



Society of Fire Protection Engineers

New Jersey Chapter

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FUSIBLE LINK

JANUARY 2010

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President's Message...

Another SFPE New Year is upon us. To review, in 2009 the Chapter conducted a successful Technical Seminar in April at the Holiday Inn Newark Airport, held a great golf scholarship outing at West Point and organized a fantastic bus ride to South Jersey touring both the Viking Yacht Plant and the Renault Winery. In addition we saw the induction of two new SFPE Fellows, Chapter Past Presidents Joe Janiga and Sarge Slicer at the SFPE National conference in Phoenix. On a sad note, we also lost long time Chapter member and Past President Nick Chergotis. Overall it was an eventful, productive and great year for the Chapter. In 2010 we have more in store for the membership so watch for the Fusible Link and special announcements for coming events. As always we appreciate and seek your feedback. If you have any ideas to make the Chapter better or subjects you would like to see presented at future meetings or seminars feel free to contact by e-mail one of the officers or board members to the left. Happy Holidays to all and from all of us at SFPE NJ Chapter we wish you all a very happy and productive New Year.

Rich Reitberger
NJSFPE Chapter President

Minutes of December 7, 2009 SFPE Meeting

President Reitberger opened the meeting at 6:00 with a salute to the flag (21 people were in attendance). The secretaries report was read and accepted. The treasurer's report will be read next month. Paul McGrath of City Fire Equipment Co. mentioned their upcoming Fire Facts Seminar #17 to be held at Seton Hall University on January 15. The topic is "NFPA 25: Water-Based Fire Protection Systems Inspection, Testing and Maintenance". Paul circulated an announcement and told us all we are welcome to attend as seating allows.

Pete Carey of Potter Electric/ Potter Corrosion Solutions gave us an informative and useful update on MIC, Microbially Influenced Corrosion. In historical context; in the 90s thin wall pipes were being more commonly used and public water utilities began making changes in their water treatment the presence of MIC seemed to

occur in about that time frame. Pete referenced a prestigious organization's comments that MIC may account for 40% of general corrosion. (ed note: that reference was to a publication by my organization, the reference was several years old and our current thoughts are that MIC really only accounts for several percent of sprinkler pipe corrosion our clients experience; still not unsubstantial).

To avoid or minimize MIC Pete mentioned that material selection is very important; MIC 'likes' zinc and galvanized pipe and it likes to be warm and moist. Rolled groove pipe is also vulnerable to MIC. And while careful data is not available yet it seems that thicker walled pipe is more resilient to MIC, so use schedule 40 or heavier. A lot of MIC presents itself at the air water interface in the piping; the point being keep unnecessary moisture out of dry systems and minimize

air pockets in wet systems. Pete also mentioned about antibacterial coatings available on metal pipe but warned that they should not be used where CPVC pipe is involved or nearby in the system. On dry pipe sprinkler systems keep moisture out by using desiccant air dryers. Use tank mounted compressors to keep temperatures in the piping low. (MIC likes to be warm. It does not thrive where cold and dry).

To test for MIC in piping there are several field chemistry kits (used on site) not unlike pool PH testers available and lab services are available as well. There are biocides available and Potter offers 'Potter Pipe Shield' a polymeric film with a positive electrical charge that coats the inside pipe surface. Usually a 1% concentration is applied. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 following a Q&A period.

New Report Finds Sprinkler Ordinances Don't Hurt Housing Construction or Prices

The results of a new study conducted for the [National Fire Protection Association](#) (NFPA) concluded that the presence of sprinkler ordinances has no negative impact on the number of homes being built.

Conducted by Newport Partners, [Comparative Analysis of Housing Cost and Supply Impacts of Sprinkler Ordinances at the Community Level](#) (PDF, 416 KB) compared residential construction in four counties; Montgomery County, Maryland, was paired with Fairfax County, Virginia, and Prince George's County was paired with Anne Arundel County, both located in Maryland. Montgomery County and Prince George's County have sprinkler requirements; Fairfax County and Anne Arundel County do not. The selected areas, all developmentally mature, cover a wide geographic area and contain a variety of housing stock and income levels, making them prime for comparing municipalities with and without sprinkler ordinances in place.

