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LOG OF MEETING

SUBJECT: Residential Sprinklers

DATE: August 20, 1996

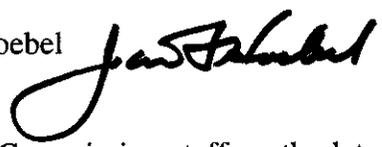
PLACE: CPSC, Bethesda, MD

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEE: James Dalton, National Fire Sprinkler Association

COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

- Walt Sanders, Chairman Brown's Office
- Pam Weller, Commissioner Moore's Office
- Nick Marchica, Engineering Sciences
- Linda Smith, Epidemiology and Health Sciences
- Rikki Khanna, Engineering Sciences
- Ron Jordan, Engineering Sciences
- Anna Luo, Engineering Sciences
- Margaret Neily, Executive Director's Office
- James F. Hoebel, Engineering Sciences

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: James F. Hoebel



SUMMARY:

Mr. Dalton visited to brief the Commission staff on the latest information regarding residential sprinklers.

Background information was provided. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13D Sprinkler Code was born in 1974. However, it wasn't until the early 1980s that the emerging fast-response technology made residential sprinklers practical. This technology also expanded the benefits of sprinklers beyond property protection to life safety. All current residential sprinklers are fast-response type, and the slowest is five to six times faster than traditional industrial sprinklers.

Some authorities began legislative action. All three model building codes require sprinklers in multiple occupancy dwellings over three stories in height. Many jurisdictions adopted codes, such as San Clemente, CA, Cobb County, GA, Napa, CA, Prince Georges County, MD, Scottsdale, AZ, and Port Angeles, WA.

However, there now appears to be a deregulation philosophy in some areas that is motivating possible retraction of codes. This has been observed in California. The California Home Builders Association sued Livermore to overturn their sprinkler ordinance. However, the Court (and the Appeals Court) ruled for the city, and the California Supreme Court refused to hear the case. Others have tried to work at a local level to achieve repeal, and have had some success (Anaheim, CA).



A primary issue is cost. The sprinkler industry estimates that it costs about \$1 per square foot to install a new home and about \$1.50 to \$2.00 per square foot to retrofit an existing home, but these estimates are debatable. Even so, these costs could still be too high to make sprinklers widely available.

There have been two notable recent technological breakthroughs. Two years ago, NFPA added a limited-area system primarily for mobile homes. This system is based on a 100 gallon water supply connected to sprinklers delivering 10 gallons per minute (at 10 psi pressure). Thus, a reservoir system could operate for 10 minutes. However, no manufacturer has marketed a sprinkler head for this application to date. The newest breakthrough has been the approval of the use of ½ inch pipe (May 1996) although there are eight restrictions to this provision. Mr. Dalton expects technology to provide these systems will develop quickly, and the ultimate effect may be to reduce costs in new homes to around \$0.50 per square foot.

Consumer education is viewed as crucial. Mr. Dalton coordinates closely with public policy groups to convince them of the value of sprinklers. Radio spots and Public Service Announcements have been developed to use in California. Dalton's organization has developed further consumer education materials working with other experienced fire safety educators. These materials are being provided to NFPA's "Champions" and are offered at half price to members of NFPA's Education Section. Workshops are starting in November, in California working with the California State Fire Marshal. They are working with NFPA to produce a video for use in hotel rooms.

The National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) is also concerned about the qualifications of installers of one/two family dwelling systems. Working with the National Association of State Fire Marshals, the NFSA is developing a program to accredit installation companies based on a week-long class and a comprehensive examination. They would also like to develop a national registry of sprinklered units and accredited installation and service companies in order to enhance consumer protection.

Meeting Log

Subject: Briefing of CPSC staff by American Gas Association (AGA) on its proposal for additional requirements for carbon monoxide detectors

Date: August 20, 1996

Place: Room 724, CPSC, Bethesda, MD.

Source: Walt A. Sanders, Counselor to the Chairman

CPSC Staff: Walt A. Sanders (COAB)

Warren Prunella (EC)
Pamela Gilbert (EX)
Eric Rubel (OGC)
Ron Medford (EXHR)
Elizabeth Leland (ECPA)
Jacquie Elder (EXHR)
Sharon White (ESHF)
Larry Hershman (COAB)
Tim Johnson (ESEE)
Mary Ann Danello (EH)
Sandy Inkster (EHHE)
Marilyn Wind (EH)
William King (ESEE)

Others: Charles Fritts (AGA)
George Gruss (IAS)
Jim Ranfone (AGA)
Murray Liebman (AGA)
Irwin Billick (Gas Research Institute)

Summary:

The meeting was closed to the public because the subject matter presented was non-public and proprietary.

The American Gas Association (AGA) briefed CPSC staff on a proposal developed by the gas industry for supplemental requirements for carbon monoxide detectors. The recommended changes would impose additional requirements to the current standard for carbon monoxide detectors (UL 2034). The AGA told CPSC staff that the gas industry had been concerned about the problem of oversensitive CO detectors that alarm when low levels of carbon monoxide are present. AGA presented findings from an AGA study that 90 percent of the 13,000 emergency calls made by utility companies, nationwide, found no health- or life-threatening levels of carbon monoxide levels in the home. The AGA said the recommended changes would make carbon monoxide detectors more reliable and less likely to alarm at low carbon monoxide levels.

The AGA said it would present its recommendations to and solicit comments from the CO detector manufacturers at a future meeting.

OK

CPSA 6 (b)(1) Cleared
8/24/96
No Mfrs/Providers or
Products Identified
Excepted
Firms Not
Comments Enclosed.

