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**INFORMATIONAL LETTER #2010-06**

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**DATE:** July 22, 2010

**TO:** ALL IDAHO INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITIES  
FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL RETARDATION

**FROM:** DEBBY RANSOM, R.N., R.H.I.T., Chief  
Bureau of Facility Standards

**SUBJECT:** **Sprinkler System Alert**

Based upon information provided by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) we are notifying you of a potential problem involving a small number of residential fire sprinkler systems.

If your facility has a residential sprinkler system (13D or 13R) **and** the system contains an antifreeze product, action is needed. If your system does not contain antifreeze, you may disregard this announcement. These systems are commonly seen in intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR).

NFPA received a report of a kitchen fire not being suppressed as designed; the incident involved a grease fire in a kitchen. The fire resulted in a single fatality and serious injury to another person.

NFPA issued a safety alert and is recommending that residential fire sprinkler systems containing antifreeze be drained and the antifreeze replaced with water. NFPA has initiated an investigation and hopes to provide long-term solutions before winter freezing temperatures are expected.

NFPA offers the following interim guidance on residential sprinklers:

- Fire sprinklers are extremely effective fire protection devices, significantly reducing deaths, injuries, and property loss from fire.

- These systems should not be disconnected.
- If you have, or are responsible for, a residential occupancy with a fire sprinkler system, contact a sprinkler contractor to check and see if there is antifreeze in the system.
- If there is antifreeze in the system, as an interim measure, drain the system and replace it with water only. Problems associated with freezing of sprinkler pipes can be mitigated by alternative measures such as insulation. NFPA hopes to provide further guidance based on additional testing before the winter freezing months.
- If you are putting in a new residential sprinkler system, design and install a system that does not require antifreeze.

“We are providing this safety alert as interim guidance based on the information we have right now,” said James M. Shannon, President of NFPA. “As soon as more information is available, we will update the public.”

The NFPA Safety Alert Regarding Antifreeze in Residential Sprinklers and more information on this topic can be found at [www.nfpa.org/antifreeze](http://www.nfpa.org/antifreeze).

If your facility has a 13D or 13R system that contains antifreeze, please notify Mark Grimes, Supervisor, Facility Fire Safety and Construction Program at (208) 334-6626 or by email at [fsb@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:fsb@dhw.idaho.gov). Further information will be provided directly to you as more details become available.



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DEBBY RANSOM, R.N., R.H.I.T., Chief  
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DR/nm

c: IHCA-ICAL  
Idaho State Fire Marshal  
Local City/County Fire Marshals