



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Manufactured Homes Meet Strict Federal Fire Safety Standards; Kasich Administration Wrong About Jurisdiction Over Fire Safety in Manufactured Home Communities

COLUMBUS, OHIO (May 23, 2017) -- Modern manufactured homes meet strict federal fire safety standards that make them as safe as site-built homes, with fewer fires and fatality rates comparable to other types of housing, the Ohio Manufactured Homes Association (OMHA) said today.

The association also cited existing state law that gives local fire officials, not the Ohio Manufactured Homes Commission (Commission), the right to regulate and approve fire protection activities and equipment, such as the presence and number of fire hydrants, in manufactured home communities, and addressed incorrect statements about who is responsible for water quality in these communities, saying that job is assigned to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

Opponents of the Commission are using misleading information about the fire safety of the homes and manufactured home communities in hopes of abolishing the independent watchdog and assigning inspection and regulation duties to the ill-equipped and less experienced Ohio Department of Commerce, OMHA Executive Director Tim Williams said.

“The Kasich Administration is making up its own alternative facts to scare people into thinking there is a problem,” Williams added.

Williams said a 2013 study by the National Fire Protection Association found manufactured homes have between 38 and 44 percent fewer fires than site-built homes, and that the fatality rate in homes built after federal building and fire safety codes were enacted is the same as other residential homes built on site.

The study also reported that manufactured homes have “a lower rate of civilian fire injuries per 100,000 occupied housing units than other one- and two-family homes.”

Williams attributed the safety of manufactured homes to the tough federal building and fire safety code (the HUD Code) in place since 1976 and continually updated through the years. Among other fire safety measures, the code requires two exits that are not next to each other and



do not require the use of other doorways for escape. It also mandates standards for designs and construction materials that limit flame spread and smoke generation, as well as requiring all bedroom windows to open in an emergency.

“Fires in most manufactured homes built since the federal building and fire safety code was established are due to human error or carelessness, not the homes themselves,” Williams noted.

He also strongly disagreed with opponents’ claims that the Commission is responsible for lack of fire hydrants or other fire safety measures in some manufactured home communities.

“State law gives fire safety authority to local fire officials, not the Commission,” Williams said. “If the Governor has a problem with a lack of fire hydrants in a community, he should make those concerns known to the local officials and fire chiefs with the ability to address deficiencies,” Williams added.

Williams also called attention to misinformation being shared by Ohio’s Environmental Protection Agency, which has sole authority over water quality issues but is incorrectly telling the public and state lawmakers that the Commission is responsible for ensuring safe drinking water in manufactured home communities.

“The Ohio EPA has failed to do its job, and now is trying to blame the Commission for its negligence,” Williams said. He said the agency has admitted it has been unable to fulfill its mandate to regulate water quality in hundreds of manufactured home communities, adding the State has never asked the Commission to revoke a manufactured home community license because of poor water quality.

The Commission’s job is to inspect and approve the installation of new and previously-owned manufactured homes, resolve disputes, regulate sales licensing and enforce manufactured home community regulations such as roadway designs, home spacing or sidewalk construction.

The Ohio House of Representatives earlier this month rejected the Kasich plan to eliminate the Commission. The proposal now is being heard in the Senate.

The [Ohio Manufactured Homes Association](#) is a not for profit organization, comprised of 500 manufactured home businesses. OMHA’s strategic vision strives to make manufactured homes a standard way of life in Ohio.

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