Report of the Committee on

Fire Tests

William E. Fitch, Chair
Omega Point Laboratories Inc., TX [RT]

Patty K. Adair, American Textile Manufacturers Institute Inc., DC [M]
Jesse J. Beitel, Hughes Associates, Inc., MD [SE]
April L. Berkof, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., NY [U]
Rep. American Hotel & Lodging Association
Robert G. Bill, Jr., FM Global, MA [I]
John A. Blair, The Dupont Company, DE [M]
Rep. Society of the Plastics Industry Inc.
Gordon H. Damant, Inter-City Testing & Consulting Corp. of California, CA [SE]
Thomas W. Fritz, Armstrong World Industries Inc., PA [M]
Pravinray D. Gandhi, Underwriters Laboratories Inc., IL [RT]
James R. Griffith, Southwest Research Institute, TX [RT]
Gordon E. Hartzell, Hartzell Consulting, Inc., TX [SE]
Marcelo M. Hirschler, GBH International, CA [SE]
Alfred J. Hogan, Reedy Creek Improvement District, FL [E]
Rep. International Fire Marshals Association
William E. Koffel, Koffel Associates, Inc., MD [SE]
James R. Lawson, US National Institute of Standards & Technology, MD [RT]
Rodney A. McPhee, Canadian Wood Council, Canada. [M]
Frederick W. Mower, University of Maryland, MD [SE]
David T. Sheppard, US Bureau of alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms, MD [RT]
Kuma Sumathipala, American Forest & Paper Association, DC [M]
T. Hugh Talley, Hugh Talley Company, TN [M]
Rep. Upholstered Furniture Action Council
William A. Webb, Performance Technology Consulting, Ltd., IL [SE]
Robert A. Wessel, Gypsum Association, DC [M]
Robert J. Wilks, American Iron and Steel Institute, AL [M]
Peter J. Willse, GE Global Asset Protection Services, CT [I]

Alternates

Robert M. Berhing, Underwriters Laboratories Inc., IL [RT]
(D. P. Gandhi)
Delbert F. Boring, Jr., American Iron and Steel Institute, OH [M]
(A. R. J. Wills)
Sam W. Francis, American Forest & Paper Association, PA [M]
(K. Sumathipala)
Richard G. Gann, Ph.D., US National Institute of Standards & Technology, MD [RT]
(A. J. R. Lawson)
Peter L. Hunsberger, Armstrong World Industries, Inc., PA [M]
(T. W. Fritz)
James K. Lathrop, Koffel Associates, Inc., CT [SE]
(W. E. Koffel)
James A. Milke, University of Maryland, MD [SE]
(F. W. Mower)
(J. J. Beitel)
David K. Tanaka, FM Global, MA [I]
(Alt. to R. C. Bill)
Ineke Van Zeeland, Canadian Wood Council, Canada [M]
(R. A. McPhee)
Joe Ziolkowski, American Furniture Manufacturers Assn., NC [M]
(Alt. to T. H. Talley)

Nonvoting

Robert H. Barker, American Fiber Manufacturers Assn., DC [M]
(Alt. to T. L. Jilg)
Tod L. Jilg, Hoechst Celanese Corporation, NC [M]
Rep. American Fiber Manufacturers Association
Rohit Khanna, US Consumer Product Safety Commission, MD [C]
Herman H. Spaeth, Novato, CA
(Member Emeritus)

Staff Liaison: Vacant

Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on fire testing procedures, for reviewing existing fire test standards and recommending appropriate action to NFPA, for recommending the application of and advising on the interpretation of acceptable test standards for fire problems of concern to NFPA technical committees and members, and for acting in a liaison capacity between NFPA and the committees of other organizations writing fire test standards. This Committee does not cover fire tests that are used to evaluate extinguishing agents, devices, or systems.

This list represents the membership at the time the Committee was balloted on the text of this report. Since that time, changes in the membership may have occurred. A key to classifications is found at the front of the document.

The Committee on Fire Test is presenting four Reports for adoption, as follows:


NFPA 267 has been submitted to letter ballot of the Technical Committee on Fire Tests, which consists of 25 voting members. The results of the balloting, after circulation of any negative votes, can be found in the report.


NFPA 274 has been submitted to letter ballot of the Technical Committee on Fire Tests, which consists of 25 voting members. The results of the balloting, after circulation of any negative votes, can be found in the report.


