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**FIRE SPRINKLERS SET TO BECOME
A STANDARD FEATURE IN ALL NEW HOMES**

BALTIMORE – October 30, 2009 – Members of the International Code Council’s Residential Building Code Committee (RBCC) have made it clear that fire sprinklers are destined to become a standard feature in all new homes. The fire sprinkler requirement was added to the International Residential Code (IRC) last year, and it is scheduled to become effective January 1, 2011, in states that adopt the latest version of this code. Currently, 48 states use the IRC as a basis of regulating residential construction, although some states lag behind in adopting updates.

At a hearing held earlier this week, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) had petitioned the International Code Council (ICC), which publishes the IRC, to repeal the fire sprinkler requirement, but the RBCC rejected that request by a vote of 7 to 4.

“This vote is significant in two ways,” said Chief Ronny J. Coleman, president of the IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition and former fire marshal for the state of California. “Not only did the RBCC reject the homebuilders’ request to repeal the sprinkler requirement, but if you look at the vote, every member of the committee, other than the four who are appointed by NAHB, voted to uphold the fire sprinkler requirement.”

Following the committee vote, NAHB attempted to use a new procedure in the ICC process that allows members assembled at the hearing to overrule the committee decision, but the members made it clear that they were standing firm on protecting American families from fire. More than 1,000 ICC members in attendance voted overwhelmingly to affirm the RBCC’s decision.

“ICC’s message on this matter is pretty clear,” said Jeffrey Shapiro, P.E., executive director of the IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition. “Their membership has now supported the home fire sprinkler requirement at both the 2008 and 2009 annual hearings, and each of those votes passed by more than a two-thirds margin.”

Those decisions have now been further affirmed by the RBCC, which is a balanced, consensus committee that includes homebuilders, building and fire safety officials, architects and engineers.

“People who buy new homes that comply with the IRC fire sprinkler and smoke alarm requirements can sleep peacefully knowing that their families and their homes are protected from fire,” said Meri-K Appy, president of the non-profit Home Safety Council.

About IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition

Founded in 2007, the IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition has grown to include more than 100 international, national and regional public safety organizations, including associations representing 45 states, all of whom support the mission of promoting residential fire sprinkler systems in new home construction. The Coalition was formed to educate public policymakers on the value of residential sprinkler systems and to support related legislation. More information can be found at www.IRCFireSprinkler.org.