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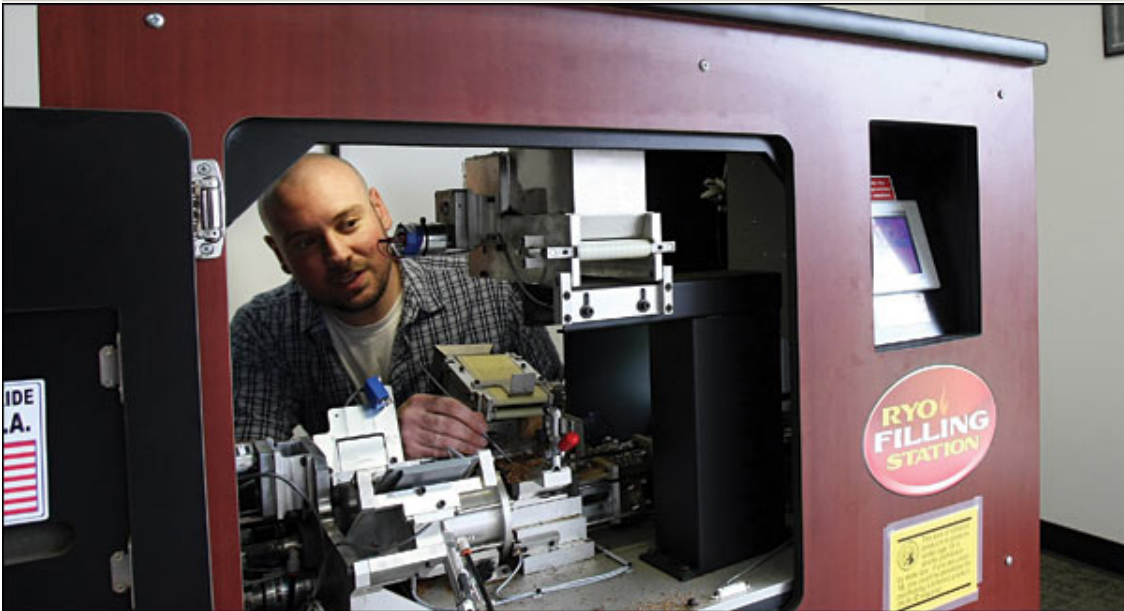
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NEWS + ANALYSIS

>> IN A FLASH

NEWS FROM NFPA + BEYOND



The owner of a roll-your-own cigarette shop in Seattle cleans one of his rolling machines. Among the concerns of fire officials is that do-it-yourself cigarettes do not use self-extinguishing paper. (Photo: Newscom; *Richmond Times-Dispatch*)

Fire-Safe Cigarettes 2.0

A boom in roll-your-own establishments presents a new twist for states and fire officials

NFPA Journal®, March/April 2012

By Fred Durso, Jr.

“Mission accomplished.”

Those were the words proclaimed in 2010 by fire officials nationwide when Wyoming became the final state to pass legislation ensuring all cigarettes sold in the U. S. would adhere to specific fire safety standards.

Those same officials now face another battle to ensure that the fire-safety intent of the law is not eroded: roll-your-own establishments that let customers make their own cigarettes, which do not use the fire safety standards required for all manufactured cigarettes sold in the U.S.

Customers typically purchase rolling tubes and loose cigarette or pipe tobacco, and special rolling machines do the rest. This do-it-yourself approach can cut the cost of cigarettes by more than half. In Pennsylvania, for example, a carton of 200 roll-your-own cigarettes costs \$25, versus \$56 for a 200-cigarette carton of Marlboros. And business is booming; one merchant, RYO Machine Rental, headquartered in Ohio, states on its website that its company has more than 1,000 machines in 35 states.

The issue has gotten the attention of the Washington Fire Chiefs Association, which first heard of roll-your-own stores a few years ago. “I haven’t spoken to a single fire chief in the state who isn’t aware of them,” says Mike Brown, the association’s executive director. “Historically, cigarette fires have been the leading cause of fatal U.S. home fires. We spent years urging the passage of legislation requiring self-extinguishing paper in manufactured cigarettes. Roll-your-own establishments should be under the same regulations.”

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According to the Tobacco Merchants Association, which disseminates worldwide data from the tobacco industry, roll-your-own machines aren't regulated in the U.S. Storeowners and frugal smokers across the country have initiated a debate on the status of the establishments housing the machines. Merchants argue that the exemptions from federal and state taxes, as well as other regulations, are warranted since the businesses are technically neither selling nor manufacturing cigarettes. Many states are fighting this position, citing a disregard of the statewide fire-safe cigarette laws that were prompted by the efforts of NFPA's Fire-Safe Cigarette Coalition.

The do-it-yourself option also avoids the taxes on conventionally manufactured and packaged cigarettes. Irked by missing out on all that potential state tax revenue, legislators in Washington State introduced a bill this year, sponsored by a tobacco company, that prohibits the use of the rolling machines. Brown says his association now supports a revamped bill in the state requiring stores to offer self-extinguishing rolling paper, instead of classifying the stores as "manufacturers" subject to federal and state cigarette taxes.

Taking a different approach, the New Hampshire attorney general recently took a retailer to court, which ruled that the operation of a roll-your-own machine constitutes the manufacture of cigarettes. Legislators in Virginia passed similar store reclassification bills this year that were awaiting a decision from Governor Bob McDonnell at press time. In Wisconsin, the state's Department of Revenue issued notices last year asking roll-your-own stores to obtain tobacco manufacturing and distributor permits in addition to paying an excise tax applicable to cigarette manufacturers; a circuit court has placed a temporary restraining order on the department's requests while it decides on a ruling. And officials in New York City have begun shutting down stores, in part for violating the state's fire-safe-cigarette law, which was enacted in 2004.

Launched in 2006, NFPA's Fire-Safe Cigarette Coalition advocated for legislation to require all cigarettes produced and sold in the country to adhere to fire-safety performance standards. By July 2011, fire-safe cigarette laws had gone into effect in all 50 states. "Early indications show that the objectives of the coalition have proven successful," says Lorraine Carli, NFPA vice-president of Communications. "Even without full implementation across the country, we are already seeing a significant decline in the number of smoking-material fire deaths and fires." NFPA data indicate a reduction in home fire deaths related to smoking materials, from 690 in 2003, the year before the first fire-safe cigarette legislation, to 540 in 2010.

"NFPA feels strongly that stores with roll-your-own machines fall under fire-safe cigarette laws that define manufacturers as 'any entity that manufactures or otherwise produces cigarettes or causes cigarettes to be manufactured,' and states should be enforcing this provision," says Carli. "Without enforcement, you are allowing two fire safety standards — one for those that pay the price of traditional cigarettes, and one for those that pay for less expensive roll-your-own cigarettes."

For more information on fire-safe cigarettes, visit firesafecigarettes.org.

THE FIRE SERVICE

Workout Woes

Studies indicate that stress and injuries from exercise are prevalent in the fire service.

By Fred Durso, Jr.

Fire service members have a greater chance of injuring themselves during exercise than when they're saving lives.

The finding, published by Injury Prevention in its November online report "Beyond the Fireground: Injuries in the Fire Service," sheds light on the unusual risks of the occupation. Researchers analyzed 21 fire stations and 650 employees in the Tucson, Arizona, metropolitan area between 2004 and 2009. Injuries sustained during exercise, an activity firefighters perform to help prevent bodily harm on the job, accounted for a third of all injuries, mainly minor sprains and strains. Injuries from fireground operations, by comparison, accounted for only 10 percent of the total, though sprains and strains developed from patient transport was the main culprit for time off work for firefighters. The other significant category, patient transport and training drills, was responsible for nearly a third of all injuries. Published last year, the NFPA report [U.S. Firefighter Injuries](#) states that there were more than 70,000 line-of-duty injuries in 2010.

"As the number of firefighter fatalities continues to decline, another issue we need to address is firefighter physical fitness and injury reduction," says Ken Holland, NFPA fire service specialist. What's prompting these injuries, he feels, is a lack of guidance from trained professionals.

[NFPA 1583, Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Department Members](#), provides the minimum requirements for an annual fitness assessment that includes an individualized exercise regimen, as well as a safety and injury prevention program. The standard recommends appointing a health and fitness coordinator to monitor the department's exercise activities, and its annex provides a template for developing a fitness program.

