

FIRE/EMS Coalition

Subcommittee: WI Residential Fire Sprinkler Coalition

Meeting Minutes for Sept. 16, 2009

9:00a.m. at the City of Brookfield Fire Station, Calhoun Road

Attendance:

Lt. Tom Clark, Pleasant Prairie Fire Dept. and WSFIA

Dan Gengler, National Fire Sprinkler Association

Mahlon Mitchell, Madison Fire Dept. and PFFW

Roger Bauer, WI Fire Protection

Chief Charlie Myers, Brookfield Fire Dept.

Ron Omernick, Wausau Fire Dept. and WSFIA

Jim Backlund, SimplexGrinnell

Matt Mertens, North Shore Fire Dept. and WSFIA

Greg Havel, WI Society of Fire Service Instructors

Kathy Meulemans, Peg Paul & Assoc.

PROCEEDINGS:

Meeting called to order at 9:10a.m. by Chairman, Tom Clark.

- I. **Welcome:** T. Clark welcomed everyone
- II. **Members:** Attendees introduced themselves. T. Clark thanked Chief Myers for usage of the conference room.
- III. **Review Minutes:** T. Clark asked for all to review the August 5, 2009 minutes. T. Clark reviewed the mins reiterating the approved vision and mission statements.
T. Clark made a motion to approve the minutes. R. Omernick approved, D. Gengler second. All approved the Aug. minutes.
- IV. **Action of Coalition:**
 - T. Clark reviewed structure of the committee indicating that a lot of what the committee intends to do revolves around education. D. Gengler mentioned MN and their coalition and how they are doing. MN has a lot in place allowing the WI Coalition to tap into in order to not have to recreate (Wisconsinize it).
 - T. Clark mentioned that the letter to Sen. Leinenkugel was sent to him asking for Department of Commerce (DOC) participation with the Coalition. No response so far. There are changes taking place that may make it a challenge to get someone from the DOC on the Coalition.
 - A revised letter was sent to the Fire/EMS Coalition mentioning that the sub committee's recommendation to have the coalition pursue the WI DOC the 2009 International Residential Code (IRC), encourage repeal of the state statute restraining local municipalities from adopting 13 D

ordinances and/or expanding NFPA 1, the State Fire Code, to include one- and two-family homes.

- **Meeting expenses:** NFPA 13D books, Guy Santelli will be getting the 2010 edition from NFPA. Will be out in Oct. No other expenses to Coalition at this time.
- D. Gengler informed the Coalition about the upcoming IRC hearings, mentioning the IRC Committee is made up of 11 members, four are homebuilders and at least two others are homebuilder friendly. There is an anti-sprinkler movement by the homebuilders. The hearings will determine whether to keep or get rid of the residential fire sprinkler requirement in the 2009 edition. There is a lot of support by national fire organizations, but it will matter who gets to Baltimore to vote at the hearings. D. Gengler explained these hearings are a bit different from last fall, as you do not need to be a government employee to join the ICC and vote at the hearings. Coalition members should visit the ICC Web site at ICCsafe.org for membership info. D. Gengler mentioned there is a heavy movement from builders to get people there to oppose the inclusion of fire sprinklers. The vote is expected to take place on Oct 28th or Oct 29th. D. Gengler mentioned the importance of getting statewide support from fire service organizations by getting to the hearings to vote.

D. Gengler emphasized you need to be a member of the ICC by Oct. 14th to qualify to vote. Individuals interested in the purpose and objective of the council can become a member under the Building Safety Professional category for \$100.

D. Gengler mentioned that there are approx. four states looking to adopt the 2009 Edition of the IRC in the next few months. No state has adopted yet, but a number of local communities have. This is the 4th edition.

- Discussion about lightweight construction pursued and the importance of getting fire sprinklers because of it. A number of firefighters die from lightweight construction, the need is to protect them.

C. Myers brought up an example as to why residential fire sprinklers are important for fire departments. In particular departments are faced with a lot of financial issues. Fire sprinklers will be out there to help firefighters and residents.

Discussion about drywall Vs fire sprinklers was discussed. Drywall failure has been shown in studies because of what keeps it up on ceilings.

Buildings are burning faster and fire departments have fewer resources.

Dan talked about the “Green” aspects of fire sprinklers such as when a fire sprinkler activates putting out or extinguishing a fire, there is less soot into the atmosphere, less water is used to put out the fire (sprinkler Vs fire hoses), less toxic run off into the main water drainage system and less contents are burned therefore less in the landfill.

- T. Clark received the agenda for the National Residential Fire Sprinkler Summit Group Meeting and will send it to the committee members. Perhaps some of what that group is working on may apply to the WI Residential Fire Sprinkler Coalition as well.
- It was mentioned the committee should have a strategic plan with obtainable goals.

V. **Training and Education:**

- Discussion of who the Coalition needs to target for education. It was mentioned the need to get insurance industry involved. T. Clark proposed ideas to increase coalition participation needing 17 or more to participate. Discussion pursued regarding getting a core group together that then train the trainer (presenter) providing materials, etc. Presenters educate in their areas throughout the state.
- PowerPoint presentations need to be developed. Much already done from what MN has developed. D. Gengler mentioned having “cliff notes” in conjunction with PowerPoint presentations. Can use “Go-to-Meeting” to coordinate with educators/trainers.
- Various community groups/civic organizations can be approached for speakers. Need to speak to homeowners, people building new homes.
- Drywall Vs fire sprinkler argument. Need to have all of our facts so people have accurate information. Be sure to address all of the possible objectives.
- Dan will have programs put on DVDs to give to Coalition members by next week.

- **Committee need:/Committee assignments:**
Members prioritized groups to educate and assigned chairpersons as follows:
Matt Mertens - Gen Pub Ed
Roger Baer and Jim Backlund– AHJ
Ron Omernick – Fire Service
Dan Gengler and Greg Havel– Builders/Legislators
- It was mentioned the Coalition might want to have a front person for the media. May want to develop press kits/pieces.
- Make asserted effort to add to fire service organization conferences. Get it on the radar for future classes.

Next Meeting Date and Time: Tues. Oct. 13 @ 11a.m. at the Brookfield Fire Department located at 2100 N. Calhoun Road Brookfield, WI 53005.

T. Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Jim Backlund.
Meeting adjourned at 11:12a.m.