

## **USFA Emphasizes Support for Residential Fire Sprinklers**

Emmitsburg, MD - The national support for residential sprinklers has been a long and important project for the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA). Since our enabling legislation passed in 1974, the USFA has been organizationally charged with improving the life safety risk from fire for the United States. Fire sprinklers and smoke alarms are, and will continue to be, among the most important planks of the USFA.

“Since 2001, then USFA Fire Administrator R. David Paulison and I have made it a point to endorse local sprinkler ordinances, and recruit all fire service leaders to embrace sprinklers in all commercial and residential properties,” said Acting USFA Assistant Administrator Charlie Dickinson. “Every firefighter in this nation, running into buildings people are running from, knows first hand the lives smoke alarms and sprinklers are saving across this nation.”

The USFA is pleased to report that the number of fire incidents, fatalities, and injuries has declined over the past 25 years. However, at the same time, the USFA finds the loss of 2,570 lives in 2005 in one- and two-family homes to be unacceptable, and in many cases, preventable.

The USFA knows smoke alarm education and other public outreach programs are practical, effective, and proven approaches to reducing fire incidents, fatalities, and injuries and acknowledges that, tragically, some homes are still without working smoke alarms. As a result, the USFA continues its support of all fire departments and citizens to ensure that every home has and maintains working smoke alarms. However, USFA believes that this is only part of the solution.

Residential sprinkler installation is another part of the solution to further reduce residential fire incidents, injuries, and fatalities. The National Fire Protection Association reports that when sprinklers are present, the chances of dying in a fire are reduced by one-half to three-fourths and the average property loss per fire is cut by one-half to two-thirds when compared to fires where sprinklers are not present.

Together with smoke alarms, sprinklers cut the risk of dying in a home fire by 82%, relative to having neither. The need to install residential sprinklers in homes has been proven to result in lower fire damage and little or no spread of the fire from the room where it started. When coupled with a working smoke alarm, there is a potential for a dramatic decrease in the over 2,500 residential fire deaths that occur each year in America.

For further information regarding the efforts and programs of the USFA, visit:

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov>



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