



**Tuesday e-Tech Alert**  
**October 17, 2006**  
**Number 68**

**NICET Reconsidering Role of Level III Technicians**

The NFSA is inviting all certified technicians to let NICET know how they feel about a possible change in policy that would essentially demote all Level III technicians. In a letter last month to the Illinois State Fire Marshal related to the recognition of NICET certification as part of contractor sprinkler licensing, NICET announced a “new concern”, and stated that a NICET Level III technician should not be allowed to prepare sprinkler system layout documents. Instead, all system layout documents should be prepared under the direct supervision and control of a NICET Level IV, a professional engineer, or a registered architect. In the view of NFSA this is a major unwarranted change. From the time NFSA originally helped NICET assemble this program, Level III certification was the mark of a competent technician. Today, dozens of states recognize Level III for the competency portion of their fire sprinkler contractor licensing laws.

The following are excerpts from NFSA’s letter to NICET in response to this proposed change in policy:

“the ‘new NICET concern’ ...is a total break with past understandings relative to the significance of Level III and Level IV NICET certification for fire sprinkler layout and detailing technicians. While we cannot comment on the significance of Level IV certification in other areas of NICET certification, this position is dead wrong with regard to automatic sprinkler layout and detailing.

“As the organization that originally approached NICET and invited you to develop certification programs for the fire protection community, we were extensively involved in the establishment of the various certification levels and the intent of those levels. From the start, there have never been any Level IV work elements. It was simply recognized that a very senior technician would have a breadth of experience that would allow the satisfaction of nearly all work elements in the program. It was recognized that the careers of some technicians would never involve certain work elements due to the business and geographic scope of employer activities (special hazards, seismic, etc.). It was agreed that Level III certification should indicate full competence and that Level IV should be an honorary level reserved for various senior people...your official position on Level III at that time: Level III is the Certified Engineering Technician (CET)...the CET is... ‘Qualified independently to perform, test, inspect and record technical work of a considerable degree of complexity within his career field. The technician at this level must have demonstrated ability to perform effectively, in the field or in the office, within parameters established through standard and complete specifications or instructions and with minimal supervision by an engineer or a Senior Engineering Technician. He will be expected to exercise logic and judgment within his designated duties and to request instructions only in matters following outside standard practices.’

“For the NICET Board of Governors now to decide arbitrarily that Level III technicians cannot perform their tasks independently and that Level IV certification is essentially the mark of competence is a disservice to all of the individuals that you have certified at Level III since the program was initiated in 1980.

“We hope the NICET Board of Governors will rescind the position expressed in the letter of September 27<sup>th</sup> and reaffirm its confidence in the individuals it has tested and recognized as Certified Engineering Technicians.”

Concerns over this proposed change in NICET position should be sent to:

Mike Clark, General Manager  
NICET  
1420 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2794

Copies can be sent to the Chairman of NICET’s Board of Governors:

Wayne Moore, P.E.  
Hughes Associates  
2374 Post Road, Suite 102  
Warwick, RI 02886-2207

### **Upcoming NFSA “Business Thursday” Online Seminar**

**Topic: Project Scheduling**  
**Instructor: Michael J. Friedman, P.E.**  
**Date: October 19, 2006**

The word “schedule” evokes many reactions in the contracting world. Scheduling is an extension of the planning process, and there is no doubt that once price and terms have been agreed upon, the most important performance objective to an owner is to complete the work on time. This course will explore the principal scheduling types: bar chart, CPM and Short Interval Schedules. The focus will be use of the CPM as a management tool to accomplish on-time completion, cash flow management and better utilization of manpower resources within the company.

Information and registration for this seminar is available at [www.nfsa.org](http://www.nfsa.org) or by calling Dawn Fitzmaurice at 845-878-4200 ext. 133, email: [dawn@nfsa.org](mailto:dawn@nfsa.org).