"This study clearly demonstrates that home fire sprinkler requirements do not

impede housing development starts," says Jim Shannon, NFPA president. "This report is another point to make the case for enacting life-saving sprinkler requirements in local communities. "

Sprinkler ordinances were enacted in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in several stages, beginning in the late 1980s, but never in Fairfax County. Anne Arundel County adopted a requirement for single-family detached residences this year; this study looked at Anne Arundel County housing starts prior to the ordinance. No reduction in the number of single-family homes built in either Montgomery County or Prince George's County accompanied the enactment of ordinances, compared to the other two counties in the study that do not have sprinkler ordinances. Rather, both Montgomery and Prince George' counties saw larger relative increases in construction in the year after the ordinances went into effect, compared to the other two counties.

Data for the analysis included annual sin-

gle-family building permits, surveys of housing and households, local documents and news reports released before and after adoption of residential sprinkler requirements, as well as reviews of other housing regulations. Interviews with key builders, trade association staff and local government officials were also conducted.

In interviews, builders and staff of the Maryland-National Capital Building Industry Association (MNCBIA) all indicated that the sprinkler requirements did not significantly affect the volume, character or price of the construction of new homes.



An old ADT Advertisement



U.S. CHEMICAL SAFETY BOARD

An independent federal agency investigating chemical accidents to protect workers, the public, and the environment.

CITGO Corpus Christi Refinery Fire – July 19, 2009

Houston, Texas, December 9, 2009 – The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) today issued urgent safety recommendations calling on CITGO to immediately improve its emergency water mitigation system in the event of another release of potentially deadly hydrogen fluoride (HF) vapor, as occurred following an explosion and fire July 19, 2009, at CITGO's Corpus Christi refinery. The Board also called on CITGO to perform third-party audits to ensure the safety of its hydrogen fluoride units at its Corpus Christi, Texas, and Lemont, Illinois, refineries.

The CSB issues [urgent recommendations](#) before completion of final investigation reports in cases where CSB Board Members determine an imminent hazard may be present and has the potential to cause serious harm unless rectified in a short timeframe.

On the day of the accident last July, hydrocarbons and hydrogen fluoride were suddenly released from the refinery's HF alkylation unit. The hydrocarbons ignited, leading to a fire that burned for several days. The fire critically injured one employee and another was treated for possible hydrogen fluoride exposure.

CSB investigators determined that a blockage of liquid caused by the sudden failure of a control valve led to violent shaking within the process recycle piping. The shaking broke threaded pipe connections resulting in the release of hydrocarbons. The cloud of hydrocarbons reached an adjacent unit and ignited. The ensuing fire caused multiple additional fires and the release of approximately 42,000 pounds of hydrogen fluoride from equipment and piping within the unit.

The refinery used a water spray system to absorb the released HF, but the CSB cited scientific literature to conclude that at least 4,000 pounds of HF likely escaped from the unit into the atmosphere and left the facility. Investigators determined that during the first day of response efforts CITGO nearly exhausted the stored water supply for the water mitigation system. Approximately eleven-and-a-half hours after the initial release, before the water supply was completely exhausted, the refinery began pumping salt water from the ship channel into the refinery fire water supply. Multiple failures occurred during the salt water transfer including ruptures of the barge-to-shore transfer hoses and water pump engine failures.

CSB Chairman John Bresland said, "It is imperative that refineries have the proper emergency response resources available to control a release of hazardous materials and protect against impact on the surrounding community."

The CSB's urgent recommendations call on CITGO to develop and initiate plans within thirty days to ensure an adequate water supply to the refinery's HF mitigation system. The company should also report planned or completed actions to the Refinery Terminal Fire Company and the Local Emergency Planning Committee every thirty days until all planned activities are fully implemented.

Investigations Supervisor Robert Hall, P.E., said, "Our investigation closely examined emergency response actions related to this accident. Investigators found that the CITGO water mitigation system serves as the last line of defense to protect the community from an HF release. The CSB's urgent recommendation aims to improve the reliability of CITGO's Corpus Christi, Texas, HF water mitigation system."

A second urgent recommendation called on CITGO to commission independent, third-party audits of the safety of its two HF alkylation units at refineries in Corpus Christi and Lemont, Illinois. The audits should compare safety practices at the alkylation units to those recommended by the American Petroleum Institute (API). Investigators said that CITGO had never conducted such an audit of the units, despite an existing industry recommendation for audits every three years.

