

Position Statement

The Home Builders Association has long been a strong advocate for increased home safety. The Association has supported numerous building codes that minimize the risk of residential fires and accidents in the home – hard-wired smoke alarms, arc-fault receptacles, firewall separation, etc. These new safety items have given consumers a strong return on their dollars invested. New homes today are by far the safest home ever constructed!

Residential fire sprinklers are not new. They have been around for many years. However, only a handful of home owners have chosen to install them in their homes. As in any aspect of life, one has to weight the risks versus the cost of added protection. Consumers have resoundingly voted against installing residential fire sprinklers – less than 1% of all new homes - because the cost greatly outweighs the benefits. For those consumers who want the maximum protection, fire sprinklers are available in the market. However, the choice should be left to an individual, not the government!

The Home Builders Association defends the right for any homeowner to install a fire sprinkler. Our industry would be happy to install a fire sprinkler system for any consumer that wants one in their new or existing homes. However, since the consumer pays for the system and has to deal with the consequences of installing a fire sprinkler system, the consumer should have a choice of installing or not installing fire sprinklers.

The General Assembly spoke very clearly on the residential fire sprinkler issue two years ago when they overwhelmingly voted to provide a local/state incentive package for voluntary installation of fire sprinklers. The General Assembly felt that consumer choice was the best public policy and we agree!

Legislative Committee 12/9/09

Board of Directors 12/15/09