beep-beep to notify people that something is wrong?

“I work for you, not for (fill in the blank company),” is one of my go-to lines. This simple yet effective line generally is perceived that I’m in this with them. I truly want their system to operate

correctly and, in effect, protect lives and property. I don’t want them to spend a pile of money, but the reality is, that probably will end up being the case the longer the issues are ignored. “Well if you don’t change the oil in your vehicle for 200,000 miles that would cause some problems wouldn’t you agree? That little bit of maintenance and money spent now could save you some serious money and issues in the future.”

Finally, we have the irrational and unbearable owners. The ones that no matter how you explain it, good or bad, they could care less. These are the ones that I have always had struggles with. When you walk in all they know is that this is going to cost them money for something they will never use. “I don’t know why I even need this! I’m not planning on having a fire!” are actual words from a building owner to which (in not my best moment), I laughed out loud. In all reality I get it, we don’t keep their buildings cool, we don’t flush their toilets, we don’t keep their lights on. We are a forgotten and unappreciated service, that is, until all else fails. You may go your entire career without having a sprinkler save, but when and if you get one that is when it all comes full circle. That is when you can tell the said building owner “I’ve seen these systems save buildings and lives, and my goal is to simply make sure I have done my part for you.”•



Advancing the Industry: Training the Next Generation

by Jim Lake, *Vice President – Training, Viking Group*

I don't know when I became part of the "senior circuit" of this industry, but my fellow "seniors" and I can likely agree how very different the training environment was before Microsoft got ahold of it. Slides and overhead projectors were the delivery methods of choice, and textbooks, handbooks and product manuals were the resources. The training was delivered in week-long sessions that provided a "9 sprinkler, K28 at 40 psi" flow of information leaving the participants overwhelmed with material and not sure how or when they would use it. Then came Microsoft PowerPoint, which revolutionized how training materials were developed and delivered. A whole new generation of learners were exposed to "three-per-page" handouts, animations, and embedded videos. This had its advantages in the development of training but was too often abused by the developer, resulting in the torturous "death-by-PowerPoint."

The next generation came, and the boundaries were pushed once more. This new group of learners wanted accessible information, with immediate applicability to their work in a format that engages their senses and meets them in their preferred learning environment. This generation of learners currently makes up approximately 36% of the global workforce. They are diverse, entrepreneurial, and educated. What's more, they are "digital natives" – more tech-savvy than their predecessors, who can't remember a time without immediate access to information. As my brother likes to put it, we live in an age when we never have to "not know" something... Just by watching this generation on virtual reality learning platforms compared to our more seasoned students, observers see a clear indication of the ease at which they navigate and consume the learning.

But being so digitally reliant may also come with a cost. Digital natives might lack the interpersonal communication skills they will need to succeed in the workplace because they spend so much of their time interacting and communicating with their devices instead of face-to-face with people. This can be problematic in an industry such as this – an industry that is so relationally-oriented and where a level of technological prowess is equally as important as knowing how to communicate effectively with colleagues, clients, and customers.

So how can organizations strike this balance between digital prowess and customer relationship building? It comes down to creating a learning program that has digital natives' unique preferences and needs in mind—one that provides resources to improve

their interpersonal skills but delivers these resources in a way that resonates in the digital age.

Focused and applicable learning is the formula for connecting with the average digital native. For instance, broad-scope programs on topics like preaction systems are panned over in search of a more specific focus, such as the functioning or repair of a pressure operated relief valve. These digital natives prefer content that's fast and self-paced. With the average human attention span clocking in around eight seconds, the content must strike a chord within those first few moments.

With this in mind, let's look at some of the learning formats and platforms that are available and in use that may attract talent to your company and customers to your product.



In-person Seminars

Don't be misled: in-person learning is still a highly valued source of learning, and hands-on, collaborative and technical learning is sometimes the best way to build on skills that are introduced in other platforms. With recent events across the globe causing many to work and learn remotely, the desire for connection and personal interaction with the topic has driven a surge back to in-person seminars.

Webinars

Still a mainstay of digital learning, these allow for interaction with the topic and facilitator, and remain quick and easy to deliver (but sometimes lack that engagement and connection).

Podcasts

The podcast format allows learners to listen in to the conversation of experts on topics that are of interest or necessity to their work – there may even be a call-in function that allows for direct interaction through questions and answers.

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Micro-Learning

Micro-Learning is a way of teaching and delivering content to learners in bite-sized (3-5 minute) bursts at the point of need, with a focused and specific learning outcome. The learner is in control of what and when they are learning and can complete their training at a time and place that suits their schedule. It's the more engaging, less time-consuming and a cheaper-to-produce sibling of regular e-learning, like webinars. While it's not the best solution for every training need, it's surprisingly effective for corporate and commercial training.

Nano-Learning

Due to the popularization of social media platforms such as TikTok and Snapchat, fast-paced content is becoming increasingly prevalent, with students now learning more from short videos on specific topics than from traditional lesson formats.

Nano-Learning is self-contained, offering small, highly targeted nuggets of information with a single objective to learners usually in less than two minutes. There is no interaction with the instructor, as it is carried out via electronic media. It can contain a wide variety of multimedia such as text, video, sound and images, all of which keep learners engaged. Nano-Learning is also very responsive as it can be viewed on a range of different devices.

Gamification

Broadly defined, gamification is the process of defining the elements that comprise games using those same elements in a non-game context to influence behavior. In other words, gamification is the introduction of game elements into a traditionally non-game situation. Gamification can be developed as a component of in-person training, or through the use of virtual reality, and this scenario seeks to motivate learners by using video game design and game elements in learning environments. The goal is to provide a totally immersive environment to increase engagement by capturing the interest of learners and inspiring them to continue learning.

With the influx of these new learners within their ranks, as well as their clients and customers, companies would do well to consider the best way to promote learning and development on their products and services. This generation grew up in a different environment than the generations before them, but by understanding this group's strengths and potential deficits, organizations can set up digital natives, and themselves for career success. •

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Fire Protection Design and BIM

by Harrison Mclarty P.E., *Senior Fire Protection Engineer at Vertex Companies LLC.*

Challenges in Detailed Fire Sprinkler System Design

The detailed design of fire sprinkler systems presents numerous challenges requiring a highly specialized skillset and intricate experience with the industry. Detailed design in this context refers to the preparation of shop drawings that can be used for fabrication and installation of a fire sprinkler system by a contractor. There are multiple facets which the designer must have a firm understanding of. This requires comprehensive knowledge of the following:

- Design and installation requirements in NFPA standards.
- A practical understanding of how piping is fabricated and installed by field personnel.
- Efficiency using sprinkler design software to complete drawings, calculations, and fabrication reports.
- Preparation of drawings that contain all details, views, pipe tags, cut lengths, elevations, hydraulic node tags, fabrication tags, and all other information necessary to comply with the applicable design standards. In addition, the drawings, must be neat, legible, and displayed in such a way that allows the contractor's field personnel to fully understand how the system needs to be installed.