The CSB also released video of the initial pipe failure, release, ignition, and fire as captured by two refinery surveillance cameras. Chairman Bresland noted, "The camera footage shows the release and spread of the flammable vapor cloud and the moment when the flammable vapor was ignited. It shows just how severe the release and fire were during this incident."

Chairman Bresland said, however, that the company had raised [objections](#) to the CSB's release of the video, saying that doing so would "raise substantial issues of national security" and would "only sensationalize this unfortunate accident." The CSB subsequently received [affirmation from the Department of Homeland Security](#) that the video did not fall under certain classifications requiring protection from disclosure.

Chairman Bresland said, "We found this claim disturbing and believe that it is contrary to the intent of a recent law passed by Congress, following similar secrecy claims by Bayer CropScience in Institute, West Virginia. This law, the American Communities' Right to Public Information Act, states that national security classifications may not be used to conceal corporate errors, prevent embarrassment, or improperly delay the release of information to the public. An important part of this CSB investigation is to ensure all relevant information and visual materials regarding this accident are made available to the residents of Corpus Christi."

The CSB is an independent federal agency charged with investigating industrial chemical accidents. The agency's board members are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. CSB investigations look into all aspects of chemical accidents, including physical causes such as equipment failure as well as inadequacies in regulations, industry standards, and safety management systems.

The Board does not issue citations or fines but does make safety recommendations to plants, industry organizations, labor groups, and regulatory agencies such as OSHA and EPA. Please visit our website, www.csb.gov.

For more information, please contact Hillary Cohen (202) 446-8094 cell or Dr. Daniel Horowitz, (202) 441-6074 cell.

University Housing Fires

These short topical reports are designed to explore facets of the U.S. fire problem as depicted through data collected in USFA's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Each topical report briefly addresses the nature of the specific fire or fire-related topic, highlights important findings from the data, and may suggest other resources to consider for further information. Also included are recent examples of fire incidents that demonstrate some of the issues addressed in the report or that put the report topic in context.

Findings

- An estimated 3,800 university housing fires occur each year in the United States
- Eighty-three percent of university housing fires are cooking fires. Small, confined cooking fires account for 77 percent of university housing fires. Cooking fires account for 6 percent of all non-confined university housing fires.
- University housing fires peak in September and October; this peak accounts for 23 percent of fires.
- The three main causes of non-confined university housing fires are intentionally set fires (17 percent), open flames (15 percent), and other unintentional causes (12 percent).
- One-fifth of non-confined university housing fires in bedrooms are started by candles.

From 2005 to 2007, an estimated 3,800 university housing fires occurred annually in the United States. These fires accounted for less than one percent of residential building fires responded to by fire departments across the Nation.^{1,2,3} These fires resulted in an average of approximately 5 deaths, 50 injuries, and \$26 million in property loss each year. This topical report addresses the characteristics of university housing fires reported to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) between 2005 and 2007. In NFIRS, university housing fires are considered to be fires in college and university residential buildings that include dormitories and fraternity and sorority houses.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports an increase in dormitory and university housing fires in recent years. Students bring more items from home to make their college stays more comfortable, including high-powered electronic equipment and appliances. However, the equipment can be dangerous when used improperly or left unsupervised, especially in dormitory rooms. The CPSC reported that fires are more common during the evening hours and weekends when most students are in the residence halls. Most of the fires are cooking-related (hot plates, microwaves, portable grills, etc.), but the majority of deaths occur in bedrooms. In August 2007, the CPSC, the United States Fire Administration (USFA), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and the University of Maryland's Fire Marshal urged students, families, and school administrators to be aware of the fire hazards and to take precautions.⁴

Types of Fires

Building fires consist of two major categories of incidents: fires that are confined to specific types of equipment or objects (confined fires) and those that are not (nonconfined fires). Confined building fires are small fire incidents that are limited in scope, confined to noncombustible containers, rarely result in serious injury or large content losses, and expected to have no significant accompanying property losses due to flame damage.⁵ Eighty-four percent of university housing fires are confined fires as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. University Housing Fires by Type of Incident (2005-2007)

