

Codes Corner

ICC Appeals Board rejects NAHB's request

The ICC Appeals Board rejects NAHB's request to set aside a previous vote to mandate fire sprinkler systems in all one- and two-family homes. NAHB's appeal was presented at a hearing Dec. 11 and cited procedural problems including how the vote was cast, how advocates funded the vote turnout and whether all voting members were appropriately vetted for eligibility. The appeals board decided to recommend that the mandate should remain, as approved, in the 2009 Edition.

However, the panel recommended that the ICC should address at least two of the concerns that NAHB brought to the table in its appeal: the growing use of third-party funding to influence voting at code hearings and the procedures and policies dealing with the requirements for ICC Governmental Members and their voting represen-

tatives.

Matt Sigler, member of NAHB's Fire Sprinkler Response Task Force, said this appeal "has gotten the attention of the ICC and they will be examining the underlying issues that led to the NAHB appeal being filed. That's what is needed long-term and that's what was accomplished."

"We are pleased that the Appeals Board members recognized many of our concerns and voted to bring them to the Code Council's Board of Directors," NAHB Chairman Sandy Dunn said. "Home builders are dedicated to the safety of the communities in which we build. As a society, we cannot afford to deny needed housing for the sake of new requirements without proven benefits. For these two reasons, NAHB disagrees with fire sprinkler mandates in all one- and two-family homes and supports programs that encourage the installation and maintenance of smoke alarm systems in all homes. Our members will continue to advocate for cost-effective construction and life safety measures through the model code process that will provide safe, decent and affordable housing."

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