



POSITION PAPER ON RESIDENTIAL FIRE SPRINKLERS

Reviewing the last five years, over 60 Marylanders have died annually as the result of hostile residential fires. It is disturbing that the one place most people feel the safest, they are actually at most risk from unwanted fires. In most cases, the real threat of fire is from the rapid spread potential and deadly smoke. Smoke alarms, family escape plans, fire resistive construction and plenty of easily accessible ways out in an emergency are all helpful in saving lives and reducing injuries in a fire. However, the single most effective way to protect the lives of family members and friends in a residential fire, including the lives of firefighters that respond, is to have a fire sprinkler system. There has never been a multiple loss of life in a structure equipped with a properly working fire sprinkler system. The local fire department, no matter how fast they arrive or how effectively they perform, cannot assure your rescue from a burning home. **RESIDENTIAL FIRE SPRINKLERS SAVE LIVES!** There is no debating this fact.

Therefore, it is the position of the Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA) that all homes regardless of size, construction or type should be protected by a fire sprinkler system. The MSFA recognizes that the economic realities of retrofitting existing homes with fire sprinkler systems as they may be cost prohibitive, however, the MSFA advocates for fire sprinkler systems in all new residential construction and encourages those with the financial ability to retrofit their homes as well. Fire sprinklers have been required in new apartments, condominiums and townhouses since the early 1990's. These systems have proven their effectiveness in numerous fire incidents. Fire sprinkler systems work in all types of homes irrespective of size or construction type.

The Maryland State Firemen's Association will work with any group, team with any association, support any legislative body and assist any agency in the effort to educate our citizens, promote, require and apply fire sprinkler technology in homes across our great State. Our goal is simple: **REDUCE THE LOSS OF LIFE IN HOSTILE HOME FIRES.**