The Role of Building Information Modeling (BIM) In Fire Sprinkler System Design

Designers must also balance this skillset while staying tech savvy and aware of the latest advancements in design software and methods. One of these advancements is the adoption of Building Information Modeling (BIM) in the construction industry that has been steadily increasing over the years. BIM has transformed the way construction projects are planned, designed, and executed, offering a wide range of benefits to stakeholders involved in the construction process. For contractors, building owners, and other stakeholders, a BIM coordinated sprinkler system design lends the following benefits and advantages:

Accurate 3D Visualization: BIM provides a detailed 3D model of the fire sprinkler system within the building, offering a clear visual representation of the system's layout, pipe routing, and sprinkler head locations. This helps stakeholders better understand the design intent and make informed decisions during the design process.

Coordination with Other Disciplines: BIM allows seamless coordination with other building systems, such as structural,

mechanical, and electrical systems. Clash detection features in BIM software identify and resolve conflicts between fire sprinkler components and other building elements, reducing design conflicts and construction issues.

Enhanced Collaboration: BIM fosters collaboration among various project stakeholders, including architects, fire protection engineers, contractors, and facility managers. All team members can work on a shared digital model, improving communication and reducing the chances of miscommunication.

Automated Hydraulic Calculations: BIM software can perform hydraulic calculations to determine pipe sizing, flow rates, and pressure requirements for the fire sprinkler system. This ensures accurate and optimized system design for effective fire suppression.

Data-Rich Components: BIM models include data attributes for each fire sprinkler component, such as model numbers, specifications, and manufacturer details. This data facilitates equipment procurement and ensures that the specified components meet safety and performance requirements.

Improved Cost Estimation: BIM enables automatic quantity takeoffs of fire sprinkler components, streamlining the estimation of material quantities and costs. Accurate cost estimation supports better budgeting and cost control during the project.

Prefabrication and Construction Planning: BIM models allow for prefabrication of fire sprinkler components off-site. Accurate measurements and spatial information from the BIM model facilitate precise planning and on-site installation, reducing construction time and waste.

Regulatory Compliance: BIM ensures compliance with fire safety codes and regulations. The BIM model can be easily reviewed and validated against applicable standards to ensure that the fire sprinkler system meets the required safety standards.



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Government Mandates: Many governments worldwide have mandated or encouraged the use of BIM in public projects, driving its adoption in the construction sector.

Facility Management Integration: The BIM model serves as a valuable asset for facility managers during the building's lifecycle. The model contains data for ongoing maintenance and management of the fire sprinkler system, supporting facility operations.

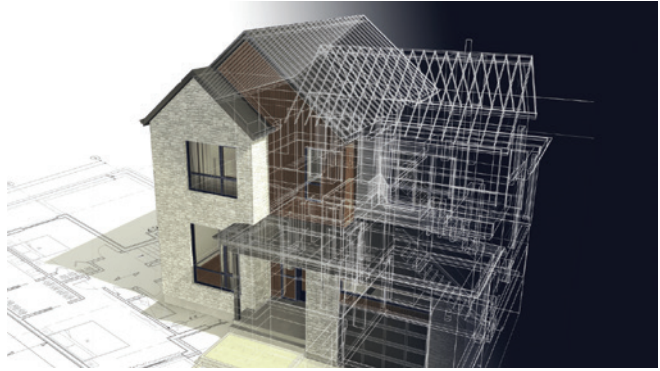
BIM Adoption: Factors, Trends, and Industry Implications: It's important to note that the adoption of BIM varies among regions, sectors, and project sizes. While larger and more complex projects tend to adopt BIM more readily, smaller projects are also gradually embracing this technology. Additionally, the pace of BIM adoption depends on factors like awareness, training, and willingness to adapt to new technologies within construction firms and the industry.

Given the continuous development and evolution of BIM technology, it is expected that its adoption will continue to grow, and more construction projects will harness the benefits of BIM to improve efficiency, collaboration, and project outcomes. It is highly recommended that contractors, building owners, and other relevant stakeholders embrace this paradigm shift before the wave of adoption leaves them behind and take action to seek resources that are capable of successfully navigating this next evolution of design.

The adoption of BIM and the increasing demand for interoperability between stakeholders, general contractors, sub-contractors, and engineers presents a fundamental change for fire protection designers. Before the advent of BIM, the fire protection industry had adopted the use of two-dimensional (2-D) CAD-based design predominately using AutoCAD. This allowed software developers to introduce tools and applications to perform industry specific needs such as the ability to perform hydraulic calculations and generate fabrication reports. The critical issue is that this design method does not produce intelligent objects allowing interoperability between various stakeholders in the construction industry that BIM driven design requires. In the AEC industry the standard platform for BIM implementation is through Revit. Revit is conceptually different from AutoCAD in almost every way imaginable. There is essentially limited crossover for an experienced AutoCAD user to jump into Revit and find immediate familiarity or productivity. The program operation, toolbars, functionality, modeling, and user interface are all different. In essence, the fire protection designer will remain isolated and disconnected from other trades disciplines who are migrating to a BIM driven design methodology primarily through Revit.

Even when not mandated, the benefits of opting for a BIM compatible three-dimensional model are numerous. The record model can be stored digitally in support of the system's life cycle. Two-dimensional paper copies of as-built drawings inevitably get lost or become illegible with age. Critical information of these systems is difficult to decipher and often impossible to gather without proper upkeep and storage of all required design docu-

ments. Losing documentation on a sprinkler system is a costly mistake, which can lead to engineering evaluations, surveys, and detailed analysis to essentially redesign the system. However, a digital three-dimensional BIM compatible model allows most of this information to be pulled directly from the model, and it can be updated should modifications be made to the system in the future.



Bridging The Gap: Integrated Engineering and Fabrication Design

Another issue facing the industry, is that traditionally engineering and fabrication level design have remained disjointed. Engineering firms tend to develop drawings and specifications with high level criteria and place the responsibility on the building owner and installation contractor to fill in the gaps and produce a constructible design. This frequently leads to costly mistakes, delays in scheduling, change orders, and frustrations during the bidding and construction process.

With the changing landscape of design, limited pool of competent designers, and adoption of BIM there are limited resources available in the construction industry that can competently address all phases of a fire protection engineering design through construction. An independent consulting firm with BIM designer's and fire protection engineers offers an ideal solution to contractors, building owners, and all stakeholders in the construction industry. This is especially true for firms who have in depth experience working with contractors or directly with a contracting background. It allows these stakeholders to delegate 100% of the design from concept to construction, which removes the budget and schedule constraints from the party responsible for installation. In addition, it allows these respective parties to obtain comprehensive services from a firm who not only specialize in design and BIM but also offers a full range of expertise and services for any fire protection related need.

In summary, using BIM for fire sprinkler design improves collaboration, coordination, and accuracy throughout the design and construction process. It enhances fire safety performance, reduces risks, and contributes to the overall success of the project by optimizing the fire sprinkler system's design and installation. Additionally, Fire Protection Engineering firms with designers who are efficient with fabrication level design in Revit and other BIM compatible software platforms are a valuable asset for contractors, building owners, and all other stakeholders. •



Advancing the Industry Through Social Media

NFSA's foray into the world of social media began in 2009. In the past 14 years that I've been building our brand and promoting fire sprinklers through posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter-I feel like I'm talking about Prince's name changes when I have to explain this -thanks, Elon!), I am proud

to say the industry has received a significant boost in its online presence using these and other social media channels.

