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Allan B. Fraser, Coordinator
NFPA e-ACCESS
afrazer@nfpa.org

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Knowledge is Power!

Sir Francis Bacon, *Religious Meditations, Of Heresies, 1597*

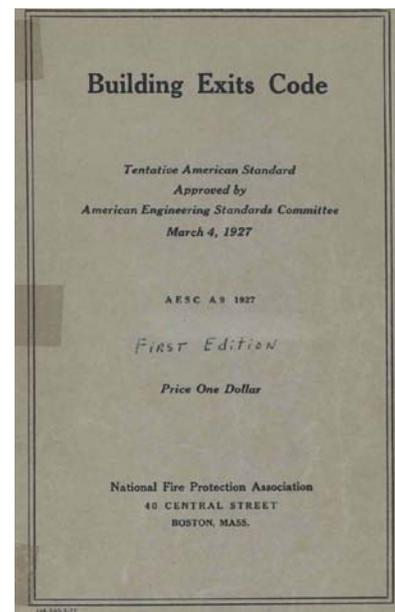
By Allan B. Fraser, CBI, CPCA, Sr.
Building Code Specialist, NFPA

This quote from Sir Francis Bacon has been repeated and validated countless times over the past four hundred and fifteen years. It is a complimentary quote to a 2500 year old one from Confucius that says: "If you read it, you'll forget it. If you see it, you'll remember it. If you do it, you'll understand it."



Perhaps one of the best ways in which to acquire knowledge is through experience. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines "experience" as the "direct observation of or participation in events as a basis of knowledge." Knowledge and experience go hand in hand.

The "History of the Code" printed in the 1927 NFPA "Building Exits Code" documents the more than 85 year involvement of NFPA of helping to assure that people can safely evacuate buildings in the event of an emergency.



"The Building Exits Code as printed herewith had its origin in the work of the Committee on Safety to Life of the National Fire Protection Association which was appointed in 1913. For the first few years of its existence the committee devoted its attention to a study of the notable fires involving loss of life, such as the Binghamton Clothing Factory fire, the Iroquois Theatre fire, the Collinwood School fire, the Triangle Waist Company fire, the Arcadia Lodging House fire, and other similar disasters, analyzing the causes of this loss of life. This work led to the preparation of standards for the construction of

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stairways, fire escapes, etc., for fire drills in various occupancies and for the construction and arrangement of exit facilities for factories, schools, etc., which form the basis of the present code.

These reports were adopted by the National Fire Protection Association and published in pamphlet form as "Outside Stairs for Fire Exits" (1916) and "Safeguarding Factory Workers from Fire" (1918). A pamphlet, "Exit Drills in Factories, Schools, Department Stores and Theatres," published in 1912 following its presentation by Member R. H. Newbern at the 1911 annual meeting of the Association, although antedating the organization of the Committee is considered as having the status of a Committee publication and has been used with the other pamphlets as a groundwork for the present Code. These pamphlets were widely circulated and put into quite general use.

The committee continued its activities developing the detailed life safety requirements for additional classes of occupancy until in 1921 the National Fire Protection Association was requested by the American Engineering Standards Committee to accept sponsorship for a Building Exits Code.Under new auspices the committee enlarged and, extended its work, revising and perfecting the standards prepared in earlier years and extending the fundamental principles already developed to include additional occupancies. These reports in each year were printed, presented to the National Fire Protection Association and duly adopted. In the preparation of each occupancy section the groups affected were consulted. Material on the proposed codes was published in the technical and trade press and otherwise given wide publicity. The reports have

been thoroughly discussed at the conventions of the National Fire Protection Association and have also been presented to the meetings of a number of cooperating organizations."

In the body of the 1927 Code, there are two different types of drills, a "Fire Exit Drill" and more general "Exit Drill".

Fire Exit Drill

"1101. The purpose of fire exit drills is to ensure the efficient and safe use of the exit facilities available. Proper drills ensure orderly exit under control and prevent the panic which has been responsible for the greater part of the loss of life in the major fire disasters of history.

Order and control are the primary purposes of the drill. Speed in emptying buildings, while desirable, is not in itself an object, and should be made secondary to the maintenance of proper order and discipline.

1102. Drills should be held frequently to be effective."

Exit Drill

"1110. Exit drills are intended for the protection and safety of the occupants of buildings, and in order to make them effective every person taking part must realize his or her own responsibility and assist in conducting them in an orderly manner. Exit drills shall be conducted once in every calendar month and all occupants shall participate therein, unless otherwise specified in the occupancy sections of this code."

Over the intervening 85 years, NFPA technical committees have clarified, refined and strengthened the provisions of our codes and standards to

help assure that all people can evacuate safely in an emergency.

In researching this article, I was immediately struck by the line from section 1110 of the 1927 Code that "every person taking part must realize his or her own responsibility and assist in conducting them in an orderly manner." In the first public seminar I presented with the late Bill Scott, founder of Abilities Unlimited, Inc. and the first Chair of NFPA's Disability Access Review and Advisory Committee (DARAC) on NFPA's *Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for People with Disabilities*, he stated that "All people, regardless of their situation, have some responsibility for their own safety!" Déjà vu.

Knowledge is power and we all have some responsibility for our own safety. The knowledge of how each of us may need to evacuate due to a fire or any other natural or man-made event must be based on a plan AND the regular experience of drills so that we heed Confucius' advice in order to understand.



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Accessibility for All?

The 2014 NEC considers electrical design for people with disabilities

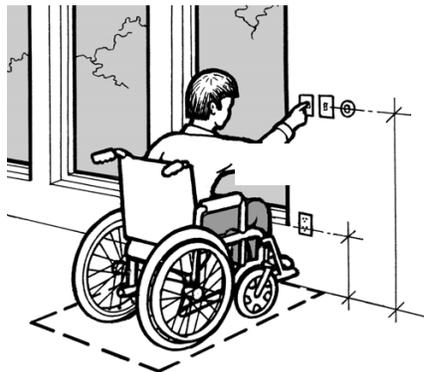
By: Jeffrey Sargent, Regional Electrical Code Specialist, NFPA



According to NFPA 70[®], *National Electrical Code*[®] (*NEC*[®]), the term "readily accessible" means that a person can quickly reach a piece of electrical equipment with ease, without having to remove impediments, and without the use of tools or ladders. The term is used in requirements for electrical equipment such as disconnecting means, overcurrent devices, ground-fault circuit interrupters, and similar items where quick operation is necessary for personal or property safety. Not all electrical equipment need be readily accessible, though, and even equipment that meets the requirements of the *NEC* definition may not be easily accessible in accordance with other standards that affect some electrical installations.



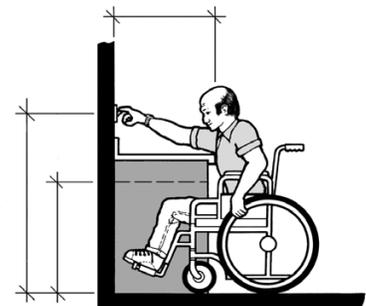
These notions of accessibility take on a new importance when considered from the perspective of people who use wheelchairs or have other mobility disabilities. In general, commonly used electrical devices such as general purpose receptacles and light switches need not be readily accessible. In dwellings, the *NEC* mandates the maximum horizontal spacing along walls and countertops in order to provide power for the myriad plug-in devices and cord- and plug-connected appliances used in today's homes. The function of this requirement is to accommodate cord- and plug-connected equipment and minimize the need for extension cords.



The same can be said for wall switch locations. The *NEC* is even more permissive in the location of these devices provided there is switch control for general illumination in specified areas. Most people can access switches and receptacles mounted on the wall near the floor or above a counter, island, or bathroom vanity, but for those with mobility disabilities these locations may present insurmountable barriers.

When a building project has to comply with federal and state requirements for access for people with disabilities, the location of receptacles, light switches, and other electrical devices is governed not only by the *NEC*, but also by requirements such as those found in the 2009 edition of ICC/ANSI A117.1, *Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities*, the 2010 design standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other accessibility standards. These provisions do not conflict with those of the *NEC*, but where ADA compliance is required, accessibility requirements must dovetail with those of the *NEC*.

To help designers and installers integrate accessibility provisions into the electrical system, Code-Making Panel 1 accepted a proposal (1-191a) to add a new informational annex, "2010 ADA Requirements for Accessible Design," in the 2014 edition of the *NEC*. At least one new Informational Note will be included in the *NEC* pointing to this new annex.



Las Vegas, Nevada, from June 11 to 13, 2012. Company representatives explained their devices and demonstrated how they work.

The material in the new annex will provide designers, installers, and authorities having jurisdiction with relevant, fundamental accessibility requirements that affect the installation of electrical equipment such as receptacles, switches, disconnecting means, and similar devices that require manual interface to operate or program. While the current edition of the *NEC* does not preclude designing to facilitate access for people with disabilities, inclusion of this new annex gives *NEC* users basic accessibility concepts in the safety standard used by the design, installation, and enforcement communities so that safely installed electrical equipment will be easily accessible to any user.

