6-22-1973

D.D. Pearsall to Beverly Eicholz of ICBO

Duane Pearsall
June 22, 1977

Ms. Beverly Eicholtz
International Conference of
Building Officials
5360 South Workman Hill Road
Whittier, California 90601

Subject: "Fire Detection for Life Safety
National Research Council
National Academy of Sciences
March 31, 1975

Dear Beverly:

This will confirm our phone of Friday, June 17, to provide a supplemental statement as an update on the attached paper.

This letter will also authorize ICBO to use the article with whatever deletions or editorial changes are desired. The following is a supplemental update statement on the paper "Fire Detection for Life Safety" presented to the National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, March 31, 1975:

"History should properly recognize that the International Conference of Building Officials, by its action at the Fall Conference, 1973, of requiring an early warning smoke detector in one and two family homes, as well as apartments, created the stimulus to save thousands from death by fire or smoke.

Going back to the very beginning of this era, those seven members of the Fire and Life Safety Committee who met in Phoenix, Arizona, April 1972, should be justly proud of their decision. John G. (Gus) Degenkolb should be nationally recognized for his tenacious promoting of the need for home smoke detectors for years prior to and culminating in that first breakthrough at the Phoenix meeting.

The rewards for that effort and those ICBO decisions are measured today in hundreds of lives being saved and thousands of fire injuries prevented. Few should challenge the fact that the general acceptance of
By whatever adjustments or corrections might be made to the above numbers, the most important fact is that the home fire fatality rate in this country must be coming down. There will also be thousands of less fire injuries, most of which occur to firemen and children.

ICBO took the first step — and the world ought to know."

Sincerely yours,

Duane D. Pearsall
President

Attachment
home smoke alarms would not have happened if building code authorities had not certified to their value and required their installation in new homes and apartments.

The following is an update of statistics based upon the same criteria described in that section of the paper entitled "What Could Have Happened":

"What Could Have Happened"
Updated to Mid 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Home Smoke Alarms Installed</th>
<th>Home Fire Fatalities Per Year</th>
<th>Home Fire Injuries Per Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net: Living Units Per Year</td>
<td>Total Living Units Equipped With Alarms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>285,000</td>
<td>285,000</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>975,000</td>
<td>1,260,000</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2,850,000</td>
<td>4,110,000</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>5,250,000</td>
<td>9,360,000</td>
<td>764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
<td>17,360,000</td>
<td>1,417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above numbers are approximations. For instance, total homes protected with early warning detectors by the end of 1973 were estimated at 300,000. In 1973 it was estimated that only one per cent of the homes had more than one early warning detector. By 1977, however, the chart is based upon 40% of the living units being equipped with two or more smoke alarms.

The chart suggests that over 1400 lives are being saved per year in 1977 due to the fact that 17 million living units will be protected by at least one early warning detector. This figure assumes not only an impossible 100% perfect performance of each detector, but that detectors would save those lives lost as a result of explosive flammables, etc. Perhaps a more reasonable adjustment would be that percentage matching national statistics of fatalities caused by smoke inhalation. On that basis, approximately 75% of the above fatalities and injuries will have been prevented.