What's changed? Involvement! Back in 2009, NFSA was basically the lone voice on the social media airwaves touting the life- and property-saving benefits of fire sprinklers. Finding sprinkler saves to post was an extremely difficult task, as the media didn't find saves to be newsworthy. Well, let's fast forward a bit! The last few years have seen an astounding increase in involvement by fire departments around the country. It's rare for me to have a day when I can't find a sprinkler save on one of the "big three" posted by a fire department promoting a recent sprinkler save. This was just about unheard of back in '09, and I like to think NFSA's consistency in posting saves on social media was the impetus in getting fire departments involved. We start off our posts with a hashtag of the city/state where the save occurred, tag the local fire department, and off we go. Among my proudest accomplishments is that now, when fire departments post a fire sprinkler save, they tag us (and most of the time, only us!) Yeah, I'm crowing, but if you were part of my social media journey, you would too!

The media has also taken up the gauntlet, as the number of media reported saves has greatly increased (not to where I'd like it, of course, but we can't look a gift horse in the mouth). I am hoping that by continued education, side-by-side demos, and the help of our industry partners, we will keep the reported saves on the uptick.

I start every workday with our social media accounts. I typically spend around two hours in the morning reading through the articles sent to me in Google Alerts that mention fire sprinklers and searching each social media channel for posts by others regarding saves and industry news. Consistency is the key to social media success. The growth of the number of reposts of our content has made me proud! The word is getting out there and we're NOT just preaching to the choir!

Advancing the fire sprinkler industry through social media educates, engages, and increases awareness of the benefits of fire sprinkler systems. I search every day for posts by NFSA members that I can repost and boost engagement. Please be sure to tag NFSA in your posts. Share your company's story, values, and mission. Storytelling helps humanize your organization and connect with your audience on a deeper level. Engage with your audience! Responding to comments, messages, and mentions builds a rapport with your followers and encourages a sense of community.

I'd like to thank the many NFSA members that have increased

Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue
111 E. COLUMBIAN AVENUE, NEENAH, WI 54956
Phone: 920-488-6200 Fax: 920-488-6208 Website: www.nmfrr.com
Fire Department Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 09-30-2023
Contact: Assistant Chief / Fire Marshal Adam Dorn
Telephone: (920) 502-9494
What: Structure Fire
2240 Harrison Street, Neenah

At approximately 6:02 p.m. on Friday, September 15, Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue (NMFR) responded to the above address for smoke and flames present in a commercial building. NMFR responded with 3 engines, 1 quint, and 1 shift commander. Engine 31 arrived on location within 4 minutes and found a large warehouse/manufacturing facility, with nothing showing from the exterior, where they met by employees.

Due to the size of the building, the moderate smoke conditions in the building, and materials being stored in the warehouse, the search for the location of the fire was difficult. It took numerous crews several minutes to locate the fire, which was ultimately located on the top layer of palletized boxes of resin materials.

Due to the location of the fire and the materials in the warehouse, the Shift Commander upgraded the response to a Box Alarm. To extinguish the fire, the palletized boxes of resin material needed to be moved out of the warehouse, which proved to be very labor intensive and time consuming.

The building was equipped with a fire sprinkler system, in which two heads did activate and contain the fire.

There were no injuries reported to civilians.

The cause of the fire is currently still under investigation.

NMFR was assisted on scene by the following Departments from Appleton Fire Department, and Village of Harrison.

Warwick Township Fire Company No. 1
September 24 at 8:37 PM
Members responded along with the Hartsville Fire Company Saturday night to a water flow alarm call at Warwick Square shopping center. The investigation found a sprinkler head activated and smoke condition. Fire out on arrival.
#Volunteers #MutualAid #WarwickTownshipFireCompanyNo1

Pleasant Prairie Fire and Rescue
April 12
PLEASANT PRAIRIE, WI – APRIL 12: Early this morning at 5 AM, Pleasant Prairie Fire & Rescue received a call for a smoke detector activation at a restaurant in the 9900 block of 77th Street. Crews arriving on scene indicated nothing showing from the exterior. Upon accessing the building to investigate, crews noticed a light smoke haze throughout the building. In the same time period, a sprinkler head activated in the Kitchen area. Fortunately, this head activation was in the... See more

STRUCTURE FIRE

Village of PLEASANT PRAIRIE
FIRE
RESCUE

the awareness of the fire sprinkler industry through their social media presence. You make my job just a little bit easier and a heck of a lot more interesting.

I love to use the *#whyweloveourmembers* hashtag, so keep posting and don't forget to tag us!

Wishing you all a most wonderful holiday season and a happy, healthy, prosperous 2024!

VBCOA Conference



NFSA attends 2023 Virginia Building & Code Officials Annual Conference & School in Virginia Beach, Virginia for the fourth year in a row. This year's event was attended by over 200 building code officials from all over the region.

NFSA's **Vincent Powers** and **Terin Hopkins** presented a three-hour program entitled Everything Fire Sprinkler. The program was aimed at building code officials, highlighting the benefits of fire sprinklers and how they operate. The program received great reviews by attendees. This training conference continues to be a fantastic conference for those in the building code communities seeking training.

International Association of Fire Chiefs Conference

Your NFSA team was happy to participate in the 2023 Fire Rescue International Conference in Kansas City, MO this week. NFSA President **Shane Ray** was joined by NFSA Vice President **Vickie Pritchett** and NFSA Southeastern Regional Manager **Brian Biggs**. They reported that they certainly participated in an action-packed week.



Congratulations go to Vickie for receiving the President's Award recognition during the Opening General Session. IAFC President

Chief **Donna Black** noted the differences made on the legislative front. Vickie was recognized along with other national fire service leaders.



President **Ray** was honored to participate in the closing General Session, joining U.S. Fire Administrator **Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell**, IAFF General President **Ed Kelly**, NVFC Board Member **Kevin Quinn**, Chief **Donna Black**, NFPA President **Jim Pauley** and UL Fire Safety Research Institute Director **Steve Kerber** and NFFF Board Member **Ernest Mitchell**. The group provided updates to FRI attendees on progress made since last Fall's Summit on Fire Prevention and Control.



It's an honor to be part of this important initiative that continues to build upon the work started by President **Harry S Truman** in 1947. #FireServiceOneVoice is more than a hashtag. More will be shared on this initiative in the future.

Vickie Pritchett Receives NFFF's Glatfelter Distinguished Service Award

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) awarded **Vickie Pritchett** with the **Arthur J. Glatfelter Distinguished Service Award**, recognizing her exceptional service to the NFFF by supporting Glatfelter's legacy as a fire service champion.

Tony Campisi, Chairman of the Glatfelter Insurance Group, presented Vickie with the prestigious Glatfelter Award on September 27th, during the opening session of the Firehouse Expo



in Columbus, Ohio. “Vickie Pritchett represents everything Art Glatfelter stood for,” Campisi said. “We are grateful for leaders who carry the standard for the fire service, and it’s a privilege to present Vickie with this award.”

Vickie received this award for her many and varied contributions to the NFFF, according to Troy Markel, Chair of the NFFF Board of Directors. “Vickie is a tireless advocate for the Foundation and an innovative fire service leader,” Markel said. “Her dedication sets the bar for the rest of us to follow.”

LinkedIn

Did you know NFSA’s LinkedIn Group has more than 13,000+ members? It’s a great place to showcase your products and services.

Join today!