The proposed inclusion of this new annex is another example of the way in which every revision of the *NEC* provides the public with the necessary safety requirements and support information to address society's increasing reliance on electrical energy.

This proposal can be viewed at the NFPA 70 document information page at nfpa.org/70.

Jeff Sargent is a licensed master electrician and was a member of NFPA's electrical engineering department from 1997 to 2011 when he was promoted to Regional Electrical Code Specialist.



NFPA's 2012 Conference & Expo in Las Vegas Featured a Demonstration of Emergency Stair Descent Devices

NFPA recognizes that fire and life safety may be more important to people with disabilities because of the barriers to accessing information and the physical barriers within the built environment.



Evac+Chair North America, Garavanta Lift and Escape Mobility Company, manufacturers of "stair descent devices" (evacuation chairs) used to assist in the emergency evacuation of people with mobility functional needs from buildings, demonstrated their devices at the 2012 NFPA Conference & Expo held at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in



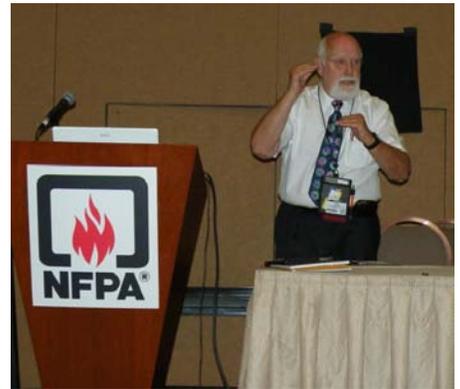
The demonstration "stage" was a modular platform 6 feet high, 8 feet wide and 8 feet deep with a set of stairs that can be disassembled and used again for other conferences and educational seminars.



Visitors were able to see the devices in action and talk with the vendors. The demonstrations were very successful with as many as 35 visitors at each demonstration showing great interest and asking many questions of the vendors.



evaluate these devices, although one is being developed by the Rehabilitative Engineering Society of North America, In. NFPA 101®, Life Safety Code®, does provide some recommended performance criteria and guidance information in its annex at A.7.2.12.2.3(2).



Gary Olsen, president of the Nevada Association of the Deaf

While not endorsing any particular manufacturer or stair descent device NFPA facilitated these demonstrations to help educate users, assistants, caregivers, building owners and managers and first responders about this evacuation option.



“Home Fire Safety Solutions for People with Disabilities” Session at NFPA’s 2012 Conference & Expo in Las Vegas



Disclaimer: *Stair descent devices are a recognized evacuation option, but NFPA does not endorse any vendor or stair descent device, nor has it evaluated, approved or certified these devices for compliance with NFPA codes and standards or those of any other organization. Stair descent devices are not currently required by model codes and there are currently no standards available by which to*



Nancy Trench, assistant director, Oklahoma State University Fire Protection Publications

In June the NFPA Public Education Division Fire Safety for People with Disabilities Task Force members Nancy Trench and Gary Olsen were the panelists for an education session at the NFPA Conference and Expo in Las Vegas titled “Home Fire Safety Solutions for People with Disabilities.” Olsen, president of the Nevada Association of the Deaf, and Trench, assistant director, Oklahoma State University Fire Protection Publications, gave a presentation on the components and lessons learned in a successful home fire safety program for people with disabilities, discussed the selection and installation of home fire safety equipment—including smoke alarms and alert devices—for people with disabilities, and provided details on advocacy efforts for home fire safety devices. More information is available on the Fire Safety for People with Disabilities Task Force at www.nfpa.org/disabilities.



Introducing "The Collection"

e-ACCESS is introducing a new column we're calling "The Collection". By definition, a collection is a group of objects or works to be seen, studied, or kept together. The purpose of this column is to provide you with links to news items, stories and general information that you may not be aware of, but may help you to reduce the burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of your own life or that of family and friends.

- [Parents of Disabled Child Worried About School's Evacuation Plan](#)
- [Handicapped Woman Burned In House Fire Flown to Parkland Hospital](#)
- [Neighbor Rescues Handicapped Woman from Sharon House Fire](#)
- [OSHA Laws for Emergency Evacuation for the Handicapped and Disabled in a University](#)

- [Fire Near Ormond Forces Evacuation of Family, Handicapped Adults](#)
- [Woman a Hero After Rescuing Handicapped Boyfriend from Fire](#)



Celebrating Inclusive Emergency Preparedness



By Marcie Roth, Director, Office of Disability Integration Coordination

July 26, 2012 was truly a reason to celebrate because it marked the 22nd anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Twenty-two years ago, we reached a turning point in our nation's history when the civil rights of millions of Americans with disabilities were recognized and protected by law. Today, more than 56 million Americans benefit from this law.

