

# Mandatory fire sprinklers?

Once again this year, proponents of fire sprinklers are seeking to mandate these costly systems in the IRC for all one and two family homes and townhouses and have submitted five different proposals to do so. NAHB was successful in preventing a favorable committee action on all five of those proposals.

However, advocates for fire sprinkler mandates will not be discouraged by these hearing results and will be working hard to “get out the vote” to achieve the two-thirds majority needed to overturn the committee’s action at the final hearings. In particular, they will likely have the greatest opportunity to prevail on a proposal to mandate fire sprinklers in all new townhouses, which failed by an extremely close committee vote of 6-5 for disapproval.

To counter their efforts at Spring Board, NAHB launched its own grassroots campaign against the proposed fire sprinkler mandates. We will be reaching out through our members and local HBAs to educate code officials about NAHB’s concerns regarding mandated fire sprinkler systems and encourage those who are eligible to vote to attend the Final Action Hearings in Minneapolis Sept. 17-23.

This will be the last opportunity for proponents to get a mandate for fire sprinklers in the body of the IRC for the 2009 Edition. That means, if unsuccessful, a mandate at the national level in the IRC will have to wait until 2012 or later.

NAHB has revamped the Residential Fire Sprinkler Action Kit to include



several new and updated resources to assist members in their lobbying of code officials – including a DVD, brochure, talking points and information on a travel assistance grants program available to code officials and others who are eligible to vote at the ICC final hearings and would otherwise not be able to travel to Minneapolis. This kit is available to download from [NAHB.org](http://NAHB.org) or by requesting hard copies from NAHB.

For more information visit: [www.nahb.org/sprinklers](http://www.nahb.org/sprinklers); or contact Steve Orłowski (800-368-5242, x8303).