Live Fire Sprinkler Demos



The National Fire Sprinkler Association’s Fire Sprinkler Institute, in partnership with the Edina, MN Fire Department, conducted live fire demonstrations in an acquired structure on September 18th and 19th. NFSA members were invited to attend and experience approximately six live burns in a building protected with automatic fire sprinklers.

The modern fire environment has changed over the past three decades. Our purpose with this demonstration was to utilize a building with a fire sprinkler system installed in 1969 and create a modern-day fire in various settings. Fire sprinkler contractors, SAM members, and the fire service partnered together to show how fire sprinklers and firefighters are an unbeatable team. •



In Memory of Wayne Gey

Wayne H. Gey passed away on August 30, 2023, after courageously fighting cancer for over 15 years. Wayne formed Wayne Automatic Fire Sprinklers 45 years ago, and his legacy lives on with his family, his WAFS family and all of us at the National Fire Sprinkler Association.

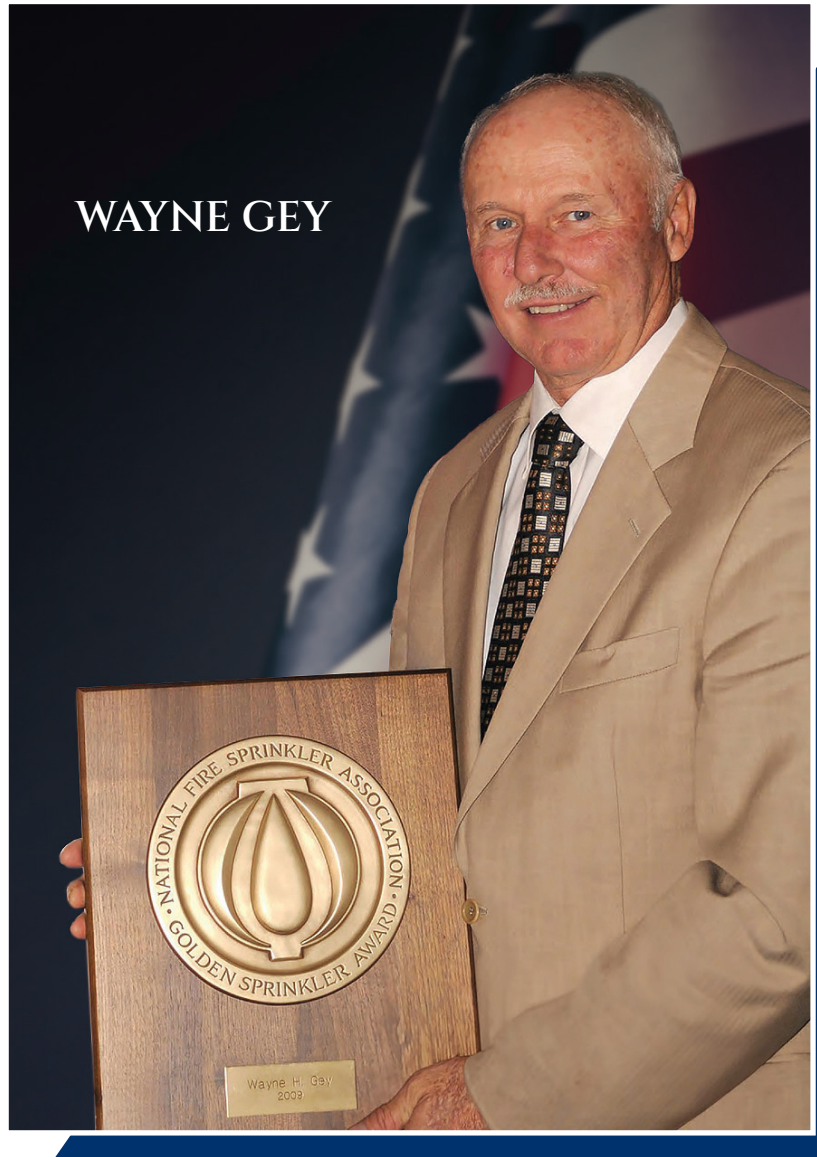
For those of us blessed to know and learn from Wayne, the best way to honor his memory is to champion for the cause, understand that Minutes Matter, and know that our work does indeed make the world a better and safer place.

He was a trailblazer in the fire protection industry, never satisfied with the status quo. He was our Board Chair from 2007-2009 and the 2009 recipient of the NFSA Golden Sprinkler Award, the Association's highest award.

Wayne was also a founding member of Common Voices. His reach and impact will live on. His love for the Common Voices advocates, his vision for "paying it forward" and his leadership paved the way for this amazing group to share their stories in the hopes of preventing other families from suffering from the tragic impact of fire.

"Take care of the customer and everything else takes care of itself. Our job is never finished until you, our customer, are truly satisfied." *(That sums up Wayne Gey and the entire WAFS family well.)*

Wayne was truly one of a kind and he will be greatly missed, there's a big hole in our hearts. •



WAYNE GEY



COLORADO

CFPA Board Votes to Become the Newest NFSA Chapter

The Board of the Colorado Fire Protection Association voted over the summer to reorganize as a chapter of the National Fire Sprinkler Association. This was done recognizing that NFSA could offer some significant administrative benefits to the long-standing statewide organization. Significantly, this reorganization will serve to unify the voice of the sprinkler industry for the State of Colorado. CFPA becomes the first NFSA Chapter within Area 9.

The NFSA Board of Directors voted to approve CFPA's membership at its regular October meeting.

MN-based NFSA Staff, 14 contractors, the Local 417 Business Manager, and spouses/partners together for fun and business.

We enjoyed golf, boating, a campfire, an awards dinner, a briefing with National NFSA leaders, a contractor's only forum, and a 2024 IP budget overview.

Jim Kuempel and Tom Lucarelli received awards for their long-standing contributions to the Chapter and the sprinkler industry in the region.

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FLORIDA

Connecting with Local Community

Florida Fire Sprinkler Association is making an impact in promoting fire safety and the importance of fire sprinklers. We have participated in eight side-by-side fire sprinkler demos in October, working with fire departments to spread fire safety. The highlight for FFSA Executive Director Lorell Bush was participation in a side-by-side fire sprinkler demonstration in her hometown of Eustis, FL, it was a remarkable way to connect with the local community and spread the mission of saving lives and property from fire.



The mission of the Florida Fire Sprinkler Association is clear and vital: to emphasize the lifesaving potential of fire sprinklers. By reaching hundreds of people, the association is making a tangible difference by increasing awareness about fire sprinklers' critical role in preventing loss of life and property in fires. It's inspiring to know that the NFSA is dedicated to continuing its mission across the country and working diligently to remind people about the importance of fire safety. Our work within our Association is commendable, and it's evident that we are making strides in enhancing fire safety and saving lives. Our ongoing efforts will undoubtedly have a positive and lasting impact on communities throughout Florida.



MINNESOTA

Minnesota Chapter Retreat

The Minnesota Chapter Retreat brought 42 people to the Grand View Lodge in Nisswa, MN, including NFSA President Shane Ray, Vice President of Codes, Standards, Learning and Development Jeff Hugo, Chief Engineer Mike Joanis, Five

CHAPTERS

CHAPTERS IN ACTION

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TEXAS

Next Chapter Meeting—Legal Issues in The Fire Sprinkler Industry

November 30, 2023: 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Dallas, TX

NFSA Texas & FSCATX will cohost a Fire Sprinkler Legal Issues Meeting.

