

Q FIRE MARSHALS QUARTERLY



INTERNATIONAL FIRE MARSHALS ASSOCIATION • FALL 2024

IFMA Represented at Single Stairway Symposium

Nick Dawe, IFMA Board Member

On behalf of our International Fire Marshals Association, I attended the NFPA Single Stair Symposium on September 11th and 12th at NFPA Headquarters in Quincy, Massachusetts. The two-day meeting was highly productive, with detailed presentations from both supporters and opponents of the single exit stairway issue presenting their perspectives in a thorough and respectful manner.

While there were many in attendance who supported the idea of a single exit stair from buildings up to six stories in height, I along with representatives from the National Association of State Fire Marshals, The International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire and Life Safety Section, and the International Firefighters Association offered counterarguments. Most of our points were based on availability of egress options and the operational impacts of limiting one stairway for use by occupants egressing the building and firefighters deploying to fight the fire via the same stairway.

There truly seemed to be significant agreement among the fire service members present that the benefits offered by a single egress stair in these buildings was not an adequate justification for the removal of the redundant second stairway in buildings greater than the four stories currently allowed by NFPA 101 – Life Safety Code (three stories under the IBC). The next step from this Symposium will be summary paper issued by the NFPA Technical Services Section which will not take a specific position, but will rather outline the objectives, issues, gaps in knowledge, and concerns expressed during the presentations and breakout sessions.

It will be beneficial to further engage with those advocating for the single stair change, to better understand their perspectives and work towards finding common ground. There may be areas of misunderstanding regarding the NFPA code development process, particularly around performance-based options in NFPA 101, Chapter 5, which offer flexible solutions in non-prescriptive scenarios.

Overall, the summit was a valuable experience, and it was great to be part of the process and meetings, ensuring that our collective voices are heard in this important discussion.





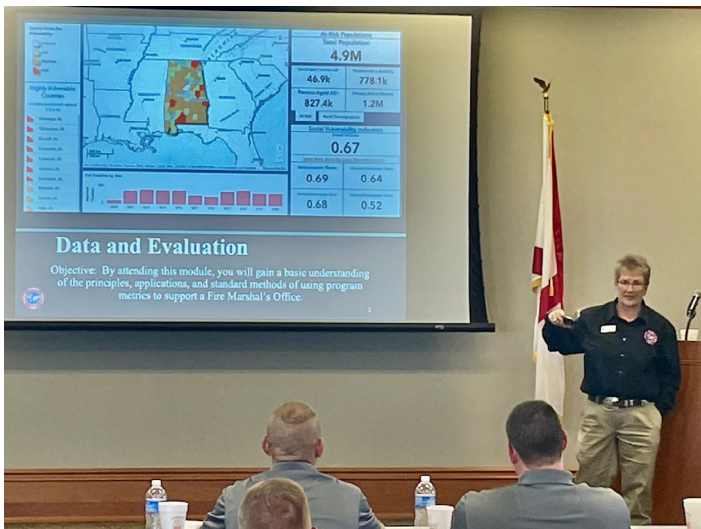
President's Corner

IFMA Management Institute in Alabama

I, along with Past President Steve Peavy, recently had the privilege of leading the International Fire Marshal's Management Institute Leadership training at the Alabama Fire Marshal's Association conference in Montgomery, Alabama. For me, it was more than just a teaching opportunity – it was a chance to witness firsthand the growing enthusiasm among fire marshals for advancing their knowledge and enhancing their leadership skills. The two-day program provided a comprehensive introduction to essential topics for effectively managing fire prevention programs, including leadership principles, legal matters for code officials, navigating the political landscape, and strategic planning.

With about 50 engaged attendees, the energy in the room was palpable as participants eagerly exchanged ideas and insights, demonstrating a clear commitment to their professional growth. Steve and I were thrilled to see the dedication and passion of those new to fire prevention leadership roles and seasoned veterans looking for a refresher. The IFMA Management Institute aims to inspire this kind of engagement across fire marshal offices nationwide.

(Continued Next Page)



President Laurie Christensen Presenting on Data and Community Risk Reduction Strategies



Past President Steve Peavy Presenting Politics and Government Leadership

IFMA Management Institute in Alabama

Continued from previous page

Dan Wilkerson, President of the Alabama Fire Marshal's Association, expressed his appreciation for the program: "

The IFMA instructors were very knowledgeable and interactive with our attendees. The Fire Marshal Association of Alabama benefited greatly from the knowledge we gained from the IFMA Management Institute Program. The program was unique in equipping Fire Marshals with a wide variety of topics not available through other programs for Fire Marshals."

Inspired by the positive feedback and the collaborative spirit of the attendees, the entire IFMA Executive Board are excited to continue supporting this kind of professional development across the country. We look forward to expanding our engagement with more IFMA chapters, fostering a national network of fire marshals focused on addressing current challenges, and celebrating the positive, innovative programs making a difference worldwide. I believe that by increasing these opportunities for dialogue and collaboration, fire marshals can learn from each other's successes and collectively elevate the profession.

