To: Illinois Licensed Architects  
From: Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation  
Re: Fire Code Adherence  
Date: January 30, 2009

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) has notified the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation of a concern regarding the number of citations being issued. One reason for this increase may be a lack of familiarity by architects and design professionals with the OSFM’s adopted codes. The Department would like to remind all licensed architects of the need to comply with the rules of the OSFM and to consult those rules at 41 Ill. Adm. Code 100 during design and construction. The Part 100 rules may be viewed on-line at:

http://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/041/04100100sections.html

The Part 100 rules adopt by reference the 2000 edition of the National Fire Protection Association’s “Life Safety Code” as the statewide applicable rules for fire prevention and safety. It is important to realize that the NFPA Life Safety Code applies to both new and existing structures. Also, some minor modifications to the NFPA Life Safety Code are made within the Part 100 rule adoption. [The Life Safety Code is not applicable to public elementary and secondary schools and the rules of the Illinois State Board of Education need to be consulted relative to public school design].

In accordance with State statute [the Fire Investigation Act – 425 ILCS 25] the State-adopted Life Safety Code serves as the minimum level of fire safety standards that new and existing buildings must meet. More stringent locally adopted codes, ordinances or rules may apply, but the OSFM-enforced Life Safety Code is the minimum standard.

The OSFM offers plan review services for architects and building owners to assist in ensuring compliance with State-adopted codes prior to construction. Plan submittal relative to building construction, additions or remodeling is not mandatory but rather offered as a free public service to those that wish to take advantage. For more information pertaining to OSFM plan review services contact the OSFM’s Division of Technical Services at 312/814-8960 or SFM.Techservices@illinois.gov.