Lance Gunnells and Josh Savitz, both NFSA Labor Relations Managers will speak.

The team will discuss current employer issues:

1. Paid leave laws
2. Overtime/FLSA
3. Independent contractor vs. employee
4. Pay equity and transparency laws
5. Negotiating terms and conditions with GCs and owners
6. Cannabis/drug testing
7. Diversity/discrimination
8. Job safety/OSHA
9. Importance of documentation

REGISTER Here:



2023 Fire Sprinkler AHJ Forums—Austin, Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth



Thank you to our sponsors and local and state fire marshals who discussed how fire sprinkler contractors can be best prepared to design, install and inspect/maintain fire sprinkler systems! NFSA and the Fire Sprinkler Contractors Association of Texas hit the road and hosted over 150 attendees and 30 Fire Marshals around the state of Texas.

Meeting sponsors were *Core & Main Fire Protection, Viking SupplyNet, Firewater Group, Texas Construction Association.*

Attendees:

Farmers Branch Deputy Fire Marshal **Scott Burke**
Dallas Division Manager **Ahmed Alqaisi**
Deputy Chief **Christopher Martinez**

Texas State Fire Marshals Office Engineer **Kelley Stalder PE**
Rockwall Deputy Fire Marshal **Kevin Clark**
Moderator **Mobley Engineering Tyler Mobley PE**
Arlington Specialist **Manny Carrillo**
Denton County Plan Reviewer **Tim Ippolito**
Denton Deputy Fire Marshal **Chris Ahrens**

WASHINGTON

NFSA Training

NFSA trainings continue to be in demand in the Northwest. The Washington State Fire Marshal Association will be partnering with NFSA to offer monthly training on a variety of fire sprinkler topics throughout 2024. NFSA's Plan Review and Rough & Final Inspections class will be held in Medford, Oregon in Feb. 21-23.

Both the Puget Sound and Columbia-Willamette Chapters are setting up a great schedule of industry speakers for the 2024 round of meetings. If you have topics you'd like featured at an upcoming meeting, be sure to contact your Chapter Chairs or Regional Manager **Suzanne Mayr**.

WISCONSIN

Valve Trailer Debut



After a stop off in Minnesota for demonstrations at the MN State Fair, the Wisconsin Valve Demo Trailer arrived in Milwaukee for its debut at the NFSA WI Chapter's quarterly meeting on September 14th.

It is scheduled for demos at some open houses in the coming weeks and we are setting up a training schedule for 2024 to visit various fire departments to introduce or update them regarding fire sprinkler systems. •

SPRINKLERING OF NEWS

■ Johnson Controls enhances Autocall ES Net Life Safety Network with Network Bridge Device



Autocall ES Net Network Bridge device

Johnson Controls has enhanced the Autocall ES Net Life Safety Network to offer long-distance connectivity between customers' buildings, better visual alarm safety and increased cost savings. The new ES Net Network Bridge device allows fire alarm system data to travel over a customer's existing network infrastructure by creating a secure VPN tunnel, improving system visibility and control across distant buildings and campuses.

Long-distance connectivity

The ES Net Network Bridge improves system-wide monitoring and control in facilities and campuses where life safety networks are often widely dispersed. By connecting multiple buildings over long distances with high-speed, high-bandwidth, high-resilience connectivity via existing network infrastructure, facilities can

eliminate the need to run new or additional dedicated wiring for the fire alarm system.

With this enhancement, the Autocall ES Net now provides a singular, shared pathway for secure, encrypted data transfer across all networked devices, including panels, detectors, strobes and alarms as well as system health. This gives an operator complete, centralized, multi-building visibility from a single workstation, allowing more effective response and more simplified system reconfiguration.

The ES Net Network Bridge meets the NFPA 72 Class N pathway specification which specifically addresses the use of IP network infrastructure used for fire alarm and emergency communication systems.

A complete life safety solution

An IP-based, UL-Listed fire and life safety network, Autocall ES Net optimizes system design and installation flexibility with impressive network capacity, speed, performance, and resiliency. Its combined features make it ideal for large commercial facility managers looking to simplify their life safety operations while taking advantage of robust features that help meet codes and the needs of users, occupants and first responders.

For example, ES Net provides compliance with NFPA 72 requirements for synchronized notifications without extra wiring, modules or programming. This feature is especially helpful in large open buildings like airports, sports arenas, atriums, or malls where multiple strobes are connected and visible at one time.




It also allows in-building emergency alert audio and firefighter telephone communication to be sent digitally over the life safety network, providing crucial communication capability for first responders. This makes it easier and more cost effective for users

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to implement audio messaging throughout their facilities and meet codes like Life Safety 101 and NFPA 72 which mandate voice evacuation messaging in certain facilities.

To learn more the complete Autocall ES Net Life Safety Network, visit <https://www.autocall.com/>.

■ Seneca College Announces Fire Protection Career Fair and Dinner

Date: March 21st, 2024

Event: **Fire Protection Career Fair and Networking Dinner**

Host: School of Fire Protection Engineering Technology

Location: Seneca Polytechnic, Toronto, Ontario

Contact: Scott Pugsley, 416.764.9983 or scott.pugsley@senecacollege.ca

■ Inspect Point Acquires FormLink Systems

Inspect Point announced its acquisition of FormLink Systems. Inspect Point and FormLink Systems have long shared a common vision of empowering fire protection professionals with the tools they need to streamline their workflow and ensure safety and compliance. With a shared commitment to excellence and innova-

tion, both brands provide exceptional customer experiences and ensuring that fire protection professionals have the best-in-class tools to optimize their operations.

Inspect Point and FormLink Systems will continue to operate as separate products. Customers of both companies can expect uninterrupted service, ongoing support, and access to even more comprehensive features and capabilities in the future.

