



# **National Independent Fire Alarm Distributors Association**

December 2016

## **Calendar of Events**

### **NIFAD**

#### **Annual Meeting**

June 2-4, 2017

Boston, MA

#### **NFPA Convention**

June 4-7, 2017

Boston, MA

#### **ISC West**

April 5-7, 2017

Las Vegas, NV

#### **AFFA National Codes Conference**

April 25-28, 2017

Monterey Bay -  
Sea Side, CA

### **From the President's Desk**

Seasons Greetings



I trust you all had a happy Thanksgiving and took time out of your busy schedule to enjoy it.

I have watched the news all summer about the droughts across the country and about all of the wild-fires that have burned out of control without giving a great deal of thought to it except to think 'it can't happen here'. Well if you've watched any news lately you've seen...it has. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park has been under siege from fires deadly grip for some time now. Just this weekend the resort towns of Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge were evacuated – during one of their busiest times of year. As of writing this article several dozen had been injured and at least three have lost their lives. Multitudes of buildings have been lost including several motels and resorts. Fortunately many of the irreplaceable attractions have been spared. I'm sure many of you have vacationed in this area as it is the most visited national park in the country. I say all this as a reminder to all that it CAN happen here...or there. Yes, it is across the state from me but it hit home in so many ways. Our local firefighters are on the scene battling the blazes. Please lift these and all involved up the next time you bow your head. They may not know you but they will appreciate it. Oh yeah, the cause of some of the fires...carelessness and arson.

If you haven't already done so please take the time to join NIFAD's LinkedIn page. Post to it, share it, and enjoy it. It is a great forum with which to reach each other and perspective members.

I hope and pray you each have a spectacular Christmas season and a safe and joyous...and prosperous... New Year

Mike Nelson  
NIFAD President

## R2's Code Corner

### --- July–October Codes and Standards Update ---

#### 1. Development of Future Codes and Installation Standards:

- 2018 Edition of NFPA 101®, *Life Safety Code*:
  - Key Technical Committee actions during the Second Draft meeting:
    - Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detection:
      - Assembly Occupancies: CO detection will be required in newly constructed restaurants, motion picture theaters, concert halls, night clubs and banquet halls having a permanently installed fuel-burning appliance or attached garage.
      - System-Connected CO Detectors: Only system-connected CO detectors are allowed to be installed in locations where the fuel-burning appliance is located outside of dwelling units in apartment buildings, guest rooms in hotels or classrooms in K-12 schools. Typical locations are boiler or furnace rooms.
    - Mass Notification: Colleges, universities and K-12 schools will be required to conduct a risk analysis and create an emergency response plan when a new building is constructed. The intent of mandating a risk analysis is that it may lead to more mass notification systems being installed.
    - Integrated Testing: Integrated (end-to-end) testing of fire alarm systems with other life safety systems in newly constructed assembly occupancies, hotels, dormitories, K-12 schools, business, mercantile and certain healthcare occupancies will be required.
  - The next step in the process is the official balloting of the above Second Draft Committee actions. The ballot was issued in September.
- 2018 Edition of International Code Council (ICC) Codes:
  - The ICC member actions during the Public Comment Hearing (PCH) are the third of a four stage process for the development of the 2018 edition of the Fire Code, Building Code and Property Maintenance Code. Key actions of interest are as follows:
    - Mass Notification: Colleges, universities and K-12 schools will be required to conduct a risk analysis and create an emergency response plan when a new building is constructed. The intent of mandating a risk analysis is that it may lead to more mass notification systems being installed.
    - CO Detection: CO detection will now be required in all existing buildings and where additions or alterations are made to existing buildings
    - Integrated Testing: Integrated (end-to-end) testing of fire alarm systems with other life safety systems (elevator recall, sprinkler systems, stair pressurization fans...) will be required in new high-rise buildings or in buildings with a smoke control system
    - Fire Alarm Emergency Voice Alarm Communication (EVAC) System: New high-rise buildings will be required to utilize multi-channel EVAC systems. This will all evacuation messages to be provided on the floor of the alarm condition, floor above and floor below of the alarm condition while other areas of the building can be given other instructions
    - Ambulatory Healthcare Facilities: Maintained a current (2015) requirement for smoke detection to be provided within the ambulatory care facility as well as outside the ambulatory care facility in public corridors and elevator lobbies. The healthcare industry was seeking to reduce construction costs by removing this requirement citing no loss of life from fires.

