



Office of Governor Pat Quinn

# NEWS

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## **Governor Quinn Signs Legislation to Improve Fire Safety throughout Illinois**

*New Laws Require Smoke Detectors to have Electrical Backup;*

*Fraternities and Sororities to have Fire Sprinkler Systems*

BLOOMINGTON – July 27, 2010. Governor Pat Quinn today signed a bill into law that requires fraternity and sorority housing in Illinois to install automatic fire sprinkler systems. Governor Quinn also highlighted a new law that requires housing units in Illinois to have a backup power supply for all smoke detectors that are wired to a building's electrical supply.

"Fire safety starts at home. These important new laws help ensure that the smoke detectors where you live don't fail when you need them the most, and help make our college students safer," said Governor Quinn. "These laws will help prevent potentially tragic situations like we saw last year at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville."

House Bill 5664 requires fraternities and sororities built after Jan. 1, 2011 to have an automatic fire sprinkler system. Any fraternity or sorority that does not comply with the new law will not be allowed to occupy its housing facility. Fraternities and sororities built before Jan. 1, 2011 will have until Jan. 1, 2019 to install a automatic fire sprinkler system.

The new law will be enforced by the local government or institution of higher education, depending upon whose jurisdiction the fraternity or sorority falls. The legislation was sponsored by Rep. Daniel Burke (D-Chicago) and Sen. Michael Frerichs (D-Champaign).

Governor Quinn today highlighted Senate Bill 3097, sponsored by Rep. Jay Hoffman (D-Collinsville) and Sen. William Haine (D-Alton). The new law requires houses, apartments, nursing homes and other dwelling units in Illinois to have a battery or electrical generator backup for all smoke detectors that are wired to a building's power supply. The new law applies to all housing facilities that are newly-constructed, reconstructed or substantially remodeled after Jan. 1, 2011.

The legislation was spurred by a 2009 incident at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville where a smoke detector failed to alert students to a possible fire. The building's smoke detector system was hard-wired into its

electrical system but a storm had knocked out power to the building. Without a backup power supply available at the time of the incident, the smoke detectors failed to activate and notify students to the fire.

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