Here at FEMA, we are committed to honoring and upholding the ADA. We are uncompromising in our dedication for the right to equal access before, during and after an emergency. Equal access gives all of us an opportunity to contribute our skills, knowledge and resources to strengthen their communities.

Here is my vision of equal access:

- Equal access means that everyone participates in exercises that test the capability and procedures of a community in the event of an emergency or disaster.



Volunteer John Kane and NFPA staffer Dawn Cedrone practicing transferring to stair descent device during a fire drill.

- Equal access means that people have accessible transportation during an evacuation. Restoring transportation accessibility after a disaster is simply a part of restoring the essential services needed by the whole community.



- Equal access means that people with disabilities have the tools and resources to maintain their health, safety and independence in a shelter.



- Because information has to be accessible to be actionable, equal access means that the whole community has access to effective communication including sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, CART, materials in large print or Braille, TTY and video relay services. Equal access also means receiving emergency alerts, warnings, and important messages in plain language.



- Equal access means meeting the accessible housing needs of disaster survivors and addressing the recovery needs of the whole community so that children with disabilities go back to school with their peers and adults with disabilities go back to work along with their co-workers.



- Equal access means that a career path in emergency management is as accessible to workers with disabilities as it is to workers without disabilities.



The anniversary of the passage of the ADA is a great opportunity to recommit to making sure that people with disabilities are ALWAYS included as a vital part of the planning team, and that the skills and knowledge of people

with disabilities are fully recognized as integral to effective response, recovery and mitigation.



An emergency evacuation planning session at a residential facility that included, from left, a staff member, a resident with a disability, a firefighter and a second resident with a disability

We know that when communities integrate the access and functional needs of individuals in all phases of emergency management, they strengthen their ability to prepare for and more quickly recover from natural and man-made disasters. Much progress has been made in the past 22 years, but we still have a long way to go to achieve the full inclusion that is at the heart of the ADA.

At FEMA, we have a growing workforce of disability integration specialists working across the country and a growing toolbox of resources to support states in meeting the disaster-related needs of children and adults with disabilities. Join us as we continue building bridges with disability advocacy and service organizations, engaging with state and local partners, training emergency managers, making improvements in disaster response, and

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NEWSLETTER

advocating for including people with disabilities in whole community planning.

There are many ways to get involved, especially before a disaster occurs. The whole community can participate in programs and activities to make their families, homes and communities safer from risks and threats. Learn about some promising practices in disability inclusive emergency management from across the country by visiting

www.fema.gov/about/odic and how you can get involved by going to FEMA's Ready website at www.ready.gov/get-involved

Marcie Roth was appointed by President Obama to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security—Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in Washington, D.C. on June 2009. She serves as senior advisor to Administrator Fugate and director of the FEMA Office of Disability Integration and Coordination, leading the agency's commitment to meet the access and functional needs of children and adults with disabilities in emergency and disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation.

Over the past 20 years, she has held leadership positions with the National Coalition for Disability Rights, the National Spinal Cord Injury Association, the National Council on Independent Living and TASH. Appointed chairperson of the Maryland Commission on Disabilities by the governor of Maryland, Ms. Roth previously served as chair of the Connecticut and Maryland Statewide Independent Living Councils.



Fire Prevention Week

October 7-13, 2012

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

While the Great Chicago Fire was the best-known blaze to start during this fiery two-day stretch, it wasn't the biggest. That distinction goes to the Peshtigo Fire, the most devastating forest fire in United States history. The fire, which also occurred on October 8, 1871, roared through Northeast

Wisconsin, burning down 16 towns, killing 1,152 people, and scorching 1.2 million acres before it ended.

Historical accounts of the fire say that the blaze began when several railroad workers clearing land for tracks unintentionally started a brush fire. Before long, the fast-moving flames were whipping through the area "like a tornado," some survivors said. The small town of Peshtigo, Wisconsin suffered the worst damage; within an hour, the entire town was destroyed.

Those who survived the Chicago and Peshtigo fires never forgot what they'd been through; both blazes produced countless tales of bravery and heroism. But the fires also changed the way that firefighters and public officials thought about fire safety. On the 40th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, the Fire Marshals Association of North America, today known as the International Fire Marshals Association, decided that the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire should henceforth be observed in a way that would keep the public informed about the importance of fire prevention.

