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Antifreeze Update

It has been over two months since the NFPA Standards Council issued Tentative Interim Amendments to NFPA 13, 13D and 13R banning the use of antifreeze in new sprinkler systems protecting dwelling units (See *eTechAlert* No. 187 – August 17, 2010). The NFSA petition to the NFPA Board to overturn the TIAs was denied based on “no extraordinary circumstances that would require the intervention of the Board of Directors.”

In its August 5th decision, the Standards Council had advised the “relevant committees” to “consider this question in a coordinated manner and report back to the Council no later than its October 2010 meeting with any proposed actions or recommendations.” The Standards Council is holding its October meeting today and tomorrow in San Antonio, Texas. What is the current status of the effort to have the various NFPA technical committees address key issues of allowable concentrations, non-dwelling occupancies and existing systems?

A task group of the Automatic Sprinkler Technical Correlating Committee (TCC) met by teleconference and at the end of September delivered their recommendations to the NFPA 13 Installation Criteria Committee, the NFPA Residential Sprinkler Committee (for 13D and 13R), and the NFPA 25 Committee on Inspection, Testing and Maintenance. These committees are in the process of having their own teleconferences in order to address the TCC task group recommendations by the end of October.

What did the TCC task group recommend? Their recommendations can be summarized as follows:

- TIAs to be issued on older editions of the NFPA standards as well as the current editions
- TIAs to address all systems, not just those protecting dwelling units
- Only factory premixed antifreeze solutions to be allowed
- For new systems, maximum concentrations by volume of 35% propylene glycol or 45% glycerin, except that 40% propylene glycol and 50% glycerin be permitted where maximum static and flowing pressures do not exceed 80 psi, and higher concentrations for ESFR systems when specifically listed for such applications. Special listed antifreeze solutions would also be permitted.
- For existing systems, testing of the existing solution, and replacement of solutions exceeding 40% propylene glycol or 50% glycerine with premixed solutions not exceeding such concentrations. Drops not exceeding 36 inches in length would not be required to be drained unless the antifreeze type is changed. Special listed antifreeze solutions would also be permitted. In existing non-residential occupancies, antifreeze systems not exceeding 40 gallons capacity protecting normally unoccupied spaces would be allowed to remain in service regardless of antifreeze type and

concentration. Examples might be attics, trash enclosures, crawl spaces, isolated storage areas, industrial equipment areas and dust collectors.

The TCC is also recommending additional research to investigate factors of operating pressures, short duration discharges, and antifreeze flow characteristics.

As the various committees consider the TCC task group recommendations, they will likely make their own recommendations. The NFPA Standards Council is next scheduled to meet in March of 2011, but they have indicated they will consider an emergency meeting to address this issue.

Upcoming NFSA/FSI “Best Practices Thursday” Seminar – Oct. 21st

Topic: The Insurance Market

Instructor: Brian Cullen & Top Myers

Date: October 21, 2010

Do you REALLY understand what drives your hazard insurances premiums? How can you save money when purchasing something you can't do without? This 45-minute presentation will overview the hazard lines insurance markets and provide participants with a solid step-by-step plan for negotiating best possible rates. One-on-one follow-up is available after the seminar at no additional charge.

Upcoming NFSA “Technical Tuesday” Seminar – October 26th

Topic: High-Rise Buildings with Relationship to NFPA 14 and NFPA 20

Instructor: Kevin J. Kelly, P.E., NFSA Consultant

Date: October 26, 2010

The latest editions of NFPA 14 and NFPA 20 have both added new requirements for high-rise buildings. The NFPA Fire Pump Committee added a whole new chapter to NFPA 20 with many new requirements for fire pumps in these buildings. This seminar will fold the requirements from the two standards into a comprehensive summary of everything that needs to be considered for standpipe systems using fire pumps in High-Rise buildings.

Upcoming NFSA “SAM Friday” Seminar – November 12th

Topic: Flexible Drops – Uses and Limitations

Instructor: Mike Dooley, Flexhead

Date: November 12, 2010

“Flexible sprinkler hose fittings” were first allowed by NFPA 13 in the 2007 edition of the standard, but have specific rules and limitations attached to their use. This seminar will address those rules, but also note the degree to which these devices have been accepted for use as part of earthquake protection features and as simple labor-saving design features.

To register or for more information on any of the above seminars, contact Michael Repko at (845) 878-4207 or e-mail to seminars@nfsa.org

Additional in-class training opportunities include:

Advanced Technician Training Class

November 16-18/Fishkill, NY
Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center
542 Route 9
Room Rate \$89/night until Oct. 17
For reservations, call (845) 896-6281 and mention code: NFS

To register or for information, contact Nicole Sprague at (845) 878-4200 x149 or Diana Romano at x132.

In-Class Training Seminars

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

Oct 25	Fairbanks, AK	Plan Review Policies & Procedures
Oct 26	Fairbanks, AK	Hydraulics for Fire Protection
Oct 27	Fairbanks, AK	Sprinklers for Dwellings
Oct 28	Fairbanks, AK	Inspection, Testing & Maintenance
Oct 29	Fairbanks, AK	Commissioning & Acceptance Testing (1/2 day a.m.)
Nov 3	Teutopolis, IL	Introduction to Sprinklers (1/2 day a.m.)
Nov 3	Teutopolis, IL	CPVC Piping (1/2 day p.m.)
Nov 4	Teutopolis, IL	Plan Review Policies & Procedures
Nov 9	Wichita, KS	Standpipe Systems (1/2 day a.m.)
Nov 9	Wichita, KS	Introduction to Sprinklers (1/2 day p.m.)
Nov 9	Las Vegas, NV	Underground Piping (1/2 day a.m.)
Nov 9	Las Vegas, NV	Basic Seismic (1/2 day p.m.)
Nov 10	Wichita, KS	Sprinklers for Dwellings
Nov 10	Las Vegas, NV	Standpipe Systems (1/2 day a.m.)
Nov 10	Las Vegas, NV	Commissioning & Acceptance Testing (1/2 day p.m.)
Nov 11	Wichita, KS	Pumps for Fire Protection
Nov 30	Pembroke, MA	Sprinkler Protection for General Storage
Dec 1	Pembroke, MA	Sprinkler Protection for Rack Storage
Dec 2	Pembroke, MA	Sprinkler Protection for Special Storage

These seminars qualify for continuing education as required by NICET, and meet mandatory Continuing Education Requirements for Businesses and Authorities Having Jurisdiction.

To register or for more information, contact Michael Repko at (845) 878-4207 or e-mail to seminars@nfsa.org

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About the National Fire Sprinkler Association

Established in 1905, the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) is the voice of the fire sprinkler industry. NFSA leads the drive to get life-saving and property protecting fire sprinklers into all buildings; provides support and resources for its members – fire sprinkler contractors, manufacturers and suppliers; and educates authorities having jurisdiction on fire protection issues. Headquartered in Patterson, N.Y., NFSA has regional operations offices throughout the country. www.nfsa.org.