

CAMPUS Firewatch™

DECEMBER 2005

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Years of Potential Life Loss

Whenever anyone dies in a fire, it is a terrible tragedy. The loss of life to a cause that is, so often, avoidable makes it even more difficult. However, when a young person loses their life, someone who has their whole future ahead of them, is even more tragic. That is one of the reasons why a death on our campuses strikes such a chord in so many people.

No one can tell the impact of the loss better than a parent. In working with these people over the years, they tell of the anguish it causes and the impact upon their lives every single day. How it affects their marriages and relationships with their other children and how it totally changes their lives.

In addition to the personal loss that each family suffers, there is a loss to society as well. Everyone has an impact on society as they grow. They may have families, jobs, careers. Over the course of their lives they will pay taxes and buy goods. They will have the

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2005 - The Year in Review

The year 2005 was a year of tremendous growth and activity for campus fire safety. There were an incredible number of activities and events across the nation that helped to raise the level of awareness among parents, students, administrators and legislators. Unfortunately, some of these were driven by the fatalities that occurred.

This is the first of a two-part series that will look at 2005 and summarize what has happened in the world of campus fire safety and the progress that has been made.



A fire in August 2004 claimed the lives of three members of the ATO fraternity at the University of Mississippi.

Fire Fatalities 2004-2005

Since January 2000, the Center for Campus Fire Safety has identified 81 fire fatalities in student housing. Since these deaths are identified by monitoring the wire services, and not all off-campus deaths are identified as student-related, it is believed that the actual number is higher.

Of the 81 deaths, almost 80% occurred off-campus in the typical rented house and apartment. Common factors seen in a number of these fires include:

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FROM THE Editor

In this issue we start to look back on all of the activity that has happened over the past year. As I started to summarize it, I was absolutely amazed at the incredible progress that has been made.

It also made me realize just how much people really care about campus fire safety and just how much of their lives they put into making sure that the students are protected from fire. For some it is their full time job. For others, it is an additional duty on top of an already full plate. For some, it is an avocation or a calling. Unfortunately, for the last group, what has spurred them to action is the death of a child.

Collectively, however, all of these people are making a huge difference in fire safety. It is this incredible level of commitment that may not come through as you read through the summary of activities that the Center has been involved with during 2005. And, more importantly, these are only the activities of the Center-their personal commitments and that of their organizations go far above and beyond what we are doing.

One of the most telling examples was the Capitol Hill Campus Fire Academy. I first broached the idea during the summer, and within a short time there were commitments from people from across the nation to help and support it. When I went looking for funding, organizations agreed immediately to underwriting. When it came to organizing the day, the people on Capitol Hill went out of the way to help ensure its success.

On the day itself, as with all major events, nothing always goes as planned. Fortunately, there were a group of almost two dozen instructors, most from the fire service, who are very experienced in "adapting and overcoming." On a moment's notice we had to change the location, search for power and water, set up the trailers and fire extinguisher props as well as set up the presentation room. It was done through extraordinary effort, on time, and from the student's point of view it was a flawless operation.

This single event stands out in my mind as the best example of how everyone is committed to a cause and to the success of our efforts. Without this commitment to not only that one day's event, but to their local communities as well, we would not be where we are today as a larger community.

As I said earlier, collectively we have made a huge difference. But this is only because of the individual commitment involved.

This is my time to say "thanks" to everyone.

Ed Comeau, the editor of Campus Firewatch, is the former chief fire investigator for the National Fire Protection Association. He began his involvement in campus fire safety as a fire fighter with the Amherst, Massachusetts, fire department while pursuing his degree in civil engineering. He can be reached at publisher@campus-firewatch.com.

CAMPUS DECEMBER 2005 Firewatch™

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Campus fire safety is a complex issue. The information in this newsletter is provided to help you in your efforts to provide as fire-safe a community as possible. However, it is no replacement for professional advice. For further assistance, contact your local fire department.

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- Lack of automatic fire sprinklers
- Missing or disabled smoke alarms
- Careless disposal of smoking materials
- Alcohol consumption

For the academic year 2004-2005, there were 14 fire fatalities. Ten of these occurred off-campus, one in a residence hall and three in a fraternity.

