

Committee Name:

Senate Committee – Economic Development, Job Creation and Housing (SC–EDJCH)

Appointments

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Committee Hearings

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Clearinghouse Rules

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Misc.

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Wisconsin Chapter
**Government &
Labor Relations**

Clearinghouse Rule 04-016 Comm 61-65 and 14

Background

Comm 61-65 represents Wisconsin's Commercial Building Code. Comm 14 is the Fire Protection Code. The current version of this Code became effective on July 1, 2002.

Clearinghouse Rule 04-016 was developed to incorporate numerous improvements that have been made in nationally recognized standards which are the basis for Wisconsin's Commercial Building Code (*International Code Council and the National Fire Protection Association*).

Issue

We desire to add a provision to CR04-016 that would eliminate smoke and heat vents and curtain boards from sprinklered buildings to CR04-016 (the topic is referenced in the 2002 Wisconsin Enrolled Code section 910).

Roof vents were originally used to aid fire fighting in unsprinkled buildings. These vents are designed to allow rising smoke and hot gasses to vent, thereby easing manual fire fighting. In sprinklered buildings, they are much less valuable and may even have a detrimental effect.

Nearly every major fire insurance underwriter in the country is opposed to the arbitrary installation of roof vents and draft curtains in buildings equipped with normal Automatic Fire Sprinkler Systems.

The majority of comments received during the public hearing on CR04-016 related to this issue, supported the elimination of smoke and heat vents.

The next opportunity to address this issue will be when Wisconsin considers the 2006 ICC code and adopts it in 2007. In the meantime, Wisconsin businesses will be burdened with the additional expense.

Action Requested

We request that the legislative committee(s) work with the Department of Commerce to add a germane modification eliminating the requirement for heat and smoke vents and curtain boards from all sprinklered buildings.

(Please see the attached comments from Mr. Steve Klessig, V.P. of Architecture & Engineering for Keller Inc. for a more complete treatment of the issue.)