

Winter
2023

National
Independent
Fire Alarm
Distributors

NIFADNews

this issue

New Member Highlight **P. 2**

Meet the New Executive Director **P. 3**

Codes & Standards Update **P. 4-6**

Director Bev Thomas Retires **P. 6**

Calendar of Events

2023 NIFAD

Annual Meeting

June 17 - 19, 2023
Las Vegas, NV

2023 NFPA

Conference & Expo

June 19 - 22, 2023
Las Vegas, NV

*Mark your
calendar
and plan
to attend!*



From the President's Desk

By Rich Sigethy, NIFAD President

Fellow NIFAD Members,

I got an email the other day from Bev telling me I had to write another Presidents newsletter article for NIFAD. My initial response of UGH (I'm a talker not a typer), was quickly changed as I thought about the upcoming meeting this year. NIFAD this year will have many new faces, new ideas, different go to market strategies to go along with new vendor offerings to discuss.

Listening to economists or watching the news recently, all we keep hearing about is that we should be preparing for recession to hit us. Talking to others at industry events or even talking with local competition, we are all so busy we can't hire enough people or get parts fast enough. If we are headed into recession, I personally cannot wait to see how much business we capture when we come out of it.

About two weeks ago we were talking to one of our vendors about their strategies to fulfill their current backlog of missing

equipment and how they felt about the industry. To my surprise, I was told that they planned to cut their orders of electronic components as they do not forecast using these components fast enough. This got me thinking. Over the past 2 years, Fireline has GREATLY increased our warehouse stock as parts come available. How come the material vendors are not doing the same thing to be proactive?

How do we act as one and go to our vendors with our concerns and have a collective voice? What resources can we share to combat the buying power of the private equities or corporate conglomerates? What successes are we having keeping good talent and acquiring new? Start getting your questions and ideas together for this year's meeting in June!

Sincerely,
Rich Sigethy, NIFAD President

New Member Highlight

Taylor Fire Protection

Palmer, Alaska

Welcome new member Taylor Fire Protection. This year Taylor Fire will be celebrating its 21-year anniversary. Taylor Fire was started with just two employees, Rick and Wendy Taylor, owner/operators. They have grown to 40 employees and are one of Alaska's largest full-service fire protection companies.

When Taylor Fire was started in 2002, it was a family-run business that grew steadily. By 2008 they had four employees. This family-owned and operated business created a dynamic that is still around today with their now 40 employees. Rick and his two brothers, Jeff Taylor and Bret Taylor, and his three sons, continue to work together at Taylor Fire.

As Taylor grew, it grew as a family business, and that feeling hasn't been lost; Rick and Wendy treat all their employees as family. With the addition of Wade Thomas FA Dept Mgr., Frederick Naef Sprinkler Dept Mgr., Michael Gravel or as the team calls him "Rock" Special Hazards Dept Mgr. and Troy Graham Warehouse Mgr. the Taylor family continues to expand. The Taylor fire 'family' prides themselves on their ability to take care of their customers' needs, regardless of today's ongoing logistical difficulties.

Taylor Fire's territory is arguably the largest geographical territory in the United States. At the end of a 15-hour drive, the only thing in the way of getting to a customer is jumping a flight to the small Burroughs and towns of the north



New Member Highlight

ProTech Fire and Security

Honolulu, Hawaii

ProTech Fire & Security LLC was established in March 2008 and we will be celebrating our 15th anniversary next month. The company was started with three employees and has grown to twenty-six. We attribute our growth and success to taking care of and treating our customers and employees as we would like to be treated.

ProTech Fire & Security specializes in fire alarm and mass notification systems in the federal market and has expanded to include ERCES for public safety systems. We have two in-house NICET Level IV fire alarm technicians and an FCC GROL.

We look forward to participating in NIFAD and becoming a contributing member.



NIFAD Board

President
Rich Sigethy
Fireline Corporation
rjs@fireline.com

Vice President
Alley Williamson
Fire Fighter Sales & Service
awilliamson@firefighter-pgh.com

Treasurer
Don Horsley
All Tech Fire and Security
Donald@alltechfire.com

DIRECTORS

Debbie Horvath
Reliable Fire Equipment Co.
horvathd@ameritech.net

John Pletcher
Pletcher Fire Protection
john@pletcherfire.com

Kevin Green
Pyro-Comm Systems, Inc.
kgreen@pyrocomm.com

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback throughout the year, please feel free to reach out to any of these members.

