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## **Fire Sprinklers An Important Message During National Fire Prevention Week**

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin – October 6, 2008** – In 2007, there were an estimated 399,000 reported home structure fires resulting in 2,865 deaths, 13,600 injuries and \$7.4 billion in direct damage in the U.S, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). This week fire departments around the country, including Wisconsin, will promote National Fire Prevention Week in an effort to decrease these statistics.

According to Dan Gengler, Regional Manager for the National Fire Sprinkler Association, Fire Prevention Week is a opportune time to inform people about the important role fire sprinklers play in saving lives and protecting property in schools, hotels, restaurants, campus housing, places of entertainment and high-rise buildings, to name a few. Gengler said this is also a good time for people to learn that fire sprinklers can protect single-family homes.

Gengler said home fire sprinklers are a growing trend with almost 400 communities across the country requiring them in all new construction homes. There are no Wisconsin communities with that requirement. Last month, voting members of the International Code Council (ICC) overwhelmingly voted to include residential fire sprinklers in new one-and-two family homes and townhouses in their 2009 Residential Code (IRC). The requirement for one- and two-family homes is effective January 1, 2011.

During National Fire Prevention Week, the National Fire Sprinkler Association, Wisconsin Chapter is reminding people of the important role fire sprinklers play in all buildings with billboard and radio ads. Gengler said many fire departments are including fire sprinkler information in their Fire Prevention Week messages.

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“Fire Prevention Week reminds people that they should take extra caution in their homes when cooking, not to leave candles unattended, be careful to not overload electrical outlets and check for worn electrical cords and not to be careless with smoking materials to name a few common fire hazards,” said Gengler. “When fire does happen in the home, it is important to have working smoke alarms, have an escape plan, and if building a new home, consider installing a residential fire sprinkler system.”

“It is important for people to know, that home fire sprinklers are individually activated by heat from the fire. Only the fire sprinkler closest to the fire will go off, controlling and often extinguishing a fire while the fire department arrives. Fire sprinklers allow family members to get out of their homes safely”, said Gengler. “People just don’t think about them. When fire sprinklers do their job, it’s usually not a news story because there is little damage with minor clean up and repairs. Often people can move back into the building in a day or two. Fire sprinklers save lives and property. Without fire sprinklers, it is a different story,” Gengler added.

For more information, visit the NFSA WI Web site at [www.nfsawi.org](http://www.nfsawi.org).

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The National Fire Sprinkler Association Wisconsin Chapter is a non-profit trade organization composed of fire sprinkler contractors, manufacturers and suppliers. NFSA Wisconsin Chapter is dedicated to educating and informing fire officials, building officials, architects, engineers, the public and elected and appointed officials of the vital role that fire sprinklers play in fire protection.