The rigors of the fire service were also documented in another study released this year by CareerCast.com, a job database that also offers career advice for employees. Firefighting was ranked the second-most stressful job in the U.S., with enlisted military soldiers claiming the top spot. Surveyors pieced the list together with data from the Census Bureau, the U.S. government, and a range of consulting firms. Provisions in [NFPA 1500, Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program](#), address the harmful effects of job-related stress through the development of a Critical Incident Stress Program. Focusing on incidents affecting firefighters' psychological and physical well-being, the program deals with fatalities involving children, mass casualties, and injuries involving colleagues.

For more on the CareerCast.com report, visit careercast.com/jobs-rated/10-most-stressful-jobs-2012. Download the injury prevention report at injuryprevention.bmj.com.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Ready or Not

CDC finds U.S. cities vary widely in disaster preparedness

If worrying about the possibility of a large-scale bioterrorist attack keeps you up at night and you happen to live in Albany, New York, you can relax. If you live in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on the other hand, you may want to refresh your prescription of Xanax.

U.S. cities differ widely in their preparations for handling specific disaster situations, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its new report, *Public Health Preparedness: 2011 State-by-State Update on Laboratory Capabilities and Response Readiness Planning*, scored 72 metropolitan statistical areas around the country on their ability to distribute and dispense medical aid within 48 hours of a large-scale bio-terrorist threat. The CDC analysis is a component of its *Cities Readiness Initiative*, which aims to enhance emergency preparedness in major U.S. metropolitan areas.

Forbes magazine recently ranked the cities by averaging the CDC's past three scoring cycles. The cities most prepared for a disaster were led by the Albany-Schenectady-Troy, New York, area, followed by Buffalo, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; Dover, Delaware; Orlando, Florida; Miami, Florida; and New York City.

Albuquerque led the list of least-prepared areas, followed by Birmingham, Alabama; Fresno, California; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Portland, Maine; Hartford, Connecticut; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Charleston, West Virginia.

For those cities needing additional help prepping for the worst, [NFPA 1600®, Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs](#), provides a blueprint for planning, implementing, and testing an emergency management plan. The standard's Annex C has a self-assessment tool allowing officials to gauge whether their jurisdictions conform to provisions in NFPA 1600, including the development of a risk assessment that identifies natural, human-caused, or technologically induced hazards.

"The cities will be better-equipped to handle an array of situations if they adhere to NFPA 1600," says Orlando Hernandez, the standard's NFPA staff liaison. "They will have more knowledge on the capabilities they have and what voids they need to fill."

Download the CDC report at cdc.gov/phpr/pubs-links/2011/download.htm. A free version of NFPA 1600 is available at nfa.org/1600.

—Fred Durso, Jr.

HOME FIRE SPRINKLERS

Sprinklers for the Feds?

HUD hears the pro-sprinkler argument as part of a discussion of manufactured housing standards. Plus, new residential sprinkler coalitions form, and more.

NFPA staff members offered their expertise at a recent meeting with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) federal advisory committee on manufactured housing, also known as the Manufactured Housing Consensus Committee (MHCC). Among the items considered were residential sprinklers in new manufactured homes, defined as a house with a wheeled chassis constructed off-site that's transported to the intended dwelling site.

The MHCC discussed the best way to address how the federal standard for manufactured housing should consider the sprinkler issue. While an across-the-board mandate for sprinklers was not supported, the question ultimately came down to what criteria should be used when a system is installed. As part of the MHCC meeting held October 19–20 in Alexandria, Virginia, NFPA was asked to present findings from its [2011](#)

[Manufactured Home Fires report](#). The report indicates that, from 2005 to 2009, U.S. fire departments responded to 12,400 structure fires in manufactured homes per year, resulting in 234 deaths, 453 injuries, and \$186 million in property damage annually.

Timothy Travers, NFPA's regional fire sprinkler specialist, discussed home fire sprinkler benefits, as well as popular myths — sprinklers are expensive, a smoke alarm provides enough protection, and so on — disseminated by sprinkler opponents, who were also in attendance. "We are going through the same growing pains we experienced in the mid 1980s with smoke alarms," says Travers. "I'm confident residential sprinklers will be as common as smoke alarms are in households today."