Jane Thurber, 20
Savannah College of Art and Design
Savannah, Georgia
Off-campus

William Townsend, 19
Jordan Williams, 20
Howard Stone, 19
University of Mississippi
Oxford, Mississippi
Fraternity

Daniel Rigby, 21
Georgetown University
Washington, DC
Off-campus

Julie Turnbull, 21
Kathryn Welling, 21
Stephen Smith, 22
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio
Off-campus

Christopher Raspanti, 21
Penn State
State College, Pennsylvania
Off-campus

Kelly Weimer, 20
Southern Adventist University
Collegedale, Tennessee
Residence Hall

Michael Scrocca, 22
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland
Off-campus

Justin McDonald, 21
Tanner Osborn, 21
Christopher Ross, 19
Conservatory of Recording Arts and Sciences
Chicago, Illinois
Off-campus



Over 40 experts came together on Capitol Hill for the first Campus Fire Safety Summit. L to R are Congressman Pascrell, Gail Minger, Congressman Weldon, Congresswoman Tubbs Jones and Ed Comeau.

Campus Fire Safety Summit

Campus fire safety was the reason for an unprecedented gathering in May on Capitol Hill that included Members of Congress as well as local, state and campus fire marshals, industry groups and the US Fire Administrator. Campus Fire Safety Summit 2005 brought all of these individuals together to help in drafting an action plan for the upcoming year. The summit was co-hosted by the Center for Campus Fire Safety and Congresswoman Tubbs Jones (Ohio).

The goal of this summit was to bring together a diverse group of close to 40 experts with Congressional representatives and their staffs to discuss campus fire safety and forge a national agenda to guide future efforts in reducing the loss of life and injury from fires. The meeting included several presentations highlighting the complex issues faced on campuses as well as the best practices being used in a number of locations. The day concluded with an open discussion about the critical needs with an action plan for developing a list of the top issues to be focused upon for the upcoming year.

The next day, participants from the Summit then spread out across Capitol Hill and met with Representatives, Senators and their staff to educate them about campus fire safety and the legislation that is pending in Congress. This education and advocacy effort was the first time that campus fire safety has been brought to the Members of Congress in such a direct way and is part of a continuing effort to help drive forward the legislative efforts currently underway.

There were three priority issues identified by the Summit attendees.

Fire Safety Education and Awareness

There is a need for a national clearing-house and coordination of program development and fire safety messages. These messages need to be consistent, clear and targeted towards the demographic that is being addressed. Much of the fire prevention material that is currently available is not appropriate for this age group.

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In order to engage the students, the material needs to be interactive and pertinent to their world. To train college students in fire safety, it might be necessary to “think outside the box” when developing programs. Several of the attendees mentioned the use of RA and Greek Fire Academies as a mechanism for engaging the students and providing training that is informative.

There are three target audiences that need to be addressed that include students, parents of current and prospective students and campus administrators.

When it comes to students, the priority is those living off-campus. According to the Center for Campus Fire Safety, since January 2000, almost 80% of the fire fatalities identified by the Center have occurred in off-campus occupancies. One of the mechanisms that can be used to address this issue is education. Training and education in fire safety will help to modify the human behavior factors that contribute to these fire deaths. Emphasizing alcohol impairment issues is critical because this has been a factor in a number of these fire deaths.

Parents of current and prospective students are a key constituency to reach and make more aware of the need for fire safety. A number of parents do not often consider fire safety when selecting a school and this important information is generally not easily accessible. More extensive outreach is needed to raise awareness of the issues which will in turn create a demand for improved fire safety on campuses.

The third group is that of campus administrators. It is necessary to reach out to them and educate them on the role that fire safety, for their students living both on- and off-campus. Ensuring that there is adequate fire safety for all students is not only the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do. Fires in student housing have a disastrous impact

on students, families, and a school’s reputation and image.

Automatic Fire Sprinklers

There was little doubt among the Summit attendees about the effectiveness of automatic fire sprinklers in saving lives and reducing the loss from fire. The problem lies with installing sprinklers in the occupancies where most students live; off-campus houses and apartments which is where most people are dying in fires.

The group consensus was that sprinkler installation can be encouraged by a combination of several different mechanisms that include financial incentives, educating the public to look for and demand sprinklered housing, legislation and mandates. All of these are being used at various levels across the country and should be expanded upon.

Information/Data Collection

One of the problems faced by officials providing fire protection for campuses is that there is a distinct lack of information about the scope of the problem. The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) stopped classifying a residence hall (dormitory) as a separate occupancy in their reporting system in January 2000. For this reason, any information gathered since then includes a number of other occupancies that are also classified as dormitories.