In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation, and since 1922, Fire Prevention Week has been observed on the Sunday through Saturday period in which October 9

falls. According to the National Archives and Records Administration's Library Information Center, Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. Each U.S president has signed a proclamation proclaiming a national observance during that week every year since 1925.

This year Fire Prevention Week will be officially recognized nationally from October 7 thru October 13. However NFPA will be run events for staff and the public from late September through most of October. While still in the planning stages, here's a preliminary list of events:

- September 27
 - Emergency stair descent device training with volunteer wheelchair users
- September 28
 - Speaker Series: Fire Sprinkler Initiative Update with Princesa Lee Bridges, one of our "Faces of Fire," will tell her personal story.
- October 11-14
 - Posters from past Fire Prevention Week campaigns will be on display in our main lobby.
 - Fire Extinguisher Training for NFPA staff
 - Sparky Story Time and photo opportunity with children of NFPA staff

- Special Fire Prevention Speaker Series in both our Quincy and Avon locations. Topics may include the Coconut Grove Fire, historic fires, what we know about human behavior in fires and evacuation for people with disabilities.
- CPR training
- "Two Way Out Relay"
- Evacuation drill
- Luncheon for area senior citizens followed by presentations on fall prevention and fire prevention in the home.

Look for Fire Prevention Week activities by your local fire departments or start your own!

Remember, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!"

Benjamin Franklin

NFPA Coming Events



September 2012

Sep. 10-13	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Chicago, IL. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Alarm • Sprinkler
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Sep. 10-13	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Quincy, MA.
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Sep. 10-14	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Charlotte, NC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical • Fire Alarm
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Sep. 10-14	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Madison, WI. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical
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Sep. 10-14 & 17-21	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Chattanooga, TN. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical • Fire Alarm • Life Safety • Sprinklers • CFPS
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Sep. 10-14 & 17-21	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Reno, NV. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical • Fire Alarm • Life Safety • Sprinkler
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Sep. 17-20	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Northbrook, IL. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical
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Sep. 17-21	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Grand Rapids, MI. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical
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Sep. 17-21 & 24-27	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Charlotte, NC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical • Fire Alarm • Sprinkler • CFPS Primer
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Sep. 17-21 & 24-27	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Houston, TX. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical • Fire Alarm • Life Safety • Sprinkler • Other
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Sep. 24-27	NFPA Training Seminar Week: Nashville, TN. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical
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- [Fire Alarm](#)
- [Life Safety](#)
- [Sprinklers](#)

October 2012

Oct. 11 Free webinar - [2006 NFPA 654, Combustible Dust Hazard Assessment](#).
Sponsored by 3D Instruments, LLC, 12:30 - 2:00 pm EST

Oct. 18 [3rd Annual Electric Vehicle Safety Standards Summit](#), Cobo Center, Detroit, Michigan

November 2012

Nov. 7-8 [Fire Safety and Sustainable Building Design](#), Courtyard Marriott Chicago Downtown/Magnificent Mile, Chicago, IL. [Register now.](#)

Nov. 12-14 [NFPA EuroCon 2012](#), Passengers Cruise Terminal, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

See NFPA's complete [online calendar](#).



Do you have a story to tell or information to share?

Our readers are people with disabilities, and their relatives, caregivers, and friends.

Our goals are to:

- Provide specialized information about fire and life safety for people with disabilities directly to those with disabilities and to those who help them in order to reduce or eliminate death and injury from fire and other emergencies.
- Provide a forum for the collection and dissemination of information for people with disabilities in support of DARAC's mission.
- Provide personal stories about events, ideas, or solutions from our readers that can guide others in similar circumstances.

Content for future editions will include:

- NFPA-related news
 - DARAC news
 - NFPA codes- and standards-related information
 - Fire safety tips
 - Emergency evacuation information
- Articles relating to the safety of people with disabilities from:
 - NFPA staff
 - DARAC members
 - Other national advocates
 - General news
 - Our readers
- News from other standards-developing organizations' news
 - U.S. Access Board
 - ANSI/ICC A117, *Standard for Accessible Buildings and Facilities*
 - RESNA
 - U.S. Department of Justice
 - Other

We'd love to hear your stories and opinions! If you'd like to contribute an article or information consistent with the outline above, please e-mail them to Allan B. Fraser, senior building code specialist and *e-Access* coordinator, at afraser@nfpa.org.

Did You Miss an Issue?



No problem! [You can read the back issues of e-ACCESS by clicking here.](#)