- The next step in the process is the official balloting of the above actions that will take place in November.
- 2019 Edition of NFPA 72®, National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code:
  - The Code is undergoing revision and the Committee actions during the First Draft meeting are the first of three a stage process for the development of the 2019 edition of the Code. Several Technical Committee actions of interest are as follows:
    - Smoke Detection:
      - Nuisance Alarm Listing: Deleted a requirement for smoke alarms/detectors to be listed for resistance to common nuisance sources other than normal cooking activities such as steam and dust.
      - Cooking Resistance Listing: Changed the compliance date for smoke alarms/detectors to be listed for resistance to normal cooking activities from 1/1/19 to 5/29/2020 to correlate with the UL effective date for the new cooking resistant test.
      - Strobe Lights: Deleted the exception allowing strobe lights installed in corridors to have a pulse duration up to 100 milliseconds and adds two new room spacing tables for indirect viewing applications that incorporate pulse durations longer than 1ms but less than 20ms and factor in the ambient light levels.

## 2. State Code Activities:

- Illinois Office of State Fire marshal (OSFM):
  - Attached is a copy of the final regulations promulgated by the OSFM for CO detection in new and existing schools. Working through NEMA I was successful in allowing system-connected CO detectors listed as complying with UL 2075 to be installed.
  - In August of 2015 HB 152 was signed into law expanding a 2007 law to include new and existing K-12 schools containing a CO source
- New Jersey Division of Codes and Standards:
  - The Division published a second draft of the regulations seeking to codify a 2015 Law requiring CO detection in all new and existing commercial occupancies. The public comment deadline for the second draft is 11/18/16. The compliance date for the regulations will be published once the regulations have been finalized. The second draft align very closely with the requirements in the 2015 edition of the IFC/IBC.
- Washington:
  - Work continues to mitigate the impact of an emergency rule that deletes a requirement in the Fire Code for an EVAC system to be used for occupant notification in K-12 schools and day-care occupancies.
  - After two conference calls and numerous emails an agreement appears to have been reached with the Fire Service and several school district officials for an amendment to the Washington Fire Code. The amendment requires one of the following for occupant notification in NEW schools:
    - An EVAC system or
    - An Emergency Response System provided that it complies with the Emergency Communication System (ECS) requirements in Chapter 24 of NFPA 72
  - The actual language is being finalized so that it can be presented during the 10/14/16 public hearing.
- Utah:
  - During the revision cycle for the 2015 Utah Fire Code the legislature passed a bill that deleted the K-12 EVAC provision within the International Fire Code (IFC). The reason for deleting the provision is the fire service and the school lobby had concerns about a significant cost increase of an EVAC system and difficulty in achieving voice intelligibility.

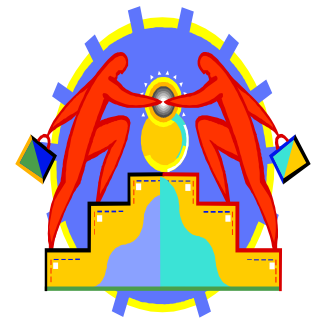
- An on-line meeting with the State Fire Marshal (SFM) addressing his concerns and questions went very well. He has a better understanding that an EVAC system represents a minimal cost increase after reviewing the NFPA 72 requirements and demonstrating the EASE modeling software for achieving intelligibility.
  - The next steps going forward will be additional on-line meetings with the SFM inspectors that were unable to attend the first meeting and then work with the fire service to submit a code change proposal to reinstate the EVAC requirement for the next edition of the Utah Fire Code.
  - Illinois:
    - Low frequency sounders will be required in the next edition of the Illinois Accessibility Code (IAC) by referencing the 2013 edition of NFPA 72® which contains the low frequency provision.
    - Enforcement will begin once the Joint Commission on Administrative Rules (JCAR) completes its review of the Code which is expected to be the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2017.
3. 2011 Energy Policy and Conservation Act:
- Department of Energy (DoE):
    - The 2011 Energy Policy and Conservation Act signed by President Obama and implemented by the Department of Energy (DoE) exempts fire alarm and security power supplies from the Act's no-load energy efficiency requirements. The exemption is set to expire on 7/1/17.
    - The reason fire alarm and security power supplies need to be exempted from the no-load provision is they are required by national consensus standards to constantly use power to monitor the integrity (supervise) of all system components.
    - The permanent no-load exemptions are facing strong objections from energy efficiency groups because they think manufacturers are trying to game the system. NEMA is reaching out to these stakeholders and trying to educate them on the critical supervision features that are needed to prevent a failed device from going undetected or detect an open or short in the circuit wiring.