Because of this, the actual number of fires, their causes and other vitally important information is no longer available. This lack of basic information is seen as a major shortcoming by those attending the Summit. It is necessary to know the scope of the problem in order to identify solutions, develop targeted programs and legislation and to educate parents, students and administrators.

As the inaugural event, the Summit helped to bring together key organiza-

tions and individuals to start the discussion. Future efforts will focus on how to best address these concerns and develop mechanisms towards resolving the issues raised during this landmark meeting.

Attendees

- Louis Alar, Catholic University of America
- William Barnard, Maryland State Fire Marshal/National Association of State Fire Marshals
- John Biechman, National Fire Protection Association
- Tom Chapin, Underwriters Laboratories
- Diane Collins, office of Congressman Weldon
- Ed Comeau, Center for Campus Fire Safety
- Buddy Dewar, National Fire Sprinkler Association
- Mark Dinneen, International Code Council
- Bruce Fraser, SimplexGrinnell
- Jim Gibbs, Arizona State University
- Tannaz Haddadi, office of Congresswoman Tubbs Jones
- Mike Halligan, University of Utah
- Shawn Kauffman, Centre Region Code Administration
- Sherry Kenyon, Boulder Fire-Rescue
- Kevin King, office of Senator DeWine
- Alice Kinklear, Urbana Fire Department
- Tim Knisely, Centre Region Code Administration
- Ken LaSala, International Association of Fire Chiefs
- Dan Madrzykowski, National Institute of Standards and Technology

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- Paul Martin, New York Office of Fire Prevention and Control
- Jane Maupin, Champaign Fire Department
- John McSheffrey, Fire Equipment Manufacturers Association
- Gail Minger, Center for Campus Fire Safety
- Gerry Naylis, New Jersey Fire Commissioner
- Erik Olson, Princeton Review
- Congressman Bill Pascrell, New Jersey
- David Paulison, US Fire Administrator
- Susan Quatrone, office of Congressman Pascrell
- Alan Sactor, University of Maryland
- Steve Sawyer, International Fire Marshals Association
- Sonny Scarff, Marriott Corporation
- Gus Schaefer, Underwriters Laboratories
- Barbara Spalding, Wesleyan University
- Mike Swain, University of Massachusetts
- Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Ohio
- Bill Webb, Congressional Fire Services Institute
- Ann Weeks, Underwriters Laboratories
- Congressman Curt Weldon, Pennsylvania

Capitol Hill Campus Fire Academy

A groundbreaking training program was held on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC on September 12 where the Capitol Hill Campus Fire Academy provided fire safety training to the interns and staff members working in Congress.

This program, which was organized by the Center for Campus Fire Safety, was hosted by the Center, the Congressional Fire Services Caucus and the Architect of the Capitol. Almost two dozen instructors from Massachusetts, Colorado, New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Kentucky, New Jersey and Maryland gathered together in view of the Capitol to conduct this landmark training program.

The goal was to not only provide training and information to these students, but to also raise the national level of awareness regarding the importance of fire safety on campuses across the country. By hosting the training on Capitol Hill, the interns received invaluable training and it helped to focus attention on the issues during Campus Fire Safety Month.

The day started with the students and staff attending a series of presentations in the Cannon House Office Building led by Sherry Kenyon from the Center for Campus Fire Safety and the Boulder Fire Department. Kenyon provided an overview of the national problem that showed these fires can, and do happen far too frequently.

Kenyon was followed by Dana Christmas-McCain who gave a riveting talk on the impact that a fire can have. Dana was able to speak from her personal experience because she was a resident assistant at Seton Hall University in 2000 when the tragic fire that claimed the lives of 3 freshmen broke out. Dana was severely burned in this fire and is reaching out to educate students about the dangers of fire and the importance of fire safety.

After Christmas-McCain, Gail Minger from the Center for Campus Fire Safety spoke about how vital it is that the students take personal responsibility for their own fire safety. The students should ask questions and not assume that everything is being taken care of for

them-it is their responsibility as adults. Minger lost her son in an arson fire at Murray State University and has since become a strong advocate for fire safety.

The New York Office of Fire Prevention and Control set up a booth with fire safety information for the students inside the Cannon building, and Ansul brought their virtual fire extinguisher prop which allowed the students to use a fire extinguisher to put out a virtual fire that was projected on a large screen.

