



Request for Proposals
Communication Strategy and Tools for Residential Electrical System Aging
Research Project

The Fire Protection Research Foundation (FPRF) is seeking proposals from qualified public relations professionals to develop a communication strategy and key communication pieces to convey the messages from a yet to be released research project entitled Residential Electrical System Aging Research Project. The communication strategy should also include strategies to release the report.

Background

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there is an annual average of 111,400 home fires attributed to faulty electrical distribution systems, electrical appliances and equipment, or heating and air conditioning systems, causing 3,785 injuries, 860 deaths and nearly \$1.3 billion in property damage. A study conducted by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in 1987 indicated that the frequency of fires in residential electrical systems was disproportionately high in homes more than 40 years old. The disproportionately high incidence of fire in the electrical systems of older homes can usually be attributed to one or more of the following factors:

- Inadequate and overburdened electrical systems.
- Thermally reinsulated walls and ceilings burying wