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MIND OF A LAWYER. HEART OF A CONTRACTOR.

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Residential Sprinkler Bill Resurrected in Washington House

Two years ago we wrote a [blog post about 2009 House Bill 2224](#), introduced in Olympia by Representative Simpson, and aimed to "eradicate barriers that prevent the voluntary installation of sprinkler systems in private residences by promoting education regarding the effectiveness of residential fire sprinklers."

While the bill had a lot of support in the House and Senate ([see voting history here](#)), it never got to the governor's desk, and largely fizzled out.

The concept is back from the dead, however, being introduced on January 18, 2011, by Representative Van De Wege as [2011 House Bill 1295](#). Compare this bill's synopsis with the 2009 summary:

...to eliminate barriers to the voluntary installation of sprinkler systems in private residences. The bill provides financial and regulatory incentives to homeowners, builders, and water purveyors for voluntarily installing the systems. It also exempts a public water system from liability for damages resulting from shutting off water to a residential home with an installed fire sprinkler system.

It's virtually identical.

The 2011 Bill appears to be moving through the chambers a bit more quickly than its 2009 counterpart, and also has a companion bill in the Senate's chambers (SB 5206).

Nationwide, residential fire sprinklers are getting more popular, and it's becoming more and more likely that government regulation over these installations will expand as time goes on. Take, for example, what the U.S. Fire Administration (through FEMA) states as follows on the topic:

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It is the official position of the U.S. Fire Administration that all American should be protected against death, injury and property loss resulting from fire in their residences. All homes should be equipped with smoke alarms and automatic fire sprinklers...

We'll keep you posted on any progress to this legislation.