



Q&A with The Voice of the Fire Sprinkler Industry A National Perspective on Fire Sprinkler Retrofits

Questions by: Dorvin D. Leis co., inc.

Answers by: NFSA (National Fire Sprinkler Association)

1. Q: What is the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA)? And, how does NFSA work with our local authorities in regard to fire life safety?

A: The National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) was founded in 1905 and serves members that are fire sprinkler manufacturers, suppliers, contractors, professionals (architects, engineers, designers, insurance agents, lawyers, etc.). Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs), which are fire officials, building officials, as well as any elected and appointed officials. NFSA works with all persons and companies interested in fire & life safety. NFSA works with federal, state, and local officials to ensure the best possible fire protection possible in accordance with the latest national codes and standards that are applicable to the built environment. NFSA is proud to have served members for 117+ years, and loves bringing people together to "protect lives and property from fire through the widespread acceptance of the fire sprinkler concept."

2. Q: Are there any advocacy efforts or opportunities in the 2023 legislative session for federal funding and/or incentives for fire sprinkler retrofits?

A: Yes! NFSA remains engaged at the local, state and federal level with advocacy and outreach efforts. Current federal legislation includes the High-Rise Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act which will include tax incentives for building owners to retrofit high-rise residential occupancies (current legislation provides this for high-rise commercial buildings and small businesses). NFSA is also supportive at the federal level of efforts that include HUD, and the Public Housing Fire Safety Act, which will provide retrofit funding for HUD housing.

3. Q: What can we do locally to help with federal (or local) advocacy for tax incentives and/or other funding assistance?

A: Participate with NFSA by engaging our national staff with programs and projects in the community

that educates building owners, occupants, and government officials on the live and property saving benefits of fire sprinklers. NFSA works with state and local governments to offer incentives for fire sprinklers. Many communities across the country have offered incentives from homes to high-rises for the installation of fire sprinkler systems, in both new construction and existing construction. This includes a percentage of cost tax rebate, waiving permit fees, low interest loans, etc. Many communities offered incentives to retrofit buildings with fire sprinklers in historical districts because they realize it's not truly preserved until it's protected. Be involved by tracking current advocacy opportunities at www.nfsa.org/ advocacy. You can also participate in NFSA Chapter meetings, our annual conference and regional conferences that occur throughout the year.

4. Q: With the recent one-year anniversaries since the tragic January 25, 2022, Philadelphia public housing rowhouse fire that left twelve dead and the January 29, 2022 Bronx fire that left nineteen dead and sixty-three injured, has there been any changes in those cities or counties related to fire life safety ordinances?

A: Those cities did take action to strengthen fire safety laws, however, they both stopped short of incentivizing and/or requiring fire sprinklers in existing high-rises or public housing. NFSA was honored to travel along with US Fire Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell during the anniversary week of these fires. Dr. Lori has unified the nation's fire service organizations to speak with "One Fire Service Voice" and has assembled a great team to share the current realities of fire and also the solutions (fire sprinklers being a prime one).

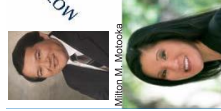
5. Q: NFSA has used Marco Polo as a case study for many years. Are there any insights NFSA can provide our Honolulu County residents based on studying the Marco Polo fire as well as others across the nation?



A: First and foremost, NFSA applauds those involved in the Marco Polo retrofit. This is a great example of leading, being proactive, and turning tragedy into advocacy. While one never wants to make the headlines due to a tragic fire, this shows that people can come together to make their community a safer place to live. The retrofit of fire sprinkler systems in existing high-rise buildings is accomplished without shutting down the building or removing people from their homes. Once the project is complete the building is safer for the occupants and their pets, safer for the firefighters, and safer for any visitors to the buildings. The more high-rise buildings with fire sprinklers the better it is on the entire community and the environment should a fire occur.



For more information on NFSA visit www.nfsa.org. For a local resource you can visit www.leisinc.com or contact Jordan Holley, Dorvin D. Leis co. Fire Sprinkler Division Manager, at JordanH@leisinc.com.



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