Following all testimony, the committee deliberated on a range of issues, from the need to mandate the systems for new homes to what rules should be considered if the home is in a jurisdiction requiring sprinklers. The recommended language that was ultimately agreed to by the MHCC includes design criteria based on the requirements of [NFPA 13D, Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes](#). The language also includes a section that notes "fire sprinkler systems are not required . . . however, when a manufacturer installs a fire sprinkler system, this section establishes the requirements for the installation of a fire sprinkler system in a manufactured home." This language marks the first time federal standards will address sprinklers in any form.

The next step is for HUD to determine if it will accept the MHCC recommendation and language. If it does, the new language will be processed through the federal rule-making system before it becomes part of the HUD criteria for manufactured housing.

"There has been a long-time awareness of residential fire sprinklers at the federal level," says Travers. "HUD officials should look to the U.S. Fire Administration, which takes the position that all homes should be equipped with both smoke alarms and automatic fire sprinklers. NFPA's Fire Sprinkler Initiative® will continue to assist those who advocate for home fire sprinklers at the federal, state, and local levels until there is universal adoption."

New sprinkler coalitions formed

As part of its ongoing campaign to educate lawmakers and the public that sprinklers save lives, NFPA has developed new statewide sprinkler coalitions in Tennessee, Massachusetts, and South Carolina. The groups join coalitions already established in Washington and New Jersey.

"These groups bring everyone together to work toward the goal of bringing fire sprinkler requirements to fruition," says Maria Figueroa, regional manager of NFPA's Fire Prevention Field Office. "Many stakeholders come to the table so that any barriers, real or perceived, might be overcome."

Barriers real or perceived are prompting legislators around the country to try to keep residential sprinkler provisions off the books.

In Colorado, a bill introduced this year prohibits local jurisdictions from installing sprinklers in single-family dwellings. In Hawaii, bills would bar local jurisdictions from adopting sprinkler requirements in one- and two-family homes. In Tennessee, the state with the second-highest death rate from home fires, a bill was introduced that would prohibit sprinkler requirements in local building codes for one- and two-family dwellings. Legislators in that state introduced similar bills last year aimed at thwarting a statewide sprinkler adoption, but later opted for a plan that gave local jurisdictions the power to adopt or reject sprinkler provisions.

Residential sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes are required in California and Maryland. South Carolina's Building Code Council voted to adopt similar sprinkler requirements, but legislative action has delayed implementation until 2014.

For more information on residential sprinkler legislation and the state coalitions, visit firesprinklerinitiative.org.

The South speaks out

South Carolina residents are complementing the state's new sprinkler coalition by advocating for residential sprinklers via new videos created for NFPA's Faces of Fire campaign. A component of NFPA's Fire Sprinkler Initiative, Faces of Fire humanizes the devastation of fire and the life safety impact of residential sprinklers.

In her video, resident Linda Chavis describes the day in 2001 that her firefighter son, Jeff, was injured while fighting a residential fire. Jeff entered a burning home through the garage, and the fire was so intense that the garage door closed behind him, cutting off his hose's water supply and trapping him inside. Flashover occurred, and Jeff sustained second- and third-degree burns over 60 percent of his body. Despite treatment at a local burn center, Jeff died a month later.

"It is definitely a parent's worst nightmare to receive a call saying your child has been hurt," Chavis says in the video. "There are still many nights I can't sleep — and it's been 10 years."

Chief Brian Black had a more fortunate outcome following a house fire. Black was sleeping at his fire station when he received word that firefighters were being dispatched to his home. Arriving at the scene, he found his house in flames — but his wife and four kids were safe. "My wife led the children out of the bedroom window," says Black. "She wouldn't have left that house without those children. I could have lost my whole family that night."

Black installed fire sprinklers in his new home. "I was surprised that the cost of the system was less than the cost of my home's landscaping," he says.

View these and other Faces of Fire videos at firesprinklerinitiative.org/faces.

SOCIAL MEDIA

NFPA Joins Google +

NFPA has created a business page on Google+, the social media platform contributing to NFPA's growing presence online. Google+ features include video chat and allow members to select the information and posts they would like to share with specific members of their "circle," including family, friends, and business associates.

"Google+ gives us many exciting new tools to help NFPA's social presence continue to expand and allow us to distribute content and information in interesting ways," says Lauren Backstrom, NFPA's social media manager. "We can target our messages and send them directly to only those who would be interested by using the 'circles' feature. We will also be able to host real-time, face-to-face video conversations with groups of our fans and followers all over the world at the same time. NFPA will be able to use its new account in several unique ways that aren't possible with other platforms."