Incident Type	Percent
Nonconfined fire	16.4
Confined fires	83.6
Cooking fire, confined to container	76.5
Chimney or flue fire, confined to chimney or flue	0.3
Incinerator overload or malfunction, fire confined	0.2
Fuel burner/boiler malfunction, fire confined	0.9
Commercial compactor fire, confined to rubbish	0.2
Trash or rubbish fire contained	5.4
Total	100.0

Source: NFIRS 5.0

Loss Measures

Table 2 presents losses, averaged over this 3-year period, for residential building fires and university housing fires reported to NFIRS.⁶

Table 2. Loss Measures for University Housing Fires (3-year average, 2005–2007)

Measure	Residential Building Fires	University Housing Fires	Confined University Housing Fires	Nonconfined University Housing Fires
Average Loss:				
Fatalities/1,000 Fires	5.4	0.7	0.0	4.4
Injuries/1,000 Fires	28.1	9.5	2.1	47.2
Dollar Loss/Fire	\$14,560	\$5,730	\$80	\$34,420

Source: NFIRS 5.0

Note: Average loss for fatalities and injuries is computed per 1,000 fires; average dollar loss is computed *per fire* and is rounded to the nearest \$10.

Table 3 presents the percentage distribution of property use for all university housing fires, confined university housing fires, and nonconfined university housing fires. Fires in dormitories and dormitory-type residences account for 94 percent of all university housing fires. These fires also account for 96 percent of confined university housing fires

and 88 percent of nonconfined university housing fires. While a substantially smaller portion of university fires in general, fires in sorority and fraternity houses play a larger role in the bigger fires, accounting for 13 percent of nonconfined fires compared to 4 percent of confined fires.

Table 3. Percentage Distribution of Property Use for University Housing Fires (3-year average, 2005–2007)

Property Use	All University Housing Fires	Confined University Housing Fires	Nonconfined University Housing Fires
Dormitory and Dormitory-type residence	94.3%	95.6%	87.5%
Sorority House, Fraternity House	5.7%	4.4%	12.5%

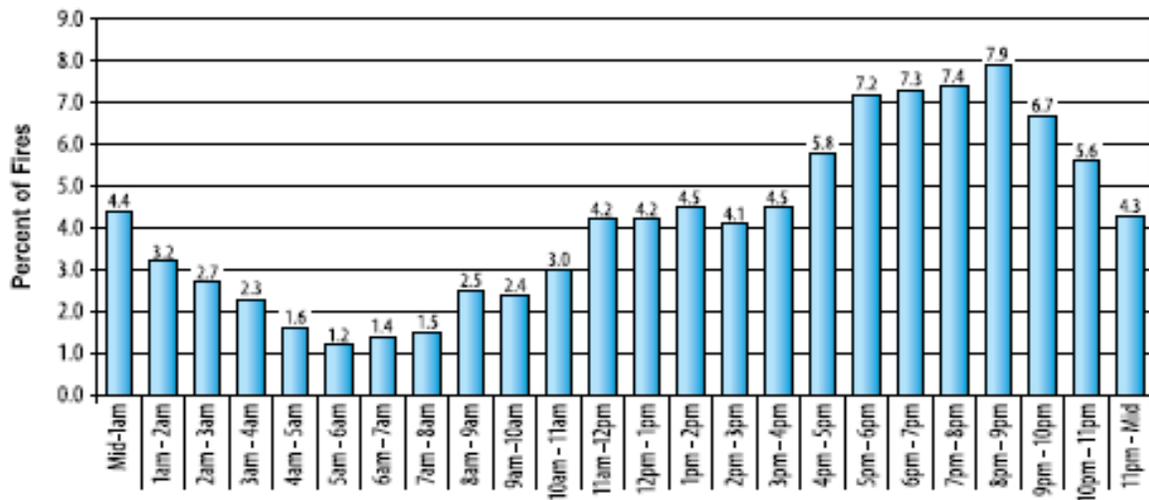
Source: NFIRS 5.0

When University Housing Fires Occur

As shown in Figure 1, university housing fires occur mainly in the early evening hours from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., peaking from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m., and then declining throughout the night and early morning reaching the lowest point during the morning hours (5 a.m. to 6 a.m.).⁷ The distribution of fires during the day is much like that of residential fires overall with the evening peak longer and later. Most likely, the timing corresponds to when students prepare snacks or cook their evening meals.

