



Tentative Interim Amendment

# NFPA 5000<sup>®</sup>

## Building Construction and Safety Code<sup>®</sup>

2006 Edition

**Reference:** A.16.3.4.3.4  
**TIA 06-1** (NFPA 5000)  
(SC 06-7-27)/Log No. 844

Pursuant to Section 5 of the NFPA Regulations Governing Committee Projects, the National Fire Protection Association has issued the following Tentative Interim Amendment to NFPA 5000<sup>®</sup> *Building Construction and Safety Code*<sup>®</sup>, 2006 edition. The TIA was processed by the Building Code Committee and was issued by the Standards Council on July 28, 2006, with an effective date of August 19, 2006.

A Tentative Interim Amendment is tentative because it has not been processed through the entire standards-making procedures. It is interim because it is effective only between editions of the standard. A TIA automatically becomes a proposal of the proponent for the next edition of the standard; as such, it then is subject to all of the procedures of the standards-making process.

Add an asterisk to 16.3.4.3.4 and add new annex text to chapter 16 for assembly occupancies as follows:

**A.16.3.4.3.4** Automatic occupant notification in assembly occupancies with occupant load sufficient to require a fire alarm system is problematic. The physical configuration (including large-volume spaces) of assembly venues and the human behavior characteristics of the occupants (including elevated levels of occupant-generated noise) present challenges to effective occupant notification by a voice communication system in compliance with NFPA 72<sup>®</sup>, *National Fire Alarm Code*<sup>®</sup>. The technical committee responsible for the assembly occupancy chapters of this *Code* seriously deliberated the subject of mandating occupant notification strictly in accordance with NFPA 72 during recent revision cycles, in particular during the processing of the 2006 edition when public proposals and comments were received on the subject. The deliberations resulted in the committee action of retaining the requirements in place which permit the occupant notification voice announcement to be made per 16.3.4.3.4 via an approved voice communication or public address system, provided with emergency power, that is audible above the ambient noise level of the assembly occupancy.

The technical committee acted to maintain the occupant notification provisions that have been in the *Code* for numerous editions for the following reasons:

(1) The effective day-to-day operation of assembly occupancy venues is highly reliant on the functionality of the public address system, thus ensuring reliability comparable to that found in a typical NFPA 72 notification system.

- (2) The acoustical performance of the public address system is superior to the performance capabilities of listed fire alarm notification equipment as applied to large volume spaces.
- (3) The public address system is designed, installed, and maintained to have the tremendous power to be heard over crowd noises and performances.
- (4) The large assembly areas are characterized by the lack of fire separation.
- (5) The public address system announcement, live or pre-defined, can adequately perform the intended function of notifying occupants of an emergency condition and of what actions to take.
- (6) The public address system with its required emergency power back-up has the reliability to provide effective occupant notification in these venues that are, in most cases, highly managed and supervised.
- (7) Costs associated with providing an NFPA 72 notification system are not justified in that such a system would be redundant to the public address system that is equivalent, if not superior, from a technical and reliability standpoint.