You can follow NFPA by visiting plus.google.com and searching "National Fire Protection Association."

— Fred Durso, Jr.

Report Pegs the Total Cost of Fire in the United States

Combining the quantifiable human and economic losses from fires with funds used to mitigate and prevent them, the U.S. spent an estimated \$331 billion on fire in 2009. That's one of the findings of NFPA's The Total Cost of Fire in the United States report, released in February. Also:

- Career fire department expenditures averaged \$43 billion, while donated time from volunteer firefighters was worth about \$130 billion.
- Property damage was about \$16 billion, while the net costs of insurance coverage were \$17 billion.
- Civilian and firefighter deaths and injuries due to fire were estimated at \$39 billion.
- New building construction costs for fire protection were more than \$41 billion.

Download the report at nfpa.org/research.

IN BRIEF

New Online Submission Process for Technical Questions Developed

NFPA's document information pages for all of its codes and standards now include a "technical questions" tab where members and public-sector officials can submit inquiries online. Responses are provided by NFPA staff on an informal basis.

The member services hotline (800-344-3555) is still fielding technical questions between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.

Isman Grant Recipient Announced

The Salina Fire Department's Hazmat Response Team from Salina, Kansas, received the 2012 Warren E. Isman Educational Grant in January.

The team, which responds to an average of 130 hazmat-related incidents a year, ranging from fuel spills to highway tanker rollovers, received \$5,000 to attend the International Association of Fire Chiefs' International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, in May. "The Salina Fire Department Hazmat Response Team is a proven leader in community involvement, education, emergency communications, and implementing cutting-edge technologies," says Ken Isman, chair of the Warren E. Isman Task Force and son of the award's namesake.

The grant is available to any established incident response team from a fire department, police department, or other publicly funded program. Qualified applicants must be trained in accordance with [NFPA 472, Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents](#), and [NFPA 473, Competencies for EMS Personnel Responding to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents](#).

The deadline for 2012 applications is September 15. Visit nfpa.org/isman for more information.

Health Care Summit, SUPDET Highlight Emerging Trends

Addressing the demographic and environmental issues facing the health care industry, NFPA and the Fire Protection Research Foundation will host a one-day summit, "National Trends in Delivery of Health and Long-Term Care: Implications for Safety Codes and Standards," on March 28. The event will address trends affecting specific NFPA codes, particularly [NFPA 99, Health Care Facilities](#), and [NFPA 101®, Life Safety Code®](#). For details, visit nfpa.org/hcsummit.

The Foundation is also hosting its 16th annual Suppression, Detection, and Signaling Research and Applications Symposium, known as SUPDET, in Phoenix, Arizona, March 5–8. This year's agenda features 30 presentations featuring the latest developments and research in the areas of detection technology, water-based suppression systems, commodity protection, and environmental regulations related to new fire suppression agents. Register online at nfpa.org/supdet.

Photo Submissions Wanted for New Firewise Calendar

NFPA's Firewise® Communities Program has begun a calendar photo contest that asks the public to submit original snapshots of Firewise plants in their natural habitat. Entrants can submit up to 10 photos of regional plants, flowers, trees, shrubs, and grasses through March 16.

The calendar will include 14 photos, one for each month, as well as the back and front covers. Winners will be announced on March 23.

One of the primary principles of the Firewise program involves creating a landscape around a house by using less flammable vegetation. For additional Firewise information and photo contest rules, visit firewise.org.

NFPA and Phoenix Society Release New Scald-Prevention Tip Sheet

In an effort to urge the public to exercise caution when handling hot liquids and soaps, NFPA and the Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors have released a new tip sheet on scald burns, which are the second-leading cause of all burn injuries in the U.S.

"We see devastating and sometimes lifelong consequences of scald burns every day," says Amy Acton, executive director of the Phoenix Society, which empowers burn survivors through peer support, education, and advocacy. "It is important to remind the public to take precautions to avoid injury."

> **Firewatch**

Overloaded power strip starts fatal fire.

> **What's Hot**

Spotlight: Sprinklers

> **Looking Back**

The collision of two jumbo jets on the island of Tenerife kills 583 people.

> **Membership: The Sections**

Spotlight on Wildland Fire Management

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