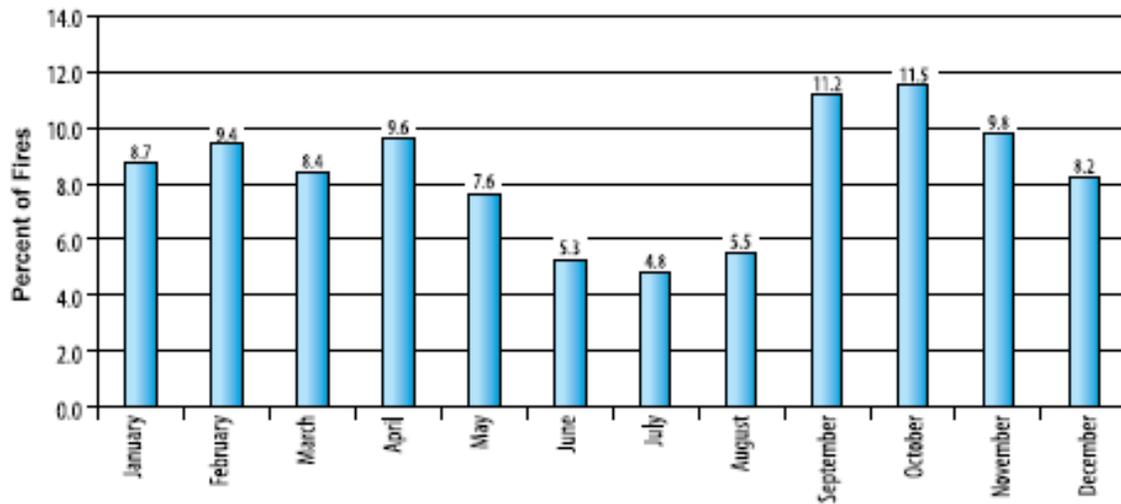
University housing fires peak in September and October as shown in Figure 2. This peak of fire activity corresponds to the beginning of the traditional academic year. September and October account for approximately 23 percent of all university housing fires. From November through April, fires fluctuate between 8 and 10 percent, accounting for 54 percent of all university housing fires. Fires begin to decline in May when the academic year winds down. Fire incidence is lowest during the months of June through August, corresponding to lower student attendance during summer sessions.

Figure 1. University Housing Fires by Time of Alarm (2005–2007)



Source: NFIRS 5.0

Figure 2. University Housing Fires by Month (2005–2007)



Source: NFIRS 5.0

Causes of University Housing Fires

Eighty-three percent of all university housing fires are cooking fires as shown in Table 4. The next four causes combined account for 9 percent of university housing fires: intentionally set fires (3 percent), open flame fires (2 percent), heating fires (2 percent), and other unintentional or careless

fires (2 percent). Candle fires, a subset of open-flame fires, account for 1 percent of all university housing fires. Candle fires have been of much concern in university housing. Only a small number of these fires are reported to NFIRS. This lack of reporting could be due to campus regulations banning candles combined with the lack of data from confined fires.

Table 4. Leading Causes of University Housing Fires (2005-2007)

Cause	Percent (Unknown Apportioned)
Cooking	83.1
Intentional	3.1
Open Flame	2.3
Heating	1.8
Other Unintentional, Careless	1.8

Source: NFIRS 5.0

Confined Fires

Confined fires are allowed abbreviated NFIRS reporting and many reporting details of the fire are not required and not reported. In the three major areas where data are available—time of day, month, and cause—confined fires dominate the overall university housing fire profile. Thirty-nine percent of confined fires occur between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m., peaking

between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. Confined fire in university housing fires peak in September and October, decline through May and are lowest during the months of June through August. Cooking is the cause of 96 percent of these confined fires.

