

FIRE SYSTEMS INSTALLATIONS

NFPA-CHINA PACT GOOD FOR INSTALLERS

By Martha Entwistle, managing editor

QUINCY, Mass.—American fire systems manufacturers and installers may see increased business as the result of a licensing agreement signed in July by National Fire Protection Association president James Shannon and the Tianjin Fire Research Institute of China.

While “the main purpose of the agreement is to ensure that products meet safety requirements,” said Olga Caledonia, executive director of global operations for the NFPA, “these agreements do open [trade] markets” for American companies.

Shannon said in a statement that the agreement, which is for the translation of more than 30 NFPA codes, handbooks and reference materials, “greatly broadens the reach of fire prevention messages and safety practices within the international community.” The NFPA has been active in China for more than a decade, with official representa-

tion in that country since 2003. The NFPA plans to open an office in Beijing before the end of the year.

Several American companies work with the NFPA in its international efforts. Isaac Papier, vice president of industry relations for Honeywell Life Safety, noted that many countries with “emerging economies look to the U.S. as a model for business, education, manufacturing and safety. When it comes to safety, the NFPA name is often mentioned.”

In June, Papier conducted a seminar in Vietnam, with Yunnan Liu, NFPA’s chief China representative. “Although most people in the audience did not know exactly what NFPA does, all were aware that it is part of

the U.S. safety system.”

Papier said the Chinese licensing agreements “can help both U.S. manufacturers and installers when the NFPA code or a harmonized document is adopted as the national norm in the contracting country. Clearly this makes it much easier for companies familiar with the NFPA codes to do business in these countries.”

Papier encouraged more American companies to get involved in the process. “In order for NFPA to achieve this type of success, it must have a sustained presence in these countries. Such presence is an expensive undertaking and industry should not expect NFPA to do this alone,” he said. “As there is clear benefit to U.S. industry for emerging economies to adopt the NFPA system of codes and standards, we must work with NFPA to achieve the required level of support.” **SSN**



Jim Shannon

COOK COMPLETES SCHOOL PROJECT

*Fire & security co.
still leads with fire*

By Martha Entwistle, managing editor

NORTH OLMSTEAD, Ohio—Cook Fire and Security recently finished installing a \$250,000 addressable smoke detector and fire alarm system in three schools in nearby Conneaut: a renovated high school and new junior high and elementary schools.

The 250-point addressable fire system, made by Honeywell, interfaces with a security and access control system, which Cook also installed.

“In the case of an emergency, all of the doors can be opened,” explained Robert Cook, owner of the company.

Nearly 100 percent of Cook’s installation work is commercial, from small retail shops to large specialty installations such as a correctional facility he did a couple years ago.

Cook has been in business for 13 years and has four employees. He started out just doing fire, but branched out into security because his customers were requesting it.

Diversifying into security was relatively easy, since there are fewer codes to worry about, he said. The majority of his business, roughly 80 percent, is still in fire, and in Ohio fire codes are adopted locally instead of statewide. Cook cites “keeping up with codes and staying on top of changes” as the number one challenge of his business.

These days, 60 to 75 percent of his overall business, which serves the Northern Ohio market, is generated by service contracts, specifically fire alarm system and extinguisher inspections and service. It helps that his four employees have years of expertise in fire and security, he said. Their experience helps Cook win the big jobs, and enables the company to successfully comply with the codes in different area towns.

And as with many small businesses, the owner and president is working alongside his employees. “I’m out there installing, too,” Cook said. **SSN**

BRIEFS

Darsch honored

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—Charles G. Darsch of Honeywell Fire Systems will be awarded the 2006 Triton Award at an October 24 event in New York City.

The award is presented annually by the Security Industry Association, the National Burglar & Fire Alarm Association and the Central Station Alarm Association for “outstanding dedication and significant contributions to the associations and the security industry at large.”

“Charlie is a scholar and a gentleman. He has been a fixture in this industry for almost four decades and has seen and been part of its tremendous growth and expansion,” said David Avritt, SIA director in a statement.

Architects, NFSA Partner

Over the last five years, the National Fire Sprinkler Association has delivered more than 150 free seminars to architectural students at 44 universities in 22 states.

These seminars, which have become part of the annual curriculum wherever presented, contain highlights of the full Design Advantage Seminars delivered to practicing architects nationwide.

Last year, the Design Advantage seminars cost students \$3,000, plus the textbooks. This year, due to the receipt of a very generous grant, NFSA can offer this seminar at no charge to American Institute of Architects Chapters. The same program is also available for colleges or universities and can be customized.

IAFC and NFSA issue guidelines

The International Association of Fire Chiefs and the National Fire Sprinkler Association announced the availability of guidelines for municipalities to adopt residential sprinkler mandates called, “Residential Fire Sprinklers...A Step-by-Step Approach for Communities.” The guide will be available on the web sites of both organizations for easy access by the nation’s fire chiefs.

The document covers planning and research, preparation, presentation and adoption, customer service, maintenance, challenges and appeals.

Code change sparks interest in axonX

By Martha Entwistle, managing editor

SPARKS, Md.—Foot traffic through axonX’s booth at the National Fire Protection Association World Safety Conference increased considerably once an NFPA technical committee voted to include language about video image smoke and flame detection equipment, known as VID, in NFPA 72.

AxonX, based here, is one of very few companies in this line of business. It develops fire detection hardware and software. Its signature product, Signifire, uses algorithms to analyze live video images, obtained by a standard security surveillance system, to detect fire and smoke.

Mac Mottley, president of axonX said, “We had a ton of people coming through our booth after the [technical committee] meeting.”

The committee voted to include two new sections about video smoke detection and video flame detection in the 2007 edition of NFPA 72, which will be released at the end of this month or early October.

The language says the technology will need to be listed and must meet a set of performance-

based requirements.

Lee Richardson, senior electrical engineer for NFPA, called this a “big first step” for VID companies. “Personally, I look at this as a beginning. It’s still in the process and the equipment still needs some development and refinement before it becomes something more commonplace,” he said.

Richardson said the technology may be well suited to some specific applications, but predicted that the technology “will probably not take the place of traditional smoke detection in most applications.”

AxonX executives, on the other hand, said they’re well on their way to meeting NFPA’s requirements.

“We will be FM [Factory Mutual] listed in a couple of months. We’ve passed the first round of tests and they’ll be coming up in a month to do a company audit,” Mottley said.

FM listing is the preferred listing for government, industrial and big commercial end users.

Mottley said he plans to get the network camera UL listed, pending some finalization of design and testing, within six months to a year.

AxonX received a \$2 million



Lee Richardson