



October 19, 2021

Dear Members,

Since the global COVID-19 pandemic first breached American soil, the fire sprinkler industry has repeatedly been faced with challenges. Local shutdowns, project delays and cancellations, escalating supply prices, and labor shortages are just a few of the obstacles which have threatened our mission to protect lives and property through widespread acceptance of fire sprinklers.

It goes without saying that the ultimate scourge of COVID-19 has been the countless serious infections and losses of life which have plagued all sectors of society. I am proud to say that the fire sprinkler industry has met these challenges without fail. For instance, NFSA fought early in the pandemic to ensure fire sprinkler fitters and employees were essential workers under the Homeland Security Act of 2002 so we could keep everyone working and supply chains operating productively. The state of our industry remains strong.

To fight the persistent threat of COVID-19, scientists and healthcare professionals around the globe worked together to develop life-saving vaccines. Peer reviewed studies conducted by the brightest scientific minds demonstrate unequivocally that these vaccines prevent serious illness and death with great effectiveness.

Now we must respond to new challenges which impact every business. Building owners and general contractors are increasingly requiring proof of vaccination to enter jobsites. The federal government has announced a series of vaccine mandates which affect many in this industry, including a mandate that all employees of contractors and subcontractors working on federal government jobs be vaccinated. This mandate applies to both employees who are physically working on the applicable federal projects, as well as those who are not. State and local governments are also beginning to require vaccines to varying extents.

Scientists report that the continued spread of COVID-19 is leading to the development of new and potentially even more devastating variants. As the Association tasked with protecting and growing our industry, we believe that we are faced with a public safety imperative to encourage vaccine acceptance. We must remember that our industry relies on public acceptance of scientific and technical facts, along with the implementation of governmental code and statutory requirements.

This letter is not written lightly. It is the result of many conversations among NFSA staff, our Councils and Committees, and our Board of Directors. The conclusion we have reached is that, for the good of the fire sprinkler industry, we must promote the only scientifically proven measure to stop this terrible virus from impacting our NFSA members, their families, and the public at large. Please join us in the lifesaving task of encouraging your employees to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

A grateful,
Shane Ray, President
National Fire Sprinkler Association