■ Scott Smith Takes the Helm as National Sales Manager for Fayette Pipe

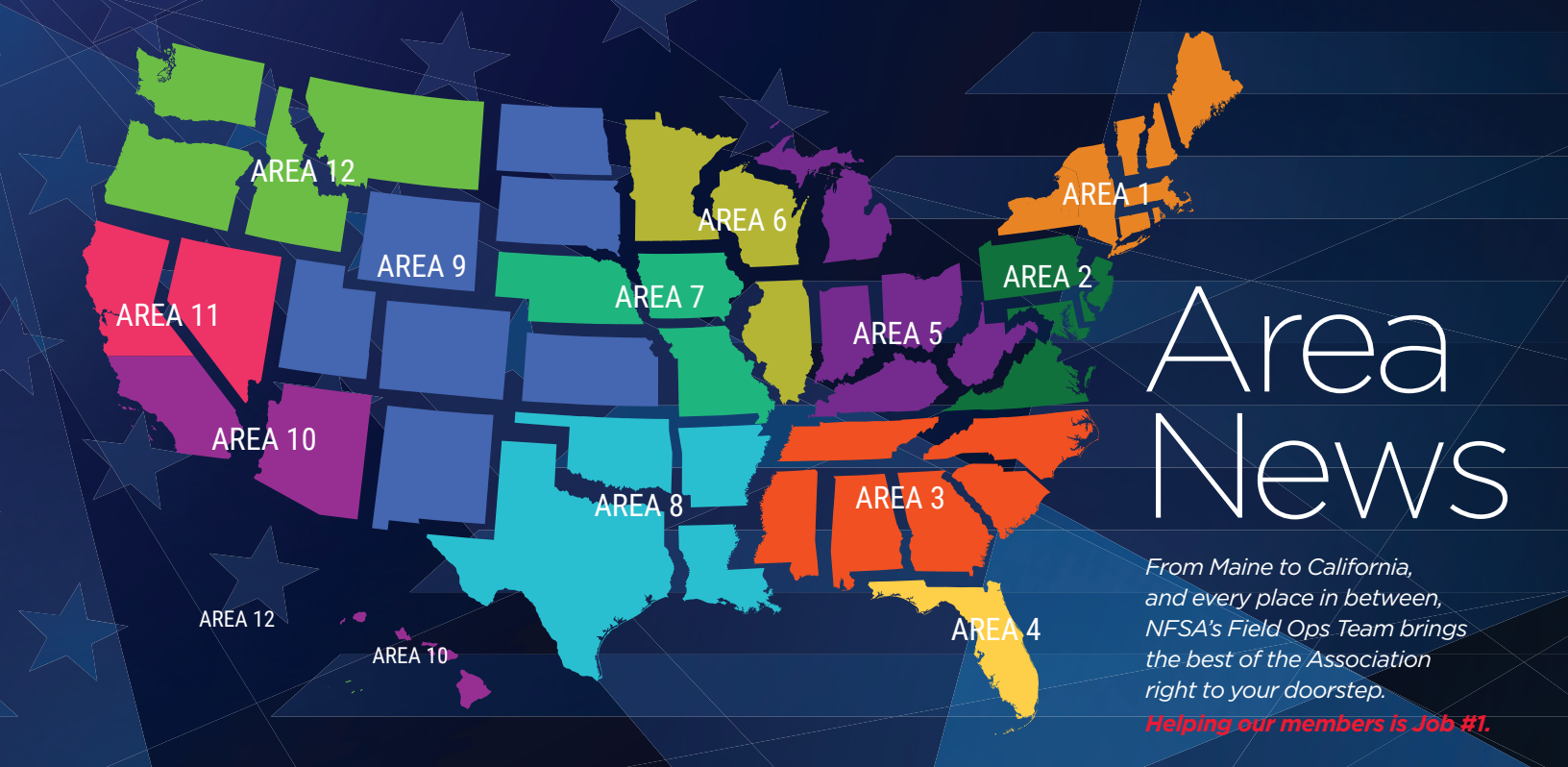
Fayette Pipe Co. has appointed **Scott Smith** as its national sales manager. He will oversee the company's sales operations, develop, and implement strategic sales initiatives, and nurture key customer relationships in the fire protection, HVAC, and plumbing markets.

Smith has 40 years' experience in sales, marketing, and distribution within the plumbing and HVAC/R industries with Leran Copper and Brass Co., Cambridge Lee Industries LLC, Curtis Marketing LLC, and most recently at Sunbelt Marketing Inc. as the Midwest regional manager. •



An advertisement for the Riptide Flow Testing System. The top half features the text "A BETTER WAY TO FLOW TEST WATER" in large, bold, yellow letters. Below this is a close-up photograph of the testing equipment, which includes a black control panel with a red dragon logo and the word "RIPTIDE" on it, and several pressure gauges. The bottom of the ad features the text "THE RIPTIDE FLOW TESTING SYSTEM™" in red and white, with the ARGCO logo to the right.

An advertisement for a conference. It features a stylized illustration of a woman in a red and white floral dress, wearing a yellow lei and a black shawl, set against a yellow circular background. To the right of the illustration, the text reads: "Maui Awaits! 2024 Annual Seminar and Business & Leadership Conference Wailea Beach Resort Maui, Hawaii May 7-10, 2024".



Area News

From Maine to California, and every place in between, NFSA's Field Ops Team brings the best of the Association right to your doorstep.

Helping our members is Job #1.

AREA 4

FLORIDA, PUERTO RICO

Tagging for Success 2024 Event Announcement

Get ready for the highly anticipated *"Tagging for Success"* event in 2024!

LOCATION:

The Island Resort, Ft Walton Beach – January 15-16
Shores Resort & Spa, Daytona Beach Shores – January 29-30
Marriott, Coral Springs – February 6-7

AUDIENCE:

Waterbased Inspectors.

CEUS:

Earn 16 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for renewal.

REGISTRATION OPENS:

November 1, 2023.

Event Highlights:

- **Interactive Learning:** Dive into engaging sessions to stay current on Florida laws and standard updates.
- **Prizes:** Win exciting prizes while participating in various activities.
- **Fun:** This event is designed for Waterbased Inspectors who prefer interactive learning over traditional classrooms.

Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity! Our "Tagging for Success" event typically sells out within two weeks, so be sure to mark your calendars for November 1st. Get your team registered early to secure your spots at this must-attend event. Stay tuned for more information and updates as the event date approaches.

Join us in 2024 for an unforgettable experience that will help you excel in your field while having a great time!

2024 FFSA is offering "Tagging for Success". This is a two day event that includes two full days of training for waterbased inspectors. This event takes participants out of the classroom and into an interactive learning environment including:

1. Hands on training in the Reliable Sprinkler learning trailer, NFSA Valve Trailer and local training trailers
2. The State Fire Marshal's game show testing your knowledge of state industry requirements
3. The game "Name That Standard" testing your knowledge of NFPA standards with chances to win prizes
4. The Fire Sprinkler Challenge testing your knowledge of the different types of fire sprinklers
5. Tag that System giving participants the opportunity to put their knowledge to use identifying which systems need to be tagged and why!
6. Day 2 will be filled with classes by industry experts that will benefit all waterbased inspectors

This event includes two days of interactive learning, games and prizes. Get all 16 CEUs required for renewal with hands on training and winning prizes.

Register online at www.floridafiresprinkler.com

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Spring Forward in Daytona Beach Shores 2024

Fire Sprinkler Contractors Conference

DATE:

January 29 - February 1

LOCATION:

Shores Resort and Spa, Daytona Beach Shores FL

Are you a fire sprinkler contractor looking to renew your CEUs and stay ahead of the game? Look no further! Join us at "Spring Forward in Daytona Beach Shores" from January 29 to February 1, 2024, for an immersive 32-hour conference that offers all the renewal CEUs you need.

Conference Highlights:

- **Renewal CEUs:** Get all the Continuing Education Units (CEUs) required for renewal in one comprehensive event.
- **Fire Product Challenge:** Participate in the one and only Fire Product Challenge, a unique and interactive opportunity for vendors to engage with attendees in a game-like atmosphere. Earn CEUs while having fun and learning about cutting-edge vendor products.
- **Expert Speakers:** We have lined up some exceptional speakers who will provide valuable insights and updates on the changes to the fire safety standards coming into effect on January 1, 2024, in Florida.
- **Fun and Education:** This conference is designed to be not just educational but also enjoyable, ensuring that your learning experience is never boring.