## NIFAD Website

Check the website for current news and information on events for our organization. Newsletters, conference brochures, industry links and conference registration forms can also be found on the website, NIFAD.com.

## Receive Benefits of 2017 Dues

Please remember to send in your NIFAD dues when you receive them later this month. Members receive a listing on the NIFAD website as well as a quarterly newsletters, participation in webinars and an Annual Conference where you can participate in the town hall meeting, receive product updates and network with your peers.



We appreciate your membership and participation in NIFAD.

## NIFAD Member Highlight – ABCO

### ABCO Fire's Growth through Culture

Our industry is full of great people. It's something that many of us who have grown up in fire protection take for granted, and nearly every time I meet another fire protection professional this sentiment is proven once again. At ABCO we have built our business upon this idea, ensuring our people fit the mold of the fire protection industry we know and want to continue to thrive in. We can train almost anyone on fire protection equipment, but we can't train anyone to share the values we've built our business upon.



In 1975, Bob Titmas, Sr., founded West Shore Fire Equipment in Cleveland, Ohio. Originally specializing in portable extinguishers, restaurant systems, and Halon products, the company grew through partnerships and acquisitions to become a full-service fire protection company by the early 1980s. One of those acquisitions was Larry Abelson's fire protection company out of Pittsburgh, PA. Known as ABCO for ABelson Company, West Shore changed its name to ABCO companywide after the acquisition. Today ABCO Fire's service area has grown to include parts of five states, as well as a network of providers that service the entire United States and areas of Mexico and the Caribbean.

Our growth and success are direct results of a corporate culture based on treating each employee with respect, and giving them the freedom to succeed to the extent that their ambition carries them. Our concerted effort to hire and develop talent that shares our values makes this level of freedom possible. It may be getting tougher to find skilled employees with a desire to work hard and get their hands dirty, but our business can't afford to fall into "warm body syndrome" regardless of how shallow the talent pool seems.

We actively seek out new employees with character and values, and we won't settle for anything less. Hiring good people, giving them the freedom to succeed, holding them to individual goals, and rewarding them when they work together to ensure everyone's goals are accomplished—these are the keys to ABCO's success. It doesn't stop at our technicians either, even when we add NICET-certified engineers or new members to our management team, character and values are paramount.

Now in our fifth decade in business, ABCO is witnessing the industry go through some major changes. For better or worse, forces are pushing and pulling at us as consolidation continues, and stricter standards are introduced as quickly as technology makes them possible. Regardless of these external influences, we rest easy knowing we'll continue to work in an industry that we've helped build to reflect the values and character that are so important to us. After all, if you don't love going to work in the morning, how long are you going to keep doing it?

**2016  
NIFAD Annual Meeting  
June 2-4, 2017  
The Westin Copley Place, Boston**



Make your reservations now for the  
2017 NIFAD conference.

NIFAD has sleeping rooms blocked June 6-9, 2017.

Our room rate is \$299 single or double.

*The Westin Copley Place Hotel offers several dining options on-site,  
a bar and lounge, a fitness studio, workspace and spa.*

The number to call for reservations is 1-866-716-8108  
To receive the group rate callers must identify their affiliation with NIFAD.