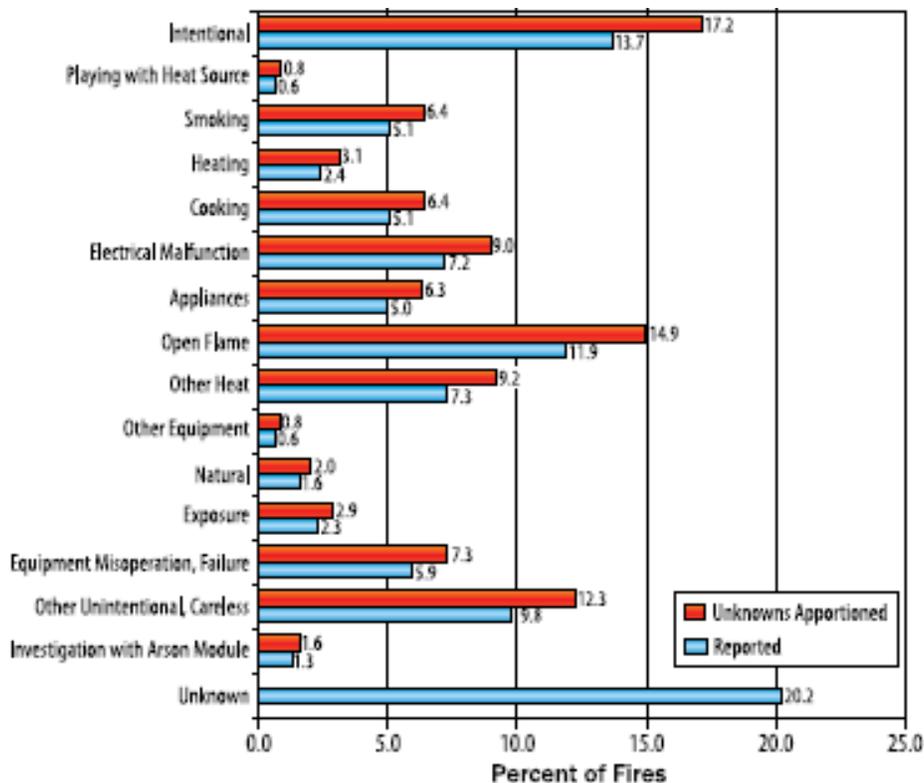
Nonconfined Fires

The next sections of this Topical Report address nonconfined university housing fires, where detailed fire data are available.

Causes of Nonconfined University Housing Fires

While cooking is the leading cause of university housing fires overall, it only represents 6 percent of all nonconfined university housing fires. Intentionally set fires (17 percent), fires caused by open flames (15 percent), and other unintentional causes (12 percent) are the leading causes of nonconfined university housing fires (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Cause of Nonconfined University Housing Fires (2005-2007)



Source: NFIRS 5.0

Where Nonconfined University Housing Fires Start (Area of Fire Origin)

Most nonconfined university housing fires begin in the bedroom (23 percent) or cooking areas and kitchens (20 percent).

Fires that start in bathrooms and locker rooms (7 percent), hallways (6 percent), common rooms or lounge areas (5 percent), and laundry areas (5 percent) account for an additional 23 percent (Table 5).

Table 5. Leading Areas of Fire Origin in Nonconfined University Housing Fires (2005-2007)

Area of Origin	Percent (Unknown Apportioned)
Bedrooms	22.7
Cooking area, kitchen	19.9
Bathroom, checkroom, lavatory, locker room	7.2
Hallway corridor	6.1
Common room, den, family room, living room, lounge	5.1
Laundry area	4.9

Source: NFIRS 5.0

For intentionally set nonconfined fires, 31 percent are set in hallways or corridors of the building. Fires set in bathrooms account for an additional 12 percent of intentionally set nonconfined fires. Eleven percent of intentionally set nonconfined fires start in bedrooms, 8 percent occur in lounges or common rooms, and 3 percent start in kitchens or cooking areas.

Fires involving open flame in bedrooms account for 42 percent of all nonconfined university housing open-flame fires. Nonconfined university housing open-flame fires start in lounges or common rooms (9 percent) and bathrooms (9 percent), accounting for an additional 18 percent.

Fires in kitchens and cooking areas account for the vast majority of other unintentional nonconfined fires (49 percent). Fires in bedrooms account for 26 percent of other unintentional nonconfined fires.

