

# Western Fire Chiefs Association



## Fire Sprinkler Position Statement

**The Western Fire Chiefs Association adopts the position that all new construction, including one and two-family dwellings, should be built with fire sprinklers installed to protect the public, fire service personnel, the structure, its contents, the economy and the environment.**

In an effort to reduce the number of deaths from an average of 3,000 citizens and 100 firefighters annually and to avert billions of dollars annually in property loss to the effects of fire, we must include fire sprinklers as an integral part of a community's fire protection. The increased demands made today on local fire departments, usually without increased staffing or funding, and the changes in building materials and home contents, all increase the risk to firefighters and the public. It's time to add active fire protection as a baseline in all new construction.

Home fire sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, giving residents valuable time to get out safely and can significantly reduce property loss and damage due to a fire. By installing these life-saving devices in new homes a large number of residents are ensured that they can enjoy the same level of safety found in many offices, schools, apartments, and public buildings.

Now is the time for the fire service to adapt to the changes in construction techniques; new technologies have become the norm in construction (light-weight construction, etc.), and building contents have become more flammable and more toxic smoke. We must meet these changes and protect our communities in proactive, rather than reactive, approaches. The current built environment and furnishings necessitate the additional protection of built-in fire protection. Fire sprinklers provide the active protection needed to reduce the fire risk associated with these new buildings components to citizens and firefighters.

We further state that we do not support and will oppose regulations that prevent or discourage the installation of fire sprinklers. We also stand against fees and charges that create economic barriers to the installation of fire sprinklers. We support incentives for business owners and citizens to protect their buildings, thus protecting our citizens, their property and fire service personnel.

This position statement supports the priorities of the Western Fire Chiefs Association and we pledge to work with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), other IAFC divisions, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and other organizations which are interested in being proactive in providing community fire protection. We welcome partners and collaborative efforts that support similar goals. It is time for us all to take action and work together to protect lives, property and the environment.

Adopted by: WFCB Board of Directors

Date: June 25, 2009

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary L. Aleshire', is written over a horizontal line.

Gary L. Aleshire, President