The IFMA Executive Board is committed to creating more opportunities for these critical discussions, focusing not only on concerns such as NFPA 3000, single stairwell legislation, and recruitment challenges, but also on highlighting the positive strides being made in fire prevention and life safety around the globe. We continue to see incredible programs being implemented in fire marshal's offices everywhere—from community risk reduction initiatives to advancements in fire safety technology. These success stories deserve to be shared and celebrated as they inspire others and drive the profession forward. This isn't just a job for us; it's a career, and we're committed to bringing in new generational leadership and innovative concepts to keep our communities safe.

Laurie Christensen, IFMA President
Harris County, TX Fire Marshal



Alabama Fire Marshals Association—IFMA Management Program
September 23, 2024



Executive Secretary's Report

We are literally days away from Fire Prevention Week 2024! This year's theme, "Smoke Alarms, Make Them Work For You!" continues previous Fire Prevention Week messages related to smoke alarms and the importance of this life saving device. It still amazes me that after all the work that has gone into codes and standards and public education efforts for both adults and children, that we still have to keep preaching the message about the importance and simplicity of this proven method of protection.

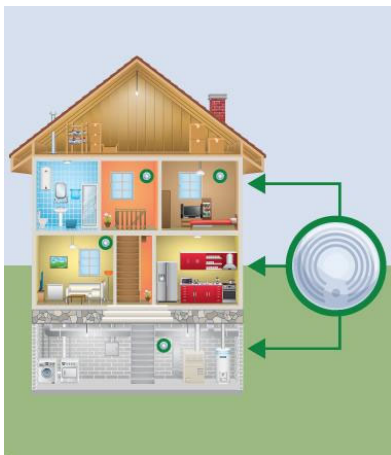
The National Fire Protection Association resources are available for you use—many of which are free for the downloading. Visit [FPW.org](https://www.nfpa.org/fire-prevention-week) to see the announcement video and look under "FPW Materials" to see all that's available for your use locally.

Your IFMA Board of Directors continues to work on issues that are important to our Chapters and Members. Recently, Board of Directors Member Nick Dawe represented the Association at NFPA's Single Stairway Symposium, and President Laurie Christensen along with Past President Steve Peavey presented the two day IFMA Management Institute program to the Alabama Chapter. Make sure to check their reports in the previous pages.

Also, the Codes and Standards Committee continues to focus on getting adequate representation on NFPA Technical Committees, and has recently had two members appointed to those committees. The Board continues to work on identifying which Technical Committees are deficient in fire marshal representation and will be updating the list at the end of this Quarterly as needed. If you are interested in applying to and representing IFMA on one of those, make sure you contact the Board of Directors to start the process.

*Robby Dawson
NFPA SE Regional Director
IFMA Executive Secretary*

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK—CALL TO ACTION MESSAGES



INSTALL



TEST



REPLACE

NASFM/IFMA Partnership a Success

This past July IFMA and the National Association of State Fire Marshals joined forces for the 2024 Fire Prevention Conference in Kansas City. This was the second year NASFM also collaborated with the Carbon Monoxide Awareness Association to host their conference as well.

Collaboration with other fire safety and life safety organizations has been a focus of the IFMA Board of Directors the last two years, and this event showcased how NASFM, IFMA, and COAA have similar goals and objectives as well as learning opportunities for our members and stakeholders.

In addition to the training and educational opportunities, the IFMA Codes and Standards Committee held joint meetings with the NASFM Codes and Standards Committee to collaborate and compare notes on upcoming code development meetings. This helps bring a more unified voice in support of, or opposition to, the critical component of the Fire and Life Safety Ecosystem component of "Development and Use of Current Codes".

Following the conference, the IFMA Board and the NASFM Board both agreed that this will be an ongoing partnership which will offer IFMA Members the same conference benefits as the NASFM membership. We look forward to working with NASFM and COAA for the 2025 conference as well.

Keep an eye out in early 2025 for the dates and registration for the next conference.



IFMA President Laurie Christensen Welcoming comments at the conference opening.



The Importance of Portable Fire Extinguishers

Dwayne Garriss, IFMA Georgia Chapter

That little red fire extinguisher in the hallway corner of your office building, apartment complex, or home, could actually be a significant weapon in the battle against climate change.

Don't think so? Consider: Fire risk makes up 1-2 percent of a building's overall carbon footprint. Structure fires are estimated to contribute between 0.5 to 1 percent of the country's total carbon footprint, amounting to a staggering 25-50 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually. That is equivalent to more than the output of 5-to-10 million cars a year, and these numbers don't take into account automobile fires, trash fires, and wildfires.