Don't miss this chance to Spring Forward in your career while enjoying the beautiful surroundings of Daytona Beach Shores. Mark your calendar and stay tuned for more details on speakers,

vendors, and registration information. We guarantee that this event will be a great blend of fun, education, and networking. See you in Daytona Beach Shores!

AREA 6

ILLINOIS, MINNESOTA, WISCONSIN

Minimum State Building Code Adopted.

Public Act 103-0510 amends the Capital Development Board Act (20 ILCS 3105/1 et seq.). It requires that certain building code standards be adopted or followed effective January 1, 2025. The Act does not require municipalities or counties that do not currently have building codes to adopt building codes, but it does require minimum construction standards in those communities. For municipalities and counties that have adopted building codes, the Act requires that those codes meet certain requirements. Having a municipal or county zoning ordinance is separate from having a municipal or county building code.

Burn Center Golf Invitational

The 35th Annual Burn Center Golf Invitational was completed Tuesday August 22nd, with 216 golfers participating at the Grand Geneva Resort in Lake Geneva, WI. The event hosted by the NFSA WI Chapter. It is a charity event created by the fire sprinkler industry focusing on burn prevention and assisting burn survivors. This event continues to have representatives from fire sprinkler partners throughout the US. We anticipate that over \$90,000 will be split between the Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Burn Unit and Wisconsin Youth Burn Camp. Golfers enjoyed sunny weather in the 80's. We thank the 44 sponsors for their support of this event.



NFSA WI Coordinator Marty King discusses the event with NFSA WI Chapter President Steve Sferra from USA Fire Protection

AREA 8

ARKANSAS, LOUISIANA, OKLAHOMA, TEXAS

Welcome to Our New TX State Fire Marshal & Assistant State Fire Marshal

The Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) announces new leadership for the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO). **Debra Knight** will serve as the new State Fire Marshal for Texas. Knight brings more than 30 years of experience in administrative and

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criminal law, as well as insurance and compliance analysis. She joined TDI in 2013 after 20 years in private practice and the insurance industry.

Knight served as the Deputy Commissioner of Compliance and Investigations for the Division of Workers' Compensation. She oversaw investigations of administrative and criminal violations. As a colonel in the United States Army, Knight served as the FEMA Region VI Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer. She holds a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from South Texas College of Law. The state fire marshal oversees all fire protection licensing.



Texas State Fire Marshal Debra Knight

Please also join NFSA in congratulating **Chuck Allen** on his promotion to Assistant State Fire Marshal, effective October 1, 2023.

Allen has been with the SFMO inspections section since 2016, promoting to lieutenant in 2018 and captain in 2019. He has over 30 years of public safety experience, including as a criminal investigator and patrol supervisor for the Van Zandt County Sheriff's Office, and as fire marshal and emergency management coordinator for Van Zandt County.



Texas Assistant State Fire Marshal Chuck Allen

Allen holds a bachelor's degree in emergency management from West Texas A&M University, and a master's degree in leadership with an emphasis in disaster preparedness and executive fire leadership from Grand Canyon University. He is a TCFP-certified master fire inspector and fire/arson investigator, and a master peace officer.

New Texas Construction Laws September 1, 2023

During the 88th Legislative Session, which was completed on May 29, 2023, the following pieces of legislation were passed and then signed by the Governor. These laws were effective September 1, 2023.

HB 3485 by Rep. Keith Bell and Sen. Nathan Johnson Amends the Prompt Pay Acts to address excessive owner-directed change orders. A Contractor may refuse owner-directed additional work IF: the change order is unsigned; AND the estimate for the work exceeds 10% of contract price. HB 3485 applies to Public AND Private Work. It is effective for all contracts signed after September 1, 2023.

HB 2518 by Rep. Keith Bell and Sen. Robert Nichols Requires performance and payment bonds on private projects on public lands by amending the Government Code to require any lease of public land include lease terms that: require performance and payment bonds; AND require Notice to the public entity 90 days prior to construction. If public entity receives Notice without bonds, it may halt construction within 10 days. If public entity receives Notice without bonds and does not halt construction,

public entity will be responsible as surety. Effective for all leases signed after September 1, 2023.

HB 679 by Rep. Keith Bell and Sen. Charles Schwertner Prohibits the use of a specified experience modifier for public projects only. Owners may still request the experience modifier. Effective September 1, 2023.

HB 2965 by Rep. Cody Vasut and Sen. Brandon Creighton Amends Right to Repair statute for public works passed in 2021 to add a NO WAIVER provision to statute. Effective September 1, 2023.

H.B. 2022 by Rep. Jeff Leach & Sen. Phil King Limits a home builder's liability to actual home defects; allows for up to three inspections after receipt of complaint and increases a contractor's deadline to make an offer to repair from 45 days to 60. Effective September 1, 2023.

H.B. 2024 by Rep. Jeff Leach & Sen. Phil King Reduces the Statute of Repose for residential construction from 10 years to 6 years for warrantied work. This became effective on June 9, 2023.

H.B. 4123 by Rep. Ryan Guillen & Sen. Judith Zaffirini Clarifies statutes addressing who has access to criminal history records for purposes of background checks for school construction. Unlike others, this change was effective immediately upon being signed by the Governor on June 13, 2023.

The Texas Construction Association worked very successfully to get these bills passed and now is requesting TCA PAC donations to support the elected officials who support TCA's legislative agenda. No contribution is too small and there is no cap on the amount that can be contributed.

AREA 9

COLORADO, NEBRASKA, NEW MEXICO, NORTH DAKOTA,
SOUTH DAKOTA, UTAH, WYOMING

City And County of Broomfield, CO Adopt Residential Sprinklers

On August 22nd, the Broomfield City Council passed an ordinance that, with a few exceptions, will require that all new residential structures be provided with automatic fire sprinkler systems. The ordinance takes effect January 1, 2024. Broomfield becomes the fifth front-range community in the past few months to adopt the International Residential Code's sprinkler provisions. Broomfield joins Estes Park, Lakewood, Lafayette, and Commerce City in adopting residential sprinkler requirements in 2023. Together, these five communities currently represent over 330,000 residents. Several large, residential projects are anticipated are expected to bring several thousand new homes in the next few years.

Steven Gosselin, Fire Marshal for North Metro Fire Rescue District, which covers Broomfield, has been a long-time advocate for sprinklers. He has hosted the NFSA side-by-side trailer on many occasions. It is believed that the NFSA trailer had a positive

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impact on the adoption, as it has been showcased in almost all these communities or neighboring communities. Notably, there was no opposition from homebuilders at the hearing. In fact, one private citizen testified in support of the ordinance based upon his experiences living previously in a home protected by sprinklers.

According to Fire Marshal Gosselin, "I want to sincerely thank Broomfield's Staff and Building Official for their work in getting this ordinance passed. This is a WIN and a BIG DEAL for residential sprinklers and for the fire and life safety of the Broomfield community."

Another Side-by-Side Trailer Added to the Area 9 Fleet!



The two-day Truman Fire Forum led off the New Mexico Fire Marshals Association (NMFMA) annual conference on August 28th and 29th. NFSA President Shane Ray, Vice President Vickie Pritchett, and Area Manager Brian Biggs offered an excellent training program to approximately 50 attendees from around the state. The highlight of the program was a side-by-side sprinkler demonstration using a new trailer, which NFSA gifted to NMFMA. The NMFMA was excited about the opportunities this new trailer brings. They looked forward to using it during a statewide fire prevention event in Sante Fe during Fire Prevention Week. Although a demonstration at the State Fair fell through this year, the State Fire Marshals office is committed to bringing this to fruition in 2024.