NFPA 290 has been submitted to letter ballot of the Technical Committee on Fire Tests, which consists of 25 voting members. The results of the balloting, after circulation of any negative votes, can be found in the report.
I make this comment with a heavy heart and after extensive soul searching. I have long believed that it is important to NFPA and fire safety that the NFPA Fire Tests committee retain a voice in the development of all fire test. For that reason I have campaigned hard to prevent the withdrawal of NFPA 263 (which has ASTM E 906 as an alternative) and of NFPA 266 (which has ASTM E 1537 as an alternative): I failed in both cases. The rationale used last year for withdrawing NFPA 263 was more valid with NFPA 267: it simply replicates the ASTM standard and is no longer used as a standard or as an alternative.

The revision of NFPA 267 presented to the NFPA Fire Tests technical committee for approval was drafted in ASTM language and not in NFPA language. Thus, what was presented was nothing more than a version of ASTM E 1590.

NFPA 267 is not mentioned in the NFPA 101 ROP.

NFPA 267 is not mentioned in the draft NFPA 1 nor in the NFPA 1 ROP or ROC.

In the NFPA 101 ROP, NFPA 267 is only mentioned in the committee action on log 101-236, as a revision to 101-10.3.4 that still includes ASTM E 1590 as an alternative. In the 101 ROC, the deletion of that reference was deleted by the Technical Committee.

The state of California approved Assembly Bill No. 603-2001 (the Dutra bill), which requires the use of a fire test for regulation of mattress (and potentially bedding) fire performance. It mentions ASTM E 1590 but does not mention NFPA 267.

There is pending activity by CPSC for a test method for flaming ignition of mattresses: it references both NFPA 267 and ASTM E 1590 as test methods to be considered.

Clearly, it is irrelevant, in the scheme of things, whether NFPA 267 remains in the books, as it is used only on paper, as an alternative to ASTM E 1590.

COMMITTEE MEETING ACTION: Accept

VOTE ON COMMITTEE ACTION: AFFIRMATIVE: 22

NOT RETURNED: 3 Griffith, Sheppard, Wessel

COMMENT ON AFFIRMATIVE:

GANDHI: The U.S. Navy uses NFPA 267 (modified version). While, I agree that recall of NFPA 267 will assist in harmonization, it will have an impact on current usage of this standard.

I agree that the withdrawal of NFPA 267 will reduce the number of national standards covering mattresses and thus may ease the harmonization process with respect to this standard.

However, it is my understanding that the US Navy uses a modified version NFPA 267 standard for fire performance requirements for mattresses used on US Navy ships. It would be beneficial for the NFPA to determine the impact on Navy procurement is this standard is withdrawn.
SUBMITTER: Paul Dillon, Southern Polytechnic State University / Rep. Sleep Products Safety Council

COMMENT ON PROPOSAL NO: 267-1

RECOMMENDATION: The Mattress Industry supports 267-2 (Log #1) in Principal. We seek your support for this position.

SUBSTANTIATION: Log #1 will harmonize the ASTM test protocol and NFPA 267 a goal of the Mattress Industry.

The Mattress Industry needs the testing services of laboratories with either an Open Calorimeter layout, a California Room or an ASTM room. The inclusion of the California Room and the ASTM room increases the total available number of commercial laboratories capable of fire testing mattresses to ten. There are only two Open Calorimeter equipped laboratories doing commercial Open Flame Ignition Testing of mattresses.

The history of the development of California Technical Bulletin 129 was an effort by the bedding industry to standardize over 100 mattress fire tests that were used for regulatory needs. The mattress industry assisted and supported the California Bureau of Home Furnishing in the development of Technical Bulletin 129 Fire Test for Mattresses. Technical Bulletin 129 was built on strong fire science and remains today the state of the art of fire testing mattresses for public institutions.

From the test protocol of California Technical Bulletin 129, ASTM E 1590 was developed. NFPA and UL 1895 development followed with further changes. This evolution led to changes in the details of each new test. Harmonization is essential to assure fire test data is dependable, comparable and understood and further that there is no confusion at the laboratory level of how the test should be conducted. Harmonization of mattress test protocols is key to assuring the industry builds fire safe mattresses.

There are 4 different mattress fire tests currently in use. These are California Technical Bulletin 129, NFPA 267, UL 1895 and ASTM E 1590. While testing round robins and experience have shown variation in test results, all these tests represent the State of the Art in Open Flame fire testing of mattresses and should be recognized as such. As with all fire tests more refinements are needed and more precision will result as better fire science and experience dictate. The Sleep Products Safety Council has been a leader in encouraging the development and refinement of fire standards and will continue this pursuit in the future.

COMMITTEE MEETING ACTION: Reject

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: See Committee Action on Comment 267-2 (Log #1).

NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS: 25

VOTE ON COMMITTEE ACTION:

AFFIRMATIVE: 22

NOT RETURNED: 3 Griffith, Sheppard, Wessel

COMMENT ON AFFIRMATIVE:

GANDHI: See my Comment on Affirmative on Comment 267-1 (Log #4).