

**PROMOTING RECOVERY OF HALONS IN THE NEW ENGLAND REGION:
A Partnership Between Environmentalists and
the Fire Protection Community**

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The members of the National Association of State Fire Marshals are the most senior fire official in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. They **are**, by and large, appointed by their governors, and routinely advise their governors and state legislators on matters of public safety. NASFM members tend to deal more on a policy level than most other national fire organizations.

When the Montreal Protocol first identified halon **as** an ozone depleter about a decade ago, state fire marshals were among those in the fire and emergency services who actively fought taxes and other measures *to* restrict halon production or use. At the time, the fire service saw an essential tool in the fight against fire being taken away without adequate replacements.

But the situation has changed over time, and more environmentally friendly alternatives now exist for most applications.

So our position has evolved, and now the NASFM position is to encourage halon alternatives to take their rightful place in the market, and save halon for those uses for which no viable alternatives yet exist. This position has evolved out of **a** recognition that fire protection and environmental protection are both important, and while they are all too often at odds with one another, they do not always have to be.

NASFM's position on this issue is that the Parties to the Montreal Protocol should revisit the question of whether current international requirements regarding halons are sufficient. We believe that the Parties should take more decisive steps toward phasing out use in developed nations—each country in the way that is best for that particular country, that does not jeopardize uses for which suitable alternatives do not yet exist, and that does not simply encourage unnecessary emissions, but rather safe collection and retirement of halon.

We think that the U.S. should be among those taking the lead on this issue — again, with the recognition that there are still some uses for which no suitable alternatives exist. But it has to start somewhere. Until there is some sort of legislation or regulation to encourage that transition, we must rely on voluntary efforts and the sense that users want to do the right thing for the environment. Therefore, NASFM is in support of the efforts of Friends of the Earth (FoE) on its voluntary Halon Recovery Program.

Consistent with FoE's program, NASFM is not interested in promoting any particular alternative over any other — that is for the market and for available technology to decide. We also are not in the business of deciding which uses in this program would be more critical than any other — that is for Friends of the Earth to decide.

We **are** working with FoE as a liaison to our own members and other contacts in the fire service who **are** interested in implementing a program of halon recovery. Rhode Island is where we **are** starting, and we hope that our experience there will serve as a model for other states. Some of

the ways in which the fire service has been able to assist in Rhode Island—and **we** hope in other locations in the future—are these:

- *Providing a **forum** to help relevant people to learn about the program.* Though the relationship may vary from locality to locality, the fire service tends to have some sort of formal relationship with those organizations that use halon as well **as** those that provide and service fire protection systems. In Rhode Island, State Fire Marshal Irving Owens has agreed to invite halon systems users and service companies to a meeting later this month in which FøE will discuss the Halon Recovery Program and invite their participation.
- *Helping to make other public officials aware **of** the program.* The Rhode Island State Fire Marshal has put FøE in touch with the State Senate Majority Leader and other public officials representing the state. They have been asked by FøE to endorse the Halon Recovery Program in the form of resolutions, public statements and other measures to help raise the visibility of the program and to encourage participation in it.
- *Helping to coordinate individual fire departments to serve as drop-off for halon extinguishers.*

Just as we look to the Rhode Island experience to serve as a model for a state level program, the New **York** State Association of Fire Chiefs has agreed to work with NASFM and FøE on a county-level program, and the chief of West Sacramento, California, has agreed to work with us on a city model program. Once the Rhode Island program is further along, we will move onto the others.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FIRE MARSHALS

- policy on Halon Phaseout
 - Coordination in Rhode Island
 - Role ~~of~~ State Fire Marshal
 - Contacts with other public officials
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HALON RECOVERY PROGRAM

- Rhode Island
 - Process
 - Timeline
 - Future of Program
 - Additional states/regions
 - Establishment of model program
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FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

- Policy on Halon Phaseout
 - Halon Recovery Program
 - Concept
 - Where Implemented
 - Results to date
-

SCIENCE

Why Increase ~~Efforts~~ to Recover Halons?

- Halons contain bromine
- Bromine is 50 times more efficient at depleting stratospheric ozone than chlorine in CFCs
- Bromine levels attributed to halons are rising in the stratosphere