



THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR WORK HITS HOME



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I WRITE THIS COLUMN FROM A HOTEL ROOM LESS THAN A MILE FROM MY HOME. NO, MY MARRIAGE IS FINE, HOWEVER, ON JAN. 2, WE HAD A HOUSE FIRE IN THE BASEMENT AND WILL NEED TO REBUILD AND RESTORE THE MAJORITY OF OUR HOME. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT NO ONE WAS HURT, AND FORTUNATELY, WE HAVE TREMENDOUS INSURANCE COVERAGE—A SHOUT OUT TO USAA FOR THE PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE THEY HAVE PROVIDED. WE LACK FOR NOTHING.

We will be back in our home in about six months, and we will be happy to put this behind us. Of course, we are sad about some things we lost, but thankful it is just things and not people—it could have been so much worse!

For years I have had the distinct honor to advocate for this industry, promoting the critical role of our products and expertise. Of course, I always spoke about life safety and in particular, fires, which were always a key component of my message. Last week, I had the pleasure to address the DHI Potomac Chapter and must admit talking about the important role this industry plays came from down deep. Let me tell you why.

On the morning of the fire, which started in a bedroom in the basement, I entered the room and attempted to smother the fire with a wool blanket. I returned a few moments later with a large bucket of water, and upon opening the door, I was hit with flames. No worries; I just lost more hair that I had already been losing and suffered no burns.

I threw the bucket at the heart of the fire and slammed the door shut. I exited the basement to the first floor and closed the door to the basement as we exited the house. I didn't even have time to get to our fire extinguisher.

After the fire department put out the fire, (and another shout out to first responders who didn't hesitate to enter our home to save it), they informed us that had we not shut the two doors

I mentioned, the house would have burned to the ground. Did you read that? *Had we not shut those doors the house would have burned to the ground.* There was also a door to a rear storage area with paint and paper products and guess what? That door prevented the fire from completely entering that room as well.

I know our industry doesn't regularly supply to the residential market, but the story is the same in any building. No, these were not fire doors, but they did the job. Only 10 percent of the bedroom door survived, but it succeeded in protecting us.

Now, when I advocate for the role you play, my passion will be greater than ever. If you have ever experienced a fire, you can relate to what I am saying. What our industry does is so very critical to life and property, and I am so thankful for things like codes and qualified professionals. I am proud we train our industry on such critically important topics.

The next six months I will be reminded of that importance as we put our lives back together. Thank you to the industry for what you do daily to fight for life safety.

The DHI Management Summit will take place the end of February in Florida. The content will be rich for your companies and management-level teams. Please consider attending this important industry event—I guarantee you will not be disappointed! Go to www.dhisummit.org for details. +