6-29-1972

Letter from J.G. Degenkolb/Code Consultant

J. G. Degenkolb
John G. Degenkolb
FIRE PROTECTION ENGINEER - CODE CONSULTANT
1720 Chevy Knoll Dr., Glendale, California 91206
Telephone: (213) 245-3075
June 29, 1972

George Clark
PYROTRONICS
8 Ridgedale Rd.
Cedar Knolls, N. J. 07927

Duane Pearsall
STATITROL
140 S. Union
Lakewood, Colo.

Don Steele
ELECTRO SIGNAL LAB
1022 Hingham St.
Rockland, Mass. 02370

Gentlemen:

At the June 29, 1972 BOCA Annual Meeting I was successful in getting the Code Change which would have required a single station detector and alarm in each residence and apartment of an apartment house changed from DENIED to FURTHER STUDY so that it will come up again next year. Otherwise I would not have been able to re-submit such a change for another 2 years. We almost got it completely reversed and modified to read:

"All multiple family dwellings (use group L-2) and one-and-two family dwelling units (use group L-3) shall be provided with an approved detector of products of combustion other than heat installed in an approved manner."

The underscored words took the place of all the other description as to the placement of the detectors. The reference to UL 168 was dropped because it does not specifically refer to ionization type detectors and the strong objections of the National Assoc. of Home Builders and some Building Officials. Mr. McNabb of UL talked and said that they did actually have a Standard but it was not in publication. This means that each of you would have to submit your device to BOCA with test information, recommendations as to placement, etc. and the BOCA approval recommendation would spell out the installation details based on the information you provide.

I did succeed in reversing the recommendation of the Committee as to the requirement for detectors in elevator lobbies. It was recommended for DENIAL but it was reversed to APPROVAL AS SUBMITTED.

Please send information on your home detector units, performance characteristics, cost etc. to Alan Trellis, Asst. Director
Technical Services
National Assoc. of Home Builders
1625 L St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036. He is the man who will oppose the acceptance of home detectors by I.C.B.O. in September at the Kansas City, Mo. meeting.

I still think it would be a good idea for you to submit 10 - 12 of the detectors to the Research Committees of both BOCA and I.C.B.O. so that they can examine them. It would be even better if you requested a Research Committee Recommendation for approval from each.

Sincerely,
[Signature]
1614.3 Door Operation on Dangerous Floors: Each elevator lobby or entrance area shall be provided with heat and smoke sensing elements which will not permit the elevator doors to open when there is a temperature of two hundred fifty (250) degrees F., or a smoke obscuration of three hundredths (0.03) optical density per foot or more at ceiling height or at an elevation of twelve (12) feet, whichever is lower, at the elevator entrance.

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SUPPORTING STATEMENT (S)

There have been numerous deaths where firemen and others have been trapped because the elevator doors opened on a fire floor. The basis for establishing the criteria suggested is given on the attached hand-written memo from the National Bureau of Standards.
1219.11 Residential Buildings: All hotels, lodging houses, dormitories and bath houses (use group L-1) having more than fifteen (15) sleeping rooms above the first floor with an occupancy load of fifty (50) or more shall be equipped with an approved fire alarm system.

All multiple-family dwellings (use group L-2) and one- and two-family dwelling units (use group L-3) shall be provided with an approved detector of products of combustion other than heat, conforming to UL 168] mounted on the ceiling or wall at a point centrally located and within twelve (12) inches of the ceiling of the corridor or providing access to sleeping compartments shall be placed approximately at the ceiling directly above the stairway when sleeping compartments are on an upper level. When actuated, the detector shall provide an alarm suitable to warn the occupants.

As stated by the ICBO Fire and Life Safety Committee in recommending the above revision in the Uniform Building Code, "Life loss in residential buildings can be attributed mainly to the failure of occupants to awaken when fire occurs. Economical detection devices are now available and should be utilized for the protection of occupants. Devices are low in maintenance costs and operate on a fail safe principal. Smoke detection can be expected to operate prior to the development of severe fire conditions. Placement outside of bedroom access areas will result in the greatest possible response. Although it is not possible to provide complete safety to the occupants, studies indicate that the use of detectors of this type can result in a substantial reduction in life loss in residential fires."