How to reduce the amount of CO₂ from structure fires seems obvious: preventing these fires completely is the most effective means to avoid the release of CO₂. Once a fire starts, the earlier it is extinguished, the lower the amount of CO₂ is released. So, when a fire is small, in its incipient stage, is the best time to address the issue. And that means arming ourselves with the necessary tool: portable fire extinguishers. In fact, one recent study found that sprinklers and portable fire extinguishers in combination can reduce the carbon footprint of a structure fire by 99 percent.

And yet, astonishingly, some federal governmental agencies and a handful of states, no longer require portable fire extinguishers to be installed in common areas when buildings are equipped with quick response sprinklers. These policy makers seem to think that prioritizing evacuation over extinguishing a small fire is a safer approach. Although their intentions might be to promote personal safety, it likely has the opposite effect. This rationale has broader implications that could be dangerous if private businesses and residential buildings adopt similar policies.

The federal government has pledged to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2032 and to achieve net-zero building emissions by 2045. One often-overlooked source of carbon emissions is from building fires. As governments work towards a united and comprehensive approach to tackling climate change, it is important to account for a building's entire carbon footprint, especially when one major source of emissions, building fires, can be easily and effectively managed.

Statistically, individuals can easily use fire extinguishers and effectively prevent fires from spreading while minimizing the potential damage caused by automatic fire-suppression systems.

While evacuating a burning building is undoubtedly crucial, it is not always the most practical solution. In many cases, individuals using fire extinguishers can quickly get small fires under control. This swift intervention prevents the fire from spreading, and often results in complete extinguishment prior to firefighters arriving on scene.

Moreover, relying solely on automatic fire-suppression equipment can lead to collateral damage to furnishings, because sprinkler systems are not able to discriminate between a minor fire and a full-scale inferno.

(Continued Next Page)

The Importance of Portable Fire Extinguishers

(Continued from previous page)

Fire safety experts have long emphasized the importance of layered fire protection by having readily accessible fire extinguishers in buildings. These devices empower individuals to take immediate action when a fire breaks out, allowing them to contain or even extinguish flames before they escalate. By equipping people with the knowledge and tools to combat fires, we can significantly reduce the potential for property damage, injuries, and loss of life. Studies have shown that 98% of participants are able to successfully use an extinguisher by pulling the pin, squeezing the trigger, and discharging the extinguisher, with nearly 74% using the proper technique of aiming at the base of the fire and using a back and forth motion until the fire was extinguished. With just a few minutes of training, those numbers went up to 100% and 96%, respectively.

Furthermore, embracing the installation and use of portable fire extinguishers aligns with a broader ethos of individual responsibility and preparedness. Just as we equip ourselves with seat belts and airbags in vehicles or install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms in our homes, having fire extinguishers readily available is a prudent step toward safeguarding our well-being. It empowers individuals to take an active role in fire prevention and response, fostering a sense of community resilience and bolstering safety.

As we strive to combat climate change and reduce carbon emissions, every avenue for reduction should be explored. Addressing fire safety in buildings should not be viewed in isolation but, rather, as part of a comprehensive strategy to prevent climate change. By providing individuals with the means to combat small fires, we can prevent them from growing into catastrophic events, reducing both the immediate danger and the subsequent release of carbon emissions.

Dwyane Garriss retired as the Georgia State Fire Marshal and remains active in fire safety with the Georgia IFMA Chapter and works with fire equipment manufacturers on code related issues.



Codes and Standards Committee at Work

The IFMA Codes and Standards Committee is continuing to seek representatives for the NFPA Technical Committees listed below. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees to represent and communication with the IFMA Board, forward an email to IFMA@nfpa.org and let us know what committee interests you, and we will guide you through the application process.

This is not a guarantee that you will be selected to serve on a Technical Committee. The decision on membership to any NFPA Technical Committee rests with the NFPA Standards Council and will depend upon the current make-up and membership of that committee.

NFPA 3: Standard for Commissioning of Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems

NFPA 4: Standard for Integrated Fire Protection and Life Safety System Testing

NFPA 30: Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code

- * Committee on Operations
- * Committee on Storage and Warehousing

NFPA 54: National Fuel Gas Code

NFPA 72: National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code

- * Committee on Testing and Maintenance
- * Committee on Public Emergency Reporting
- * Committee on Protected Premises

There is no financial support available through IFMA, however those who qualify can apply for funding through the Enforcer Funding Program.

Learn more about qualifications, expectations, and requirements for Technical Committee membership at www.nfpa.com/Codes-and-Standards

Important Dates and Meetings

October 15, 2024: Board of Directors Meeting (Virtual)

February 12-13, 2025: Board of Directors Meeting and CFSI Dinner, Washington, DC

June 15, 2025: IFMA Chapter Presidents Meeting (tentative), Las Vegas, NV.