### **October 24<sup>th</sup> “Technical Tuesday” Online Rescheduled for October 31<sup>st</sup>**

Due to a scheduling conflict, the “Confusing Aspects of Storage Protection” online has been rescheduled for the week later, October 31<sup>st</sup>. A Halloween treat.

**Topic: Confusing Aspects of Storage Protection**  
**Instructor: Kenneth E. Isman, P.E, NFSA Assistant Vice President of Engineering**  
**Date: October 31, 2006**

Requirements for protecting storage with fire sprinklers can be extremely confusing to the user of NFPA 13. This presentation will show how the organization of NFPA 13 can clarify the protection requirements for storage and then continue by pointing out the areas where users frequently get tripped up.

Information and registration for this seminar is available at [www.nfsa.org](http://www.nfsa.org) or by calling Dawn Fitzmaurice at 845-878-4200 ext. 133, email: [dawn@nfsa.org](mailto:dawn@nfsa.org).

### **NFSA In-Class Training Opportunities**

NFSA also offers in-class training on a variety of subjects at locations across the country. Here are some upcoming seminars:

Oct 19	Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Noblesville, IN
Oct 24	Introduction to Sprinkler Systems (1/2 day) (AM)	Southfield, MI
Oct 24	Standpipe Systems (1/2 day) (PM)	Southfield, MI
Oct 25	Hydraulics for Fire Protection	Southfield, MI
Oct 24	Introduction to Sprinkler Systems (1/2 day) (AM)	Willoughby, OH
Oct 24	Standpipe Systems (1/2 day) (PM)	Willoughby, OH
Oct 25	Sprinklers for Dwellings	Willoughby, OH
Oct 26	Pumps for Fire Protection	Willoughby, OH
Oct 26-27	Two-day NFPA 13 Overview & Intro to Plan Review	Southfield, MI
Nov 7	Sprinkler Protection for General Storage	Irvine, CA
Nov 9	Sprinkler Protection for Rack Storage	Irvine, CA
Nov 14-15	Two-day NFPA 13 Overview & Intro to Plan Review	Winston-Salem, NC
Nov 16	Hydraulics for Fire Protection	Winston-Salem, NC

For more information or to register, visit [www.nfsa.org](http://www.nfsa.org) or call Mike Repko at 845-878-4207, email: [seminars@nfsa.org](mailto:seminars@nfsa.org).

### **NFSA Announces Spring 2007 Technical Tuesdays on 2007 Standards**

During the first half of 2007, NFSA will be devoting its “Technical Tuesday” online seminar series to an in-depth review of the new 2007 editions of NFPA 13, 13D and 13R. This is your chance to learn from the experts who represent the fire sprinkler industry on the technical committees that write the sprinkler rules. See the changes in the 2007 edition that can clarify older rules and make the installation of fire sprinkler systems more cost effective.

The level of all seminar topics is considered intermediate. Because these seminars are being offered as a complete program on NFPA 13, a 30% discount is available when signing up for all ten seminars in the series.

Information and registration for this seminar series is available at [www.nfsa.org](http://www.nfsa.org) or by calling Dawn Fitzmaurice at 845-878-4200 ext. 133., email: [dawn@nfsa.org](mailto:dawn@nfsa.org).

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*of the NFPA or its technical committees or those of other organizations except as noted. Opinions expressed herein are not intended, and should not be relied upon, to provide professional consultation or services. Please send comments to Russell P. Fleming, P.E. [fleming@nfsa.org](mailto:fleming@nfsa.org).*

*In the promotion of the fire sprinkler concept, the National Fire Sprinkler Association represents all fire sprinkler industry interests including fire sprinkler contractors, manufacturers and suppliers of fire sprinklers and related equipment and fire protection professionals. Established in 1905, the National Fire Sprinkler Association provides publications, nationally accredited seminars, representation in codes and standards-making, market development, labor relations and other services to its membership. Headquartered in Patterson, New York, the National Fire Sprinkler Association has regional operations offices throughout the country.*