How Nonconfined University Housing Fires Start (Heat Source)

Figure 4 shows sources of heat in nonconfined university housing fires. Heat from powered equipment accounts for 49 percent of nonconfined university housing fires. Within this category, radiated or conducted heat from operating equipment accounts for 19 percent of all fires and heat from other powered equipment accounts for 16 percent of all nonconfined university housing fires. Heat from open flame or smoking materials accounts for 28 percent of nonconfined university housing fires. This category includes candles, cigarettes, lighters, and matches. The third largest category pertains to hot or smoldering objects (14 percent). This category includes hot embers or ashes, molten, hot material, and heat sparked from friction.

To be continued in the February Fusible Link

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NJ Chapter SFPE By Law Change

The Chapters Board has proposed a change/amendment (per Section 10.1) to our bylaws that requires a reading of the proposed change at two successive membership meetings with a vote at the second meeting. The first reading to be December 7 and the second reading with a vote on January 4. The By-Laws proposed change/amendment is as follows:

The last sentence of Section 3.4 states of our By Laws states, "Dues and fees are payable immediately upon election for a new Member or a new Chapter Supporter and for all Member/Supporters on or before August 1st of each fiscal year thereafter." **The proposed change/amendment is as follows, ".....all Member/Supporters on or before the first Chapter meeting of each fiscal year thereafter."** This essentially means that the dues are due prior to our first meeting for the season which is held in September.



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MEETING NOTICE

- Date:** January 4 , 2010
- Place:** Hanover Manor
16 Eagle Rock Avenue
East Hanover, NJ
- Price:** \$26.00
- Dinner:** 5:00-6:00 (Cash bar for mixed drinks)
Dinner at 6 PM
- Topic:** Fire Pump Update—Ken Isman, Vice President of Engineering for the National Fire Sprinkler Association

Please note for this meeting:

All officers, directors and committee chairman are requested to attend a meeting at 4:00 p.m. at the Hanover Manor.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN WITH YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO "SFPE NJ CHAPTER" TO:

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400 Interpace Parkway, Bldg C - 3rd Floor
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OR PAY AT THE DOOR

NAME: _____

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Meeting Dates/Programs 2009-2010

DATE	TOPIC
January 4	Fire Pump Update—Ken Isman, Vice President of Engineering for the National Fire Sprinkler Association
February 1	Earthquake - Construction and Mitigation Analysis—EQ CAT
March 1	HVLS (High Volume Low Speed) Fan Update—Peter Wise, XL GAPS
April 23	Annual Technical Seminar (possibly joint with AFAA)
May 3	Pop up Curbs—Flammable Liquids
June 14	FM Global Standards Update
June 21	Golf Outing—West Point



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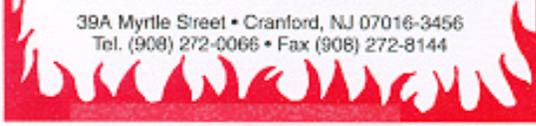
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HELPFUL LINKS

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AFAA National <http://www.affaa.org/>

AFFSA <http://www.firesprinkler.org/>

ANSI <http://web.ansi.org/>

ASHRAE <http://www.ashrae.org/>

Campus-Firewatch <http://www.campus-firewatch.com/>

Coffee Break Training <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/coffee-break/>

CPSC <http://www.cpsc.gov/>

CSAA <http://www.csaaul.org/>

Municipal Codes (E Codes) <http://www.generalcode.com/Webcode2.html>

FDNY <http://nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/home2.shtml>

FM Global <http://www.fmglobal.com/>

FSDANY <http://www.fsdany.org/regs.htm>

FSI <http://www.firesprinklerinitiative.org/>

FSSA <http://www.fssa.net/>

Fire Tech Productions—Nicet Training (FTP) <http://www.firetech.com/>

Home Fire Spklr Coalition <http://www.homefiresprinkler.org/>

HVAC Bld. Control Fire Safety <http://www.iklimnet.com/hotelfires/hotelfiresmain.html>

AFAA-NJ <http://www.affaanj.org/>

International Code Council - <http://www.iccsafe.org/>

International Code Council Residential Sprinkler Exam - http://www.iccsafe.org/news/nr/2009/0709_ResidentialSprinklerExam.pdf

The Joint Commission (JCAHO) - <http://www.jointcommission.org/www.JointCommission.org/>

Material safety data Sheets (MSDS-OSHA Site) - <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/hazardcommunications/index.html>

National of Fire Equipment Distributors (NAFED) - <http://www.nafed.org/index.cfm>