

Massachusetts House Bill 2481, written by Representative Ruth B. Balser, is currently in the House Ways and Means committee. If passed it would offer cities and towns the option of requiring home fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family houses. (Not a resident of Massachusetts? Consider proposing legislation similar to House Bill 2481 in your state.)

Think about the wonderful opportunity that this offers the fire service. Every city and town in Massachusetts can present to the general public and town officials a program that shows that home fire sprinklers save lives. It's also an opportunity to reinforce other important lifesaving elements: functioning smoke and CO alarms, a family escape plan, among others.

Just the discussion of House bill 2481 will save lives, whether the town votes for it, or not.

Some Talking Points:

Fires start, and sometimes fires kill. According to the Department of Fire Services there are about 50 home fire deaths each year in Massachusetts. The primary causes have not changed through the years – smoking, cooking, electrical, heating.

A single **home fire sprinkler**, automatically activated by the heat of a fire, will spray water on the fire keeping it from spreading. This gives occupants additional time to get to safety.

Smoke alarms play a vital role in reducing fire deaths and injuries. If there is a fire in your home smoke spreads fast and you need smoke alarms to give you time to get out. Ideally smoke alarms should be interconnected – when one sounds they all sound. Keeping bedroom doors closed helps to keep smoke and fire from spreading into your bedrooms.

Look at everyone in your household and make a **family escape plan**. Walk through your home and inspect all possible exits and escape routes. Draw a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors.

If you support House Bill 2481 please contact:

- your department: fire chief, training officer, fire prevention officer, public information officer
- Mass. House Ways and Means Committee (State House, 24 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02133)

Chair: Representative Jeffrey Sanchez (15th Suffolk) Jeffrey.sanchez@mahouse.gov

Vice-Chair: Representative Stephen Kulik (1st Franklin) Stephen.Kulik@mahouse.gov

- your town government: mayor, board of selectmen
- your legislators: to find them visit: <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>
- your local newspaper

For more about home fire sprinklers, smoke alarms and surviving a fire visit:

<http://www.fire-police-ems.com/sprinklers.shtml>

Please pass this along to anyone who believes in home fire sprinklers or anyone who cares about fire safety. If you would like to be added to my sprinkler email list, please contact me.

Ira Hoffman, ira@fire-police-ems.com