The students and staff then moved outside to a fire safety "mall" where a series of demonstrations had been set up in the street leading up to the Capitol. There were sprinkler trailers that demonstrated the effectiveness of sprinklers and smoke trailers where the attendees had to navigate smoke-filled rooms.

In addition, there were two fire extinguisher props where the attendees could put out fires using dry-chemical fire extinguishers. This was a great hands on training opportunity, and for most of the people it was the first time that they had ever been this close to a fire and able to use a fire extinguisher.

After they had completed the stations, each of the students and staff then received a gift bag with important fire safety information, a T-shirt and a smoke alarm donated by Kidde.

This training, which was the first of its kind, helped to reinforce important fire safety lessons that the students may have seen before. By having both a classroom session and the hands-on training session, the messages were made even more indelible.

So often this age group does not receive the important fire safety information that it needs. According to government statistics, there are approximately 29 million adults between the ages of 18 and 24 in the United States. The U.S. Department of Education reports that

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Students at Siena College in New York learned about fire safety during Campus Fire Safety Month.

there are approximately 16 million students enrolled in colleges and universities this fall. This means that a majority of this age group is in position to be reached with life-saving fire safety information that, unfortunately, doesn't happen as frequently as it should.

Campus Fire Safety Month

The Center for Campus Fire Safety designated September as Campus Fire Safety Month across the nation with the goal to raise the level of awareness among parents, students, administrators and legislators about the importance of fire safety.

Proclamations

To help in this effort, legislation was introduced in both houses of Congress, proclaiming September as Campus Fire Safety Month. Governors from Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma and Rhode Island also issued similar proclamations. This was the result of an awareness campaign by the Center where letters were

Center's behalf by the National Association of State Fire Marshals encouraging them to have these proclamations. In addition, the Center sent a letter, signed by four women who lost children in campus fires, to the governors' wives asking them to support this initiative.

Capitol Hill Campus Fire Academy

A series of events were held to also mark September as Campus Fire Safety Month. One of the most notable events was the Capitol Hill Campus Fire Academy that took place right on Capitol Hill on September 12.

University of Kentucky

At the University of Kentucky, campus fire safety was the focus of a series of events that were held over three days. According to the university's fire marshal, Garry Beach, they easily reached over 1,600 students with activities such as fire extinguisher training, sprinkler trailer demonstrations and handing out t-shirts and informational pamphlets. The t-shirts had a creative slogan this

year: "When the alarm sounds, move your butt so you won't be an ash."

Siena College

Siena College was the kick-off for the New York Office of Fire Prevention and Control's campaign. Activities included burning a mockup of a student room to demonstrate the speed with which fire could spread and destroy the typical contents of a student room. Other activities included fire extinguisher training and interacting with the local fire fighters. A very successful tactic to promote the day's activities was using a robotic fire hydrant and fire engine.

Nassau Community College

A similar program was held at the Nassau Community College on Long Island, which is the largest community college in the country. According to fire officials, over 2,700 students participated in the day-long events.

University of Maryland

The University of Maryland held their fire safety event during their Homecoming Weekend in October. They had large banners hanging on the fire station near the residence halls and on the fire truck in the homecoming parade. The cheerleaders threw fire safety t-shirts into the crowd during the football along with an announcement on the big screen in the stadium. The University ran fire safety videos on the College Park cable television channel as well.

In addition, the university held a fire fighter challenge contest on campus that will include donning fire fighting gear, hoseline drag, 100 pound dummy drag and other activities that simulate fire fighting skills.

Penn State

Penn State held a Fire Safety Fair that was run by Penn State and the Centre

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Region Code Administration.

Participants were able to suppress a fire using a fire extinguisher; witness a sprinkler extinguishing a room fire; walk through a burned out bedroom, crawl through the smoke filled safety house, and talk with firefighters and fire inspectors about fire safety.

Catholic University of America

Catholic University of American in Washington, DC, had a week-long safety campaign. September 23 was Fire Safety Day and activities included the University of Maryland's sprinkler demonstration trailer and a fire truck from Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department. There was a display set up outside of the dining hall with smoke

detectors and carbon monoxide detectors, fire safety information and signups for CPR and AED training. In addition, they had plasma screens in the student union showing "A Letter Home" all day. (A Letter Home was developed by the Boulder Fire Department and is available on the Center for Campus Fire Safety's RESOURCE page on their website www.campusfire.org).

