



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460
(916) 445-8200
Website: www.fire.ca.gov



**Smoke Alarm Task Force
Office of the State Fire Marshal**

1131 S Street, Sacramento
March 28, 2011, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

NOTES

Attendees:

Ruben Grijalva (Co-Chair)
Vickie Sakamoto (Co-Chair)
Ray Bizal
Kevin Cimini
Gene Gantt
Howard Hopper
Ray Iverson
Bob Latz
Jay Levy
Jessica Power
Doug Williams
Morgana Yahnke

Via Phone:

Shane Clary
Tom Fabian
Wendy Gifford
Sarah Owen
Jim Palisi
Ken Quick
Larry Ratzlaff
Richard Roberts
Randy Sekany
Gordon Simpkinson

Guests:

Tom Cleary
Ken Kraus
Lee Richardson

AGENDA TOPICS

1. **Welcome and Roll Call**
2. **Review/Approve February 16-17, 2011 Notes**
 - Notes were approved by all.
 - Ruben Grijalva suggested that when submitting additional documents via email to the Co-chairs; indicate permission to forward them to committee members. The Co-Chairs will forward the information to all members to discuss/consider at the next meeting. All members agreed.
3. **Presentation - [Smoke Alarm Detection Technology](#)**
- Click on title to see presentation

PRESENTER

R. Grijalva/V. Sakamoto

R. Grijalva/V. Sakamoto

L. Richardson

4. Presentation – [Results & Analysis - NIST Smoke Alarm Sensitivity Study](#)

T. Cleary

- Click on title to see presentation

5. Report – [R-27 An Evaluation of Fire Detectors For Residential Placement](#)

K. Kraus

- Click on title to see report

The following points were taken from group discussion:

- Los Angeles City study was trying to access the liability of heat detectors verses smoke detectors and not compare photoelectric verses ionization detectors.
- The testing was done jointly when efforts by IAFC and CFA FPO's were combined. Heat detectors being about ½ as effective in giving people time to escape
- The conclusion should be tempered with the benefit of more recent comprehensive studies conducted by science based standards and testing entities (e.g. UL, NIST, and NFPA).

6. Sub-Group Updates

Define “Nuisance Alarms” - Richard Roberts

The following points were taken from group discussion:

- Malicious alarm, Nuisance alarm, Unwanted alarm & False alarm.
- Get rid of unwanted alarms. All 4 are unwanted but you could label them differently.
- Do situation analysis; what is the situation and can we document that so we can come up with some recommendations that are actionable?
- What cause unwanted alarms?
- Are we getting alarms when we don't want them?
- Woodland Texas study and Washington study
- Cooking nuisance alarm – look at moving farther.
- Nuisance alarm- Particulates/Moisture (condensation) more common.
- Proper location of installation vs. maintenance
- Are people disabling alarms because they are malicious, unwanted, false, nuisance or all of the above?
- Acceptance of proposed definitions was moved to the next meeting. The final suggestion was to look at actual scenarios before deciding on definitions. Group to rework definitions based on the input they have heard.

Statistics & Human Factors - Ray Bizal

The group has established ground rules and has a meeting scheduled for next Wednesday, March 30th. They will have information and statistics at the next meeting.

Adequate # of Alarms/Placement - Ken Quick

The following points were taken from group discussion:

- Number of alarms will be based on codes.
- Ionization is the preferred device because it's less expensive to builders and to home owners. People do not understand where to install and we to educate the electrician/building inspectors the proper placement.
- How do we get the word out to the person installing them in their own home, i.e. training sessions at Home Depot?
- Packaging to address concerns or insert?
- Get information to rental housing and home inspectors doing residential home sales.
- Have problem statements and then recommendations.

- Will address different ways of getting information out through manufactures, rental and home inspectors and Real Estate Law.

The Importance of Smoke Alarms - Richard Roberts

The following points were taken from group discussion:

- Mission statement/statistics were sent out to the group.
- Interested in statistics of the number of alarms per home (survivability).
- Importance of interconnection. It is required but appears not to be enforced. How can we make this happen?

Smoke Alarm Technologies - Shane Clary

The following points were taken from group discussion:

- Preliminary report was sent in. It can be more technical if the group prefers.
- Dual component technology to be added.
- The difference between Ionization and Photoelectric.
- Talk about the four technologies and which ones are more effective for what type of fires. Educate people about the new technologies including the dual technology information.
- Multi criteria alarms: describe how they would work. Are there statistics available? Give a brief description on how they operate.

Current State Regulation - Kevin Cimini and Vickie Sakamoto

The following points were taken from group discussion:

- Manufactured home requirements.
- List code sections - not verbatim.
- List the summary of regulations.
- Include terms of mandatory replacement beyond a certain age limit or be replaced at transfer of title.

Related Standard & Code Considerations - Richard Roberts

The following points were taken from group discussion:

- Group looked at UL product safety standards.
- All devices must pass same fire tests no matter what technology.
- Possible changes to NFPA 72, ongoing study.

Miscellaneous Task

- Don Russell's presentation is rescheduled to the April meeting.
- Marc, Jay and Gordon will provide their presentation at the April meeting.
- Next meeting date confirmed on April 20-21st.
- Task Force approved documents to be added to the website.
- Plan to look only at relatively recent studies/U.S. Studies
- Bring recommendations to the April meeting.
- Suggestion for the Nuisance Alarm Task Group to specifically cover seven items: cooking, steam, humidity, fireplaces, low battery, maintenance and replacement.