

Fire Sprinkler Requirements in Residential Homes

The International Code Congress (ICC) adopted provisions R313 that requires an approved automatic fire sprinkler system shall be installed in new one-and two-family dwellings and townhouses in accordance with National Fire Protection Association **Standard 13D**.

Early in 2010 the Florida Building Commission will begin work on the next addition of the Florida Building Code based on the ICC model code that contains the above provision.

The Florida Legislature has adopted a specific policy (F.S. 633.025 (9) and (10)) that prohibits Fire sprinkler requirements in one and two family dwellings unless specific fees and allowances are offered by government to offset the increased costs of fire sprinklers requirements.

The costs associated with ICC sprinkler requirements that would be mandated by the next Florida Building Code are not justified by the fact sheet attached. Specifically:

- Performance of residential sprinklers is questionable;
- One and two-family fire incidents, injuries and death continue to decline without the installation of fire sprinklers or the need to mandate sprinklers in new homes;
- Smoke alarms work, consumers feel safe without sprinklers & demand is not there;
- New homes are safer than ever before;
- Fire sprinklers are costly and have not been proven to be a cost effective solution and costs are far greater than what advocates state;
- Annual sprinkler installation costs (not including maintenance costs) new homebuyers will be forced to pay will greatly exceed property loss nationwide or in any jurisdiction where they are required; and

- Significant technical problems still exist.

According to the Fire Sprinkler Initiative (advocates for the sprinklers) 20 states have filed and are considering anti-sprinklers legislation. While a number of states have passed a prohibition no states have adopted the requirement.

Therefore, the FHBA encourages the Florida Legislature to prohibit the adoption of the new fire sprinkler requirement as contained in the ICC model code by the Florida Building Commission and by local government amendment to the Florida Building Code.

Suggested language: 553.73 (14). The provisions of R313.1, R313.2, and R313.2.1 relating to mandated fire sprinklers shall not be included in the Florida Building Code as adopted by the Florida Building Commission and available as a local amendment to the Florida Building Code.

This prohibition would still allow the current statutory provisions as stated in section 633.025 (9) and (10), F.S. to allow fire sprinklers as provided by state policy.