Tip a Day

In response to a number of requests, the Center for Campus Fire Safety created the Tip a Day service for September. Each day, a campus fire safety tip was sent out to people that had subscribed through the Center's website. In addition, the Campus Safety, Health and

Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA) sent the tips to their 3,000 members. In turn, a number of schools sent the email on to their students or posted it on their school websites.

Media Awareness

The media ran a number of stories relating to campus fire safety. Some of these were due to a national media campaign initiated by Underwriters Laboratories; others were as a result of the local activities of fire departments, colleges and universities.

The December issue of Campus Firewatch will contain the conclusion of this review.

Years of Potential Life Loss Continued from page 1

potential to make differences, big and small, over the course of their lifespan. But how can this be measured?

This issue came up at the bi-annual PARADE meeting held at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. (PARADE, which stands for Prevention Advocacy Resource and Data Exchange, is a membership organization made up of the 50 state fire marshals' offices, the fire department serving the largest city in each state, jurisdictions with over 200,000 people and representatives from each of the FEMA Regions.)

Assistant Fire Marshal Tim Vandenbrink from the Edmonton Fire Rescue Services in Alberta, Canada, spoke about changing how we measure the impacts of fire deaths on our communities. He reported that he is starting to use a metric called "years of potential life loss" or YPLL.

YPLL measures how many years of life the victim lost if he or she had lived out their full life. According to the Center for Disease Control, YPLL was first introduced in 1947 as a mechanism for measuring the changes in the death rates due to tuberculosis. Since then its use has expanded in the medical community

to better demonstrate the impact of deaths among the younger generation.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that the current expected lifespan in the United States is 77 years. Using this as a benchmark, the Center for Campus Fire Safety started reviewing the past fires to determine what the YPLL would be from fire deaths in student housing.

In looking at the past two academic years (2003-2004 and 2004-2005) plus the current academic year, there have been 27 deaths to date resulting in 1,503 years of potential life loss with an average of 58 years per loss. The age of one victim is unknown at this point so only 26 deaths were used in calculating the YPLL.

This is a very sobering number. Since January 2000, there have been 81 people killed in student housing fires across the nation. Since only the past two academic years have been analyzed at this point, the total YPLL is going to increase significantly. Based on the average YPLL of 58 years per loss of life, the projected YPLL is 4,698 for the period of January 2000 to the present.

YPLL is just one method of measuring

how fires at our nation's colleges and universities impact upon society, but there are also others that are not as tangible. These can include looking at how many students are impacted by a fire. In early December, a fire at one school broke out during finals, and 29 students were forced from their apartments and will have to find lodging elsewhere at a time when their attention needs to be focused on their academics.

Another measurement is to look at how many students do not return following a fatal or serious fire. This is an issue that can have a direct impact on the school's financial future at a time when schools are becoming more competitive in attracting and retaining students.

The Center for Campus Fire Safety is going to start looking at different methods for quantifying the impact that all fires have. This effort will help in developing focused solutions that target the problem areas and develop effective programs that include the three fire safety program areas of prevention, detection and suppression. By identifying the problem and its impacts we can develop effective solutions.

LEGISLATION

Update

Federal - HR 128 - College Fire Prevention Act

Co-Sponsors

Congresswoman

Stephanie Tubbs Jones

1009 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

(202) 225-7032 (tel.)

(202) 225-1339 (fax)

stephanie.tubbs.jones@mail.house.gov

Congressman Curt Weldon

2466 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

(202) 225-2011 (tel.)

(202) 225-8137 (fax)

CurtPA07@mail.house.gov

95 co-sponsors as of 12/7/05

Funding

\$100,000,000/year for five years

Facilities

Dormitories and Greek housing

nationwide

Summary

This bill will provide 50% matching grants for the installation of sprinkler systems in dormitories and Greek housing.

Status

2/9/05: Referred to the House subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness.

Federal - S512 - Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act

Sponsors

Senator Rick Santorum

511 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

(202) 224-6324 (tel.)

13 co-sponsors as of 12/7/05

Summary

This bill will provide a tax incentive to classify the retrofit of automatic sprinkler systems as 5-year property for the purposes of tax depreciation.

Status

3/3/2005: Referred to the Committee on Finance.

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Legislation Update Continued from previous page

Federal - HR 1131 - Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act of 2005

Sponsor

Congressman Curt Weldon (PA)
 2466 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-2011 (tel.)
 (202) 225-8137 (fax)
 CurtPA07@mail.house.gov

144 co-sponsors as of 12/7/05

Summary

This bill will amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to classify automatic fire sprinkler systems as 5-year property for purposes of depreciation.