Board of Director Meetings are open for IFMA Members to attend unless a closed session is declared. Contact the Executive Secretary via email at IFMA@nfpa.org for information on how to attend.

Chapter Presidents Meetings are exclusively for the President of an IFMA Chapter or their designee.

Code Development Dates

NFPA 1 Fire Code: First Draft Posting Date, Feb 13, 2025
Public Comment Closing, Apr 24, 2025

NFPA 1 Life Safety Code: First Draft Posting Date, Mar 25, 2025
Public Comment Closing, Jun 3, 2025

NFPA 400 Haz Mat Code: Public Input Closing, Jun 4, 2025

View a complete list of codes under development at: [Code Status Page](#)

IFMA Executive Board

Laurie Christensen, *President*
Fire Marshal
Harris County, TX
E-mail: laurie.christensen@fmo.hctx.net

Ken Bush, Term Expires 2025
Chief Fire Protection Engineer
Maryland State Fire Marshals Office
E-mail: Kenneth.bush@maryland.gov

Kevin Sehlmeier, *First Vice President*
State Fire Marshal
Michigan State Fire Marshals Office
E-mail: sehlmeierk@michigan.gov

Ariana Kistner, Term Expires 2025
Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal
Rockwall Fire Department
Rockwall, TX
E-mail: akistner@rockwall.com

Kip LaMotte, *Second Vice President*
Fire Marshal
New Brighton Fire Division
New Brighton, MN
E-mail: kip.lamotte@newbrightonmn.gov

Byron Mathews, 1st Term, Expires 2026
State Fire Marshal
Wyoming Director Department of Fire Prevention
E-mail: byron.mathews@wyo.gov

Justin Finan, *Secretary*
Captain/Deputy Fire Marshal
Henrico Division of Fire
Henrico, VA
E-mail: fin04@henrico.us

Nick Dawe, 2nd Term, Expires 2026
Division Chief/Fire Marshal
Cobb County Fire and Emergency Services
Cobb County, GA
Email nick.dawe@cobbcounty.org

Ken Tyree, *Immediate Past President*
Fire Marshal
West Virginia State Fire Marshals Office
Email: Kenneth.E.Tyree@WV.gov

Robby Dawson, *Executive Secretary*
NFPA SE Regional Director
E-mail: rdawson@nfpa.org
Cell: 804-401-9063

Fire Marshals Quarterly

The mission of the International Fire Marshals Association is to aid in the preservation of life and property by advocating, promoting and providing leadership in the prevention or mitigation of fire, explosions and other related hazardous conditions.

IFMA was incorporated in 1906.
In 1927, IFMA became a membership section of NFPA.

Published quarterly as a service to the membership of the
International Fire Marshals Association (IFMA).

The articles published in the Quarterly are the opinion of the
authors and not necessarily the opinion of IFMA or NFPA.

Editor: Robby Dawson

International Fire Marshals Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169
E-mail ifma@nfpa.org

IFMA Chapters

Fire Marshals Association of Alabama, Chapter 8
Arizona Fire Marshals Association, Chapter 5
Arkansas Fire Marshals Association, Chapter 26
California Fire Prevention Officers, Southern Div.
Chapter 27
California Fire Prevention Officers, Northern Div.
Chapter 28
Fire Marshals Association of Colorado, Chapter 20
Fire Marshals Association of Delaware Valley, Chapter 6
Florida Fire Marshals & Inspectors Association, Chapter 3
Georgia Fire Prevention Association, Chapter 35
Illinois Fire Inspectors Association, Chapter 15
Iowa Fire Marshals Association, Chapter 24
Fire Marshals Association of Kansas, Chapter 32
Kentucky Fire Inspectors Association, Chapter 31
Maryland State Chapter of IFMA, Chapter 36
Michigan Fire Inspectors Society, Chapter 1
Fire Marshals Association of Minnesota, Chapter 11
Fire Prevention Association of Nevada, Chapter 22
New England Association of Fire Marshals, Chapter 2
New Jersey Fire Prevention and Protection Association,
Chapter 21
New York State Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association,
Chapter 4
North Carolina Fire Marshals Association, Chapter 12
Ohio Fire Officials Association, Chapter 25
Fire Marshals Association of Oklahoma, Chapter 7
Oregon Fire Marshals Association, Chapter 19
South Carolina Fire Marshals Association, Chapter 14
South Dakota Fire and Life Safety Committee, Chapter 33
Tennessee Fire Safety Inspectors Association, Chapter 16
Texas Fire Marshals Association, Chapter 9
Fire Marshals Association of Utah, Chapter 17
Virginia Fire Prevention Association, Chapter 29
Washington Chapter, Chapter 18
West Virginia Chapter, Chapter 13
Wisconsin Fire Inspectors Association, Chapter 23
Wyoming Association of Fire Marshals, Chapter 34