



See the sprinkler head? Most sprinkler heads in homes are concealed giving them a very low profile. A smoke detector has a larger profile than a fire sprinkler head.



Fire sprinklers being installed in a house under construction on Northview Dr. in Urbandale.

Unfortunately, there are several special interest groups that oppose minimum levels of safety such as home fire sprinkler systems. One of the biggest problems is the public does not receive factual information on these life safety systems. Here are resources where you can get factual information:

[www.homefiresprinkler.org](http://www.homefiresprinkler.org)

[www.firesprinklerinitiative.org](http://www.firesprinklerinitiative.org)

[www.firesprinklerassoc.org](http://www.firesprinklerassoc.org)

[www.urbandale.org](http://www.urbandale.org)

When in doubt, contact the people who have firsthand experience about the effectiveness and installation of fire sprinkler systems—your fire department!



3927 121st St.

Urbandale, IA 50323

Phone: (515) 278-3970

Email: [fire@urbandale.org](mailto:fire@urbandale.org)

[www.urbandale.org](http://www.urbandale.org)

[www.facebook.com/urbandalefiredepartment](https://www.facebook.com/urbandalefiredepartment)



## Fire Sprinklers & Smoke Detectors-Saving Lives and Property Everyday!!



Smoke detectors are an important early notification device in your home to alert you to a fire! Many fire deaths in homes occur where there were either no smoke detectors present or the detectors did not work. Home fire sprinklers in conjunction with smoke detectors give you the best chance of surviving a fire as well as minimizing the devastating effects of fire.

## Smoke Detectors

### Did You Know?

Smoke detector manufacturers recommend that detectors be replaced at least every 10 years and batteries be replaced at least annually.

### Technology is Good!

All new residential construction in Iowa is required to have dual sensor smoke detectors. Most detectors in homes currently use "ionization" technology, which are best for early detection of rapidly spreading, flaming fires. "Photoelectric" technology best detects slow burning, smoldering fires. Dual sensor smoke detectors combine both technologies into one detector.

### What if My Detectors Do Not Need to be Replaced Right Now?

If the ionization or photoelectric smoke detectors in your home currently meet all the manufacturer's recommendations, you are not required to immediately replace them. When it comes time, they need to be replaced with dual sensor detectors.

### Will I Notice Anything Different with Dual Sensor Detectors?

No. The appearance, mounting instructions, maintenance, and testing procedures mimic the detectors you currently have in your home. Please read and follow the manufacturer's instructions.



## Home Fire Sprinklers

The National Building and Residential Codes have required fire sprinklers in homes as a minimum requirement since 2009. However, elected officials in Urbandale have chosen to remove this minimum level of protection from new homes. Data from communities across the U.S. have shown home fire sprinklers are effective, affordable, and save lives.

MYTH: Requiring fire sprinklers makes housing "unaffordable."

FACT: A recent study conducted by the Fire Protection Research Foundation showed the average cost for a fire sprinkler system in a new home is \$1.35/square foot.\* Fire sprinkler opponents have never been able to provide data or research to show how home fire sprinklers caused a negative economic impact in a community that has required fire sprinklers in new homes.

MYTH: Sprinklers go off accidentally, causing unnecessary water damage.

FACT: Accidental sprinkler discharge is extremely rare. Things like burnt toast and cigarette smoke will not trigger sprinkler operation. Each sprinkler works independently and only in response to the heat of the fire. Studies have shown that over 90% of the time a fire is controlled or extinguished with no more than 2 sprinkler heads activating.

MYTH: A smoke alarm provides enough protection.

FACT: If operational, smoke alarms may alert occupants to the presence of danger, but they do nothing to extinguish or control the fire.

\* A copy of this study can be downloaded from [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)



Testing conducted by Underwriters Laboratories shows that structural materials used to build new homes today are prone to collapse sooner when exposed to fire. In addition, homes today are primarily furnished with items made from plastic and synthetic materials which burn faster and release more heat and toxic smoke than furnishings made from natural fibers, significantly reducing the time someone has to escape a fire.

### SPRINKLERS: A SAFE, SMART CHOICE

Many communities across the U.S. are seeing impressive results from installing home fire sprinklers in all new homes. Data from Bucks County, PA helps illustrate this:

*Overall, there were 90 fire deaths in non-sprinklered 1-2 family dwellings in Bucks County from 1988-2010 (88% of all county fire deaths during that time frame). No fire deaths occurred in sprinklered dwellings. Five fire incidents in sprinklered homes have been documented as saving at least 5 lives. The average property loss in the sprinklered home fire incidents was \$14,000, with an average of 340 gallons of water used to extinguish the fires. These incidents can be compared to 51 fires in non-sprinklered homes from 2005-2010, in which the average fire loss per incident was \$179,896. For those fires where water usage was available, an average of 5,974 gallons of water was needed to extinguish the fires.\*\**

\*\* A copy of this report can be obtained from UFD or downloaded from [www.homefiresprinkler.org](http://www.homefiresprinkler.org)