Funding

n/a

Status

3/3/05 Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Federal - HR 2637 - Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act

Sponsors

Congressman Bill Pascrell
 2464 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-5751 (tel.)
 (202) 225-5782 (fax)

Congressman Joe Wilson
 212 Cannon House Office Building
 Washington, DC 20515
 (202) 225-2452 (tel.)
 (202) 225-2455 (fax)

36 co-sponsors as of 12/7/05

Federal - S 1196 - Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act

Sponsor

Senator Jon Corzine
 502 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510-3004
 (202) 224-4744 (tel.)
 (202) 228-2197 (fax)

Senator Frank Lautenberg
 324 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington DC 20510
 Phone: (202) 224-3224
 Fax: (202) 228-4054

3 co-sponsors as of 12/7/05

Summary

This bill will call for colleges and universities to report fire safety information to the US Department of Education for review by parents and students.

Funding

n/a

Status (House)

6/22/05 Legislation passed out of committee and moves to the full House for consideration.

Status (Senate)

6/8/05 Referred to Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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Legislation Update Continued from previous page

New York City - Int. No 644 - Installation of Sprinkler Systems in Student Housing

Sponsor

Council Member Avella
38-50 Bell Blvd. (Suite C), Bayside
Bayside, New York, 11361
(718) 747-2137 (tel.)
(718) 747-3105 (fax)
avella@council.nyc.ny.us

Jurisdiction

City of New York

15 co-sponsors as of 7/6/05

Summary

This law would require the installation of all student housing on campus to be equipped with an automatic fire sprinkler on or after January 1, 2006. Furthermore, any housing that a student is referred to shall be required to also be equipped with an automatic fire sprinkler system.

Funding

n/a

Status

5/15/05 Referred to the Committee on Housing and Buildings

AB 544 Fire Sprinkler Safety Act SB 250 Fire Sprinkler Safety Act

Sponsor

Representatives Kreibich, Krawczyk, Hines, Ott, McCormick, Molepske, Lamb, Vruwink, Cullen and Shilling
Introduced by Senators Brown, Olsen, Risser, Lassa and Plale
www.legis.state.wi.us/

Jurisdiction

State of Wisconsin

Summary

This law would require the retroactive installation of automatic fire sprinklers in all high-rise residence halls and student residential structures (i.e., Greek housing and privately operated student housing), statewide within five years of the enactment.

Funding

n/a

Status

This bill passed the Assembly on a voice vote on November 10, 2005. It has been introduced in the Senate and is waiting for action.

CAMPUS Fire Log

The following are brief summaries of incidents that have occurred in college occupancies. Unless noted otherwise, they have been taken from press accounts and have not been verified for accuracy. Several of these incidents will be profiled in future issues of **Campus Firewatch**.

If you have an incident that you would like to contribute for this column, please contact us at publisher@campus-firewatch.com.

November 1, 2005
Apartment Fire
Binghamton University
Binghamton, New York

A fire in an off-campus apartment fire housing 26 students was the site of a fire on the second floor of the two-story building. According to media reports, a number of fraternity members lived in the building after their fraternity chapter had lost its recognition by the university.

November 10, 2005
Residence Hall Fire
Benedict College
Columbia, South Carolina

A fire on the fourth floor of a residence hall was believed to have been started by a worn extension cord. The sprinkler system was activated and controlled the fire.

November 10, 2005
Residence Hall Fire
Hartwick College
Oneonta, New York

A fire that is believed to be arson forced the evacuation of 150 students at 4:14 am. The building's fire alarm system was automatically activated and a security guard arrived on the scene and extinguished the fire with a portable fire extinguisher. Fire fighters reported heavy smoke conditions on the fourth floor. Several students were still in the building and had to be escorted out.

November 13, 2005
Student Center Fire
Bethune-Cookman College
Daytona Beach, Florida

A fire in a men's restroom cause \$6,000 in damage. A student was subsequently arrested and expelled after being seen on surveillance photographs exiting the building. He was confronted by a security officer as he left the student center and he fled into a residence hall other than the one where he lived.

