



# Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association



*Position Statement: Support for HB 6777; Issued February 19, 2015*

*AN ACT REQUIRING THE INSTALLATION OF AUTOMATIC FIRE EXTINGUISHING SYSTEMS IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS*

1. **Automatic Sprinklers save lives.** According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), in homes sprinklers, the fire death rate per 1,000 reported home structure fires was lower by 82%.
2. **Sprinklers do more than save lives; they also protect property from destruction by fire.** In many situations, that means a family that survived a fire will also have a place to live and enough resources to continue living their lives as they did before.
3. **“Saving lives” means more than just preventing deaths.** Just as there is no other fire safety technology or program that produces as great a reduction in risk of death as sprinklers, nor is there other fire safety technology that produces as great a reduction in property loss as sprinklers.
4. **All model safety codes now require the use of home fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes.** In terms of sprinklers, the consensus position of fire and life safety experts is clear: sprinklers save lives and should be installed in all new one- and two-family dwellings.
5. **Newer homes are more likely to include a threat to firefighters in the form of lightweight construction.** Lightweight construction has been estimated to be used in a half to two-thirds of all new wood one- and two-family homes. **Sprinklers can offset the increased dangers posed by lightweight construction and create a safer fire environment for firefighters to operate.** The Performance of Unprotected Floor Assemblies in Basement Fire Scenarios assert that these structures are prone to catastrophic collapse as early as six minutes from the onset of fire.
6. Home sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce the heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, giving families valuable time to get to safety. According to NFPA, **85% of the time, fires are contained by the operation of just one sprinkler.**
7. **Smoke alarms alert occupants to the presence of danger, but do nothing to extinguish the fire.** Home fire sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, giving residents valuable time to get out safely.
8. Smoke alarms reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by 50%. **If you have a fire in your home, the risk of dying decreases by about 82% when sprinklers are present according to NFPA.**
9. **Home fire sprinklers are affordable.** In 2013, the Fire Protection Research Foundation issued the Home Fire Sprinkler Cost Assessment report, which revealed that the cost of installing home fire sprinklers averages \$1.35 per square foot for new construction with access to a public water system. Many people pay similar amounts to install counter tops in their kitchen to put a front door on their home.
10. **Building homes without residential fire sprinkler systems denies Connecticut residents the affordable life and property protection that they deserve, and unnecessarily endangers firefighters.**

## For additional information:

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