

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to update you on some new information related to the fight to defeat the proposals to mandate fire sprinklers in the IRC at the code hearings this fall. First, we now have a much better idea when the proposals dealing with fire sprinklers (RB62-66) will be heard at the ICC Final Action Hearings in Minneapolis, MN. The IRC portion of **the hearings will start no sooner than 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 20.**

Please tell anyone who is planning to attend and vote on the fire sprinkler proposals that they need to be there in time for the 6:00 p.m. start time on Saturday and recommend that they stay through Sunday evening.

Why stay that long? First, there is no guarantee that the IRC portion of the hearings will start at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, only that they will not start before that time. Also, while the schedule currently shows the hearings ending at 9:00 p.m. each day, no one should count on that, particularly if the hearings are running behind schedule. The hearings will start at 7:00 a.m. each morning.

The proposals dealing with fire sprinkler mandates fall fairly early in the IRC hearing schedule, with only thirty (30) ahead of them. So, they will probably be heard either late Saturday evening or Sunday morning. However, there are a number of other significant code changes proposed where votes in favor of NAHB's position would be most helpful, particularly those dealing with energy efficiency and wall bracing. Information on those proposals and NAHB's position is being posted at www.nahb.org/codehearings. That is why NAHB is asking everyone to stay, if possible, through the entire hearings on the IRC building and energy provisions on Sunday.

Additionally, after looking at the rising cost of airfares to Minneapolis, **it has been decided to increase the travel assistance grant being offered by NAHB to \$1,000.** It is hoped that this higher grant will be adequate to cover the airfare and a two-night hotel stay in Minneapolis, with some money left over for meals and other incidental expenses. There is no need for anyone who has already submitted an application to reapply, as everyone approved will receive the higher grant.

For anyone needing assistance finding a hotel, ICC has made arrangements with a number of the hotels in Minneapolis to provide a discounted rate to the attendees of its annual conference and code hearings. The following is the link to the ICC site where a hotel reservation can be made:

http://abm.iccsafe.org/2008/lodging_and_transporation.cfm

However, few of these hotels still have rooms available on the nights of September 20 & 21, and those remaining are going fast. Additionally, CC&S staff is checking to see if there are any other hotels that have rooms available in downtown Minneapolis on those nights. If found, that information will be posted at www.nahb.org/sprinklers, where the travel assistance grant application and all other resource materials related to the fire sprinkler grassroots campaign is already available.

If additional assistance or clarification is needed regarding any of the above, please contact Steve Orlowski of NAHB staff at sorlowski@nahb.com or 1-800-368-5242, ext. 8303.

Thanks again for help in fighting this push for fire sprinkler mandates.

Sincerely,

Earl McLeod
EOC President