AREA 12

ALASKA, IDAHO, MONTANA, OREGON, WASHINGTON

Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board of Puget Sound Rolls Out New Outreach

With the message "Fire is fast, fire sprinklers are faster," the Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board of Puget Sound is getting the word out about the effectiveness of fire sprinklers in businesses and homes. The four-prong campaign spanned across tv, radio, print and billboards.

- A highlight was a King 5 TV segment on the popular "Evening" news magazine with host Jim Dever. Emerald Fire LLC owner Kris Hillstrom taught Mr. Dever the finer points of installing a sprinkler system while educating viewers on the benefits of fire sprinklers. The segment aired during

Fire Prevention Week.

- Radio ads on KIRO and KPWN featured a mock 9-1-1 call that emphasizes how fast a sprinkler activates. The ad received great feedback for its attention-grabbing approach.
- A feature article in the print and online edition of the Sunday Seattle Times highlighted the differences in consequences of a fire during when there is no fire sprinkler installed versus one with a fire sprinkler system. Fire Marshal Todd Short and NFSA Area Director Nancy Hammond highlighted the community resources need to fight a major blaze and the long-term damage in the aftermath of a fire. The online version of the article featured logos from all of the Puget Sound area NFSA members that contribute to the industry promotion efforts.
- Billboards in King, Pierce and Snohomish emphasized the importance of fire sprinklers. The electronic billboard along I-5 in Tacoma was particularly successful, viewed by hundreds of thousands of commuters along the busy interstate corridor during its run.

NFSA trainings continue to be in demand in the Northwest. The Washington State Fire Marshal Association will be partnering with NFSA to offer monthly training on a variety of fire sprinkler topics throughout 2024. Highlights include an NFPA class for AHJs, fire sprinkler and alarm plan review, and an in-class and hands-on pumps class. NFSA's Plan Review and Rough & Final Inspections class will be held in Medford, Oregon in February.

Both the Puget Sound and Columbia-Willamette Chapters are setting up a great schedule of industry speakers for the 2024 round of meetings. If you have topics you'd like featured at an upcoming meeting, be sure to contact your Chapter Chairs or Regional Manager Suzanne Mayr. •



Kris Hillstrom, owner of Emerald Fire LLC, Suzanne Mayr, NFSA Regional Manager, and Jim Dever, host of KING 5's Evening TV show, take a break during the filming of a segment to be aired during fire prevention week.



National Fire Sprinkler Magazine

The Flagship Publication of The National Fire Sprinkler Association

NFSM Article Submission Guidelines

National Fire Sprinkler Magazine (*NFSM*), a members-only publication of the National Fire Sprinkler Association, is published six times a year. It offers Fire Sprinkler Industry news and articles of interest to Association members.

Query

Send an e-mail or letter briefly describing your article proposal, why the topic is important, and how it is relevant to our audience. Say something about the sources of your information (*personal involvement? interviews?*) and about your present position and background. Tell us what types of photographs and graphics are available to illustrate your story. Be sure to include an email address and a daytime phone number.

NFSM runs full-length feature articles of approximately 800-1200 words.

Feature Articles

Articles for *NFSM* should be on a topic of significant interest to the industry. Articles promoting a specific product or service will not be published. We have advertising opportunities available to boost your sales.

Writing Guidelines

NFSM tries to maintain a straightforward style. Accuracy is vital. All facts should be double-checked before a manuscript is submitted. All manuscripts must be submitted as Word docs, single-spacing between sentences. Images must be submitted as separate hi-res jpegs. Charts and tables must be submitted as separate pdfs.

Each manuscript should be accompanied by a list of resources on the topic at hand: relevant books and reports, conferences, and/or contact people and their phone numbers. To settle points of style, use *The Chicago Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press).

Illustrations

NFSM uses a variety of photographs, line art, charts, and maps.

We prefer to receive artwork electronically, and all illustrations should include credit and caption information.

Copyrights

Articles must be exclusive to *NFSM* magazine and not submitted to any other industry publication, unless prior agreement has been reached. Author is responsible for the accuracy of article and that it does not infringe on any other copyright. All published submissions become the property of NFSA.

Payment

NFSM does not pay for articles; we do recognize an author with a byline and credit. NFSA reserves the right to reject any submission at its own discretion.

NFSM EDITOR:

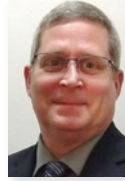
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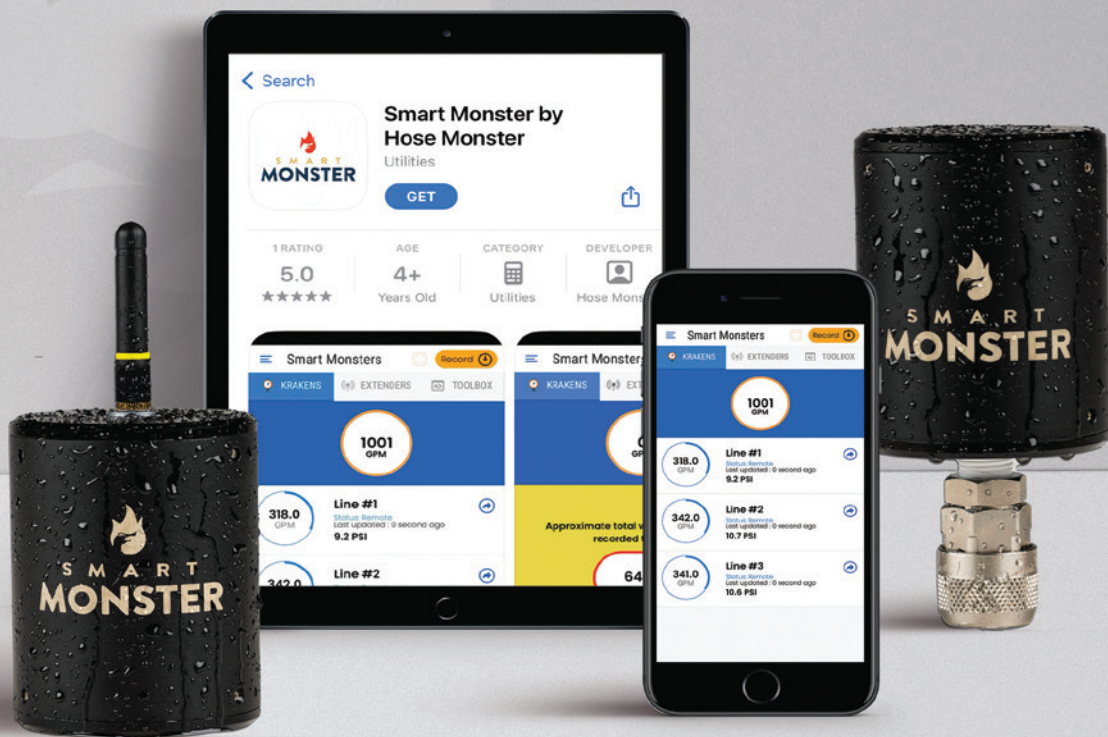
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