Additionally, if you have any member referrals, please forward them to any board member for follow up.

Meet New Executive Director Cathy Tabor

Hello, NIFAD Members!

I'm Cathy Tabor, and I'll soon be onboard as your new Executive Director, replacing Bev – who is retiring after working with NIFAD for almost three decades. For the next couple of months Bev and I will be in a transition & training period. I officially start on April 1.

My background? I know some of you from my many decades in the Fire Protection Industry.



My working career began at Pyrotector, in Massachusetts. As I understood the story (dating back to the 1960's) this company actually designed and manufactured the first photoelectric type smoke detector. The inventors credited with this were Al Vassel (Pyrotector) and Don Steel (Electro Signal Labs). I never worked on the smoke detector side of the company. My 18+ years were on the Industrial side of Pyrotector working with UV and IR Flame detection for hazardous areas, airplanes engine and cargo compartments, and even millisecond detection & suppression systems for Navy Vessels, Armored Vehicles and Personnel Carriers. I loved it. When Pyrotector was acquired, my options to relocate were North Carolina (Kidde) or Minneapolis. I chose Detector Electronics (Det-Tronics) in Minneapolis – and I loved that too. Just an FYI – Det-Tronics originally started with three men who left their jobs at Honeywell, re-mortgaged their homes, and started the company. Rumor has it when they went on the road to sell, they were so poor they shared a hotel room and where possible they took their portable hibachi with them to make low-budget meals.

Oddly enough, after a few years in cold, but lovely, Minneapolis I had the opportunity to relocate back to my own original home state of Massachusetts, and even my own hometown. I took the relocation package and worked for Xtralis (back then, formally known as Vision Systems, and before that IEI North America). We marketed the Air Sampling Smoke Detector known as VESDA to the Americas market. Another fun job! A decade or more later, Xtralis was acquired, and I moved on to a marketing position with FIREPRO Inc (now a branch of Jensen Hughes).

At FIREPRO I managed the non-profit, member-based organization known as The Center for Campus Fire Safety (CCFS). Approximately 7 years later (2012) I started my own management & marketing company (Tabor and Associates, Inc.), and provided marketing assistance to a few organizations, but mostly CCFS.

Today, I continue to manage CCFS as the Executive Director, and will now work with NIFAD as well. I think two great organizations are enough for me. I do not have any plans on expanding – I just want to enjoy both organizations and help them to grow.

My promise to you ... I'll do my best to fill Bev's shoes. I know she is highly appreciated. I'll work hard for you all and I'll have fun with what I do. I look forward to working with you. Please keep my contact details and feel free to reach out at any time.

Best to all Cathy

CathyTabor@nifad.com | landline: 781-319-8001 | mobile: 781-831-1165
NIFAD, 125 Church Street, Suite 90-382, Pembroke, Massachusetts 02359



Codes & Standards Updates

Development of Future Codes:

- 2027 Edition of the International Fire Code (IFC) and International Building Code (IBC): Proposals for these codes will be due in January of 2024. An initial list of priorities for changes that are being considered are CO, low frequency, thermal imaging, remote access, and possibly fuel-gas detection. The next step is to begin the vetting ideas with influential stakeholders.

Detection:

- Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Detection and Notification Product Standards: Numerous proposals have been submitted to allow for the use of electronic/non-printed installation instructions for various product categories such as fire control units, initiating devices and notifications appliances.
- Carbon Monoxide: A work group (WG) has been formed to align the requirements in the 2025 edition of NFPA 72 with a change to the 2024 edition of the International Fire Code/International Building Code that permits carbon monoxide alarms (not detectors) to be installed inside rooms or spaces within commercial buildings that are remote from dwelling units and sleeping units. The objective of the WG is to make sure an activated alarm installed in an unoccupied room or area notifies a responsible party.


State Legislation:

- New Jersey Carbon Monoxide (CO) Legislation: S.2788 seeks to require CO detectors in hotels and apartment buildings to be monitored by a supervising station. The intent of the bill will help protect occupants in these buildings. The National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) Government Relations sent a letter of support for the intent of the bill as well as requesting several amendments that will align with current codes & standards and to remove ambiguity

Emergency Responder Communications:

- Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) ERCES Certificate Program: Effective 1/1/2023, the following jurisdictions will require UL certificated ERCES:
 - Palm Beach County, FL
 - San Francisco, CA
 - San Mateo Fire District, CA
 - Menlo Park, CA

This new program is intended to raise the level of competency of companies installing, servicing, and maintaining ERCES by providing them the ability to declare they have the technical expertise to design, install and main-





Codes & Standards Updates Continued

tain code compliant ERCES. The new ERCES program will be modeled after the UL Fire Alarm System Certification Program. UL's new program will certify contractors using UL 2524 listed product by any NRTL. That means our product (that is listed by SGS) will be acceptable.

- 2022 Edition of NFPA 1225, *Public Emergency Service Communications*: The Committee formed a Working Group (WG) to write one or several tentative interim amendments (TIA) that will modify the current edition. The reason for this initiative is there are numerous issues that cannot wait three years for the Committee to propose changes for the 2027 edition of the emergency responder communications system (ERCES) standard. After being appointed Chair of the WG, Richard held two virtual meetings that resulted in:
 - An initial list of fifteen topics that need to be considered
 - Formed seven sub-WGs that will prepare draft language for the full WG to consider

A TIA is NFPA's official process for amending a published code or standard.

Fire Protection Research Foundation (FPRF):

- Smoke Detector Spacing in High Ceiling Spaces:
 - The project has received the necessary funding to proceed, and a contractor selected.
 - This project seeks to determine the installation requirement of smoke detectors on ceilings over 10-ft. and is needed because NFPA 72 does not provide prescriptive requirements for the reduction of spacing for smoke detectors. This gap has caused confusion in design and enforcement on what to do when smoke detectors are installed on ceilings higher than 10 feet.
- Carbon Monoxide Incidents - A Review of the Data Landscape:
 - The final report is now online and can be accessed [HERE](#). The purpose of this project is to review and present the carbon monoxide (CO) incident data landscape to clarify the sources of information, how the data is compiled and what the data represents. The report concluded that the eight databases hosting CO incident information did not provide a sufficient level of detail to fully understand the CO exposure problem in the United States.
- Fire Detection and Alarm Research Council: The mission of the Council is to advance the implementation of detection and alarm system technology through research. The Council identified the following research priorities for 2023:
 - CO Detection: Determine if the current alarm thresholds need to be modified and CO Diffusion through walls.



Codes & Standards Updates Continued

- Survivability of ERCES Cables. Conduct full scale fire tests to identify the temperature at which the transmission of data signals over fire alarm circuits will be degraded, and the temperature at which ERCES voice messages are no longer understandable for emergency responders.
- Evaluation of Dynamic Directional Exit Signage: The final report is now publicly available on the FPRF website. The Report concludes that while dynamic signage is finding applications, there are still many codes & standards and technical barriers to widespread adoption of truly adaptive, dynamic exit signage.

Author

Richard Roberts
Senior Industry Affairs Manager
Honeywell Fire Safety
1-630-338-7025
Richard.roberts@systemsensor.com

NIFAD Executive Director, Bev Thomas, retiring April 1, 2023

Dear NIFAD Friends,

After 27 years as your executive director, I am retiring April 1st. I started with NIFAD in 1996 after my neighbor, Dave Roemer, one of the original founding members of NIFAD, asked me if I would be interested in managing the NIFAD association. After I started, I had about three months to find a hotel in Boston and organize the meeting. My first and last NIFAD meetings were in Boston. Over the years we have held meetings in Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, Florida, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Cincinnati. Longtime member, Biederman, hosted a party on their acreage outside Cincinnati, which included driving antique cars and target practice!

I have had the opportunity to work with two generations in some cases: Steve Waters and daughter Anna Gavin and Ernie Horvath and daughter Debbie Horvath.

It has been an honor and a privilege to work for you the last 27 years. Thank you so much. I think of you not only as members of NIFAD, but friends as well. I plan to travel more with my husband, play more golf and spend time with the grandkids. I wish each one of you the very best in all your future endeavors, both professional and personal.