November 15, 2005
Off-campus high-rise apartment
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, North Carolina

Students were evacuated from a nine-story off-campus high-rise apartment building when smoke was seen on the third and fourth floors of the building. Fire fighters and building management personnel were unable to identify the source of the smoke and residents were allowed back in the building after 45 minutes.

November 15, 2005
Arson Fires
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

A series of four arson fires were set in four different buildings on Monday and Tuesday, November 14 and 15. In three of the fires, flammable liquids were ignited and a stack of papers was lit in the fourth fire. In one of the fires, a flammable liquid was poured in an elevator and ignited. On November 16, a former female student was apprehended and charged with setting the fires.

November 22, 2005
Laboratory Fire
Stanford University
Stanford, California

A researcher was seriously injured in a laboratory explosion. He was transported to the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in critical condition following the explosion in a chemical engineering laboratory.

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November 27, 2005
Student Services Building Fire
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan

A fire shortly before 2:00 am broke out on the second floor of a four-story administration building. According to published reports, the building had been broken into prior to the fire, which is believed to be arson. The building's automatic fire alarm system was activated by the fire.

November 29, 2005
Library Fire
Northeastern Illinois University
Chicago, Illinois

A fire in a mechanical room damaged books in the library and spread smoke through a connecting tunnel into an adjacent science building.

December 1, 2005
Off-campus apartment fire
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon

A student was critically injured in an off-campus fire and transported in critical condition by helicopter to Legacy Emmanuel Hospital in Portland. According to published reports, the fire department reported that the fire was started by the careless disposal of smoking materials in a couch outside of the apartment. The fire then spread to the inside of the building. Six other students also fled the fire which broke out at approximately 4:00 am.

December 1, 2005
Off-campus house fire
Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

A fire that started in a couch located outside of the house broke out at approximately 8:40 am. Two students that live in the house were awakened by someone yelling that their house was on fire. It was reported that the porch was on fire when the fire department arrived and that damage was limited to the porch area.

December 4, 2005
Off-campus apartment fire
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Twenty-nine students were displaced by two fires in an off-campus apartment building. The first fire, at approximately 3:00 am, was caused by candles igniting combustibles in a second floor apartment. The second fire broke out at 7:40 am and was caused when smoldering debris that had been removed by the fire department outside of the building ignited. The fire caused extensive damage to three apartments and smoke damage to the other 12 units in the building, resulting in approximately \$225,000 in damage.



Campus Firewatch Website

The value of this newsletter doesn't stop with just this copy. Visit its companion website at www.campus-firewatch.com, where you will find a wealth of information relating to campus fire safety.

If you have something that you would like to contribute, please send it to us at publisher@campus-firewatch.com

See you there!

Training Reflections

By Mike Halligan

As I left Tempe earlier this month I had a chance to reflect on the information that was presented at Campus Fire Forum 7. I was also in the final stages of reviewing a campus fire prevention program for one of our counterparts here in the west. A common theme between the Forum and the program review was a need to focus on education and training of our campus populations. Students, faculty and staff all need fire prevention, preparedness, response and recovery education. What seems to vary from campus to campus is the amount of effort given to providing great training. Some campus fire prevention programs are fortunate to have full time training and education staff; others share this task with other departments and still others try to fit it in with the many other responsibilities we have.

Regardless of how many resources you have at your disposal your training should be effective. Many of the people I talked with in Tempe said they pose “how do you” type questions to various list serves they belong to, others rely on venues such as the Forum. People came to the conference with a list of questions they asked in sessions and on the patio in the evening. These are all great places to start, but to be really effective the initial data collection phase of what others are doing needs to be in sync with the problem being mitigated.

Identify Problem

The risk assessments, incident reports, building inspections and

complaints received in your office should help you to identify the problem. This data analysis should, in turn, help identify possible strategies to be used to target a corrective action. You should be able to define who needs the training and how the training should be delivered. Is it web-based training? Do you deliver it during a staff meeting? Can you train a trainer?

Develop Training

Once you truly understand what you need to train for and how you will deliver the training you can solicit ideas from listservs and networking. I believe this is what most of the conversations were about in Tempe. After attending a program small discussions took place about how these issues were addressed on a local level. Many times I overheard comments such as, “we have 15 minutes to talk about fire safety in the lab” or “we spend 4 hours with Resident Advisors”. What these comments tell me is that you have defined the “who” and “how” of training and now you are filling in the details of training content.

Evaluate Training

How many of you, after delivering training, evaluate the effectiveness of the training? Ask yourselves, “Was the target group reached by the training strategy,” or “Did the training change the behavior that we identified as the problem.” Can you see a measurable decline in the problem identified? Also, ask the audience, what they thought of the

training. Was it too long, too technical, not technical enough? Did it answer the questions they had?

Training is a constant activity. You are always looking for training opportunities to solve the behavior based fire safety issues you face on your campus. Using this brief outline on training should help you to set in motion a training development and evaluation plan for your campus. There are many other detailed training plans out there. Search the web or ask at Forum 8 next year.

For more information on how to train or what fire and life safety topics to train on consult with your local fire codes, NFPA standards, and OSHA documents.

Mike Halligan is the fire marshal at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, and is a member of the Center for Campus Fire Safety's Board of Advisors. He can be reached at mhalligan@campusfire.org.

Letter to Congress

Copies of this letter were sent to the 535 Members of Congress.

November 2, 2005

We would like to ask for your support of, the "Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act of 2005." This landmark legislation will provide critical information to prospective students and their parents regarding the level of fire safety at colleges and universities across the nation.

According to information compiled by the Center for Campus Fire Safety, 81 people have been killed in student housing fires since January 2000 with over 78% of them in off-campus housing such as rented houses and apartments. Some of the common threads that we see in a number of these fires include:

- Lack of automatic fire sprinklers
- Missing or disabled smoke alarms
- Careless disposal of smoking materials
- Alcohol consumption

Unquestionably, the dormitory fire at Seton Hall in New Jersey in 2000 that claimed the lives of three students created a dramatic shift in the attention placed on campus fire safety. In 2004-2005, another three students were killed in a fraternity fire at the University of Mississippi. More fatal fires occurred in Georgia, Washington DC, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Just recently, two more students were killed in Raleigh, North Carolina and a number of "close calls" have happened at campuses in other states across the nation.

To address this problem, a three-pronged approach is needed that includes Prevention, Detection and Suppression, which we refer to as "The Circle of Life." Each of these components is equally important. While a number of schools have exemplary programs, others are lacking in one, two or all three areas.

When parents and students look at a school, they can learn about a school's academic potential, quality of life, athletics and a number of other factors. Yet parents lack information about how schools are addressing the problem of fire safety through these three components. Fire safety is regrettably something that often is not even considered.

Unless they know to ask, information about how a school protects its students is not easily available. Through the Clery Act, schools are required to publish crime statistics for the school and associated areas, such as fraternities and sororities. The legislation sponsored by Senators Corzine and Lautenberg will help to expand this reporting so that parents will have access to invaluable life-safety information.

Much of the information being requested through this legislation already exists. Schools know how many fires they have each year, how many false alarms occur, how much fire prevention training they provide, etc. This legislation will simply require that they now take this existing information and provide it to the US Department of Education so that it will be universally accessible.

It is also hoped that by making this information available, schools will take a more critical look at how they address all aspects of fire safety. For example, false alarms are thought to be a problem at many schools that cannot be fixed. This is absolutely not the case. Through engineering practices these problems can be corrected, but only if a school chooses to identify the causes of the alarms and take the appropriate corrective action.

Furthermore, all of the fatalities in Greek housing over the past 20 years, with one exception, have occurred in fraternities, and it is important that schools also take responsibility for the students living in these occupancies. Even though the buildings may be located off-campus, the school can still exercise control over their actions. This was recently demonstrated when the University of Massachusetts at Amherst shut down two fraternities and placed them on three year probation due to health and safety violations. By having the schools report information regarding the level of fire safety in these occupancies, problems can be identified that can then be corrected.

The information that students receive about fire safety while they are living in the residence halls and during their time at school will influence their actions throughout their lives. If they can learn proper fire-safety behaviors while in school, they will then carry these messages with them as they become the decision-makers of tomorrow. We can influence what they learn, and by doing so we have the opportunity to make a more fire-safe generation of tomorrow.

Continued on next page

Letter to Congress Continued from previous page

We would like to ask for your support by co-sponsoring this bill. By doing so, you will change the face of fire safety today and for the future.

Thank you for your support.

Ed Comeau
Director
Center for Campus Fire Safety

Bill Webb
Executive Director
Congressional Fire Services Institute

Chief William D. Killen
President
International Association of Fire Chiefs

Jim Tidwell
Vice President
International Code Council

Scott Adams
President
International Fire Marshals Association

James Burns
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National Association of State Fire Marshals

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