

Mid Atlantic Pipe Trades Association



Maryland Senate – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

TO: Senator Paul Pinsky, Chair; Senator Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair; and Member of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

FROM: Shawn Broadrick – International Representative, United Association (Parent organization to Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades)

Support SB 746 – State Fire Marshal – Sprinkler Systems Enforcement

My name is Shawn Broadrick I am a fire sprinkler fitter installer of 35 years. I was trained and graduated a five-year apprenticeship that has given me the knowledge and skill to install fire sprinklers in structures from single family dwellings to nuclear power plants.

For years, fire sprinkler codes and standards have been in building codes. The mandatory installation of fire sprinklers in all new single and multifamily dwellings dramatically increases fire safety in the State of Maryland. It is proven that firefighter injuries dropped and residential fire sprinkler systems were effective in controlling a fire 96% of the time until the fire fighters arrive with many instances actually extinguishing the fire.

If fire sprinklers are so effective at saving lives and reducing property damage, “why do we need compliance to make sure the sprinkler systems are installed to code and standards by the fire marshal?” While the number of home fires have dropped, the increasing use of lightweight construction materials in the last 25 years has created additional risk during a fire. Structures using lighter materials burn quicker, fails faster and collapses quicker. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) states that the average window to escape a fire in a structure made with traditional construction materials is about 15 minutes. However, the escape drops to only 2 minutes in a home using light weight construction materials.

Residential fire sprinklers slow down the progress of the fire and allows extra time for families to get out and for firefighters to fight the fire effectively. Much like commercial fire sprinkler systems, residential sprinklers are incredibly effective at saving lives and property if they are installed correctly and inspected properly.

Giving the fire marshal the jurisdiction of authority over the standard and code compliance provides the best possible protection against loss of life and property.

Sincerely,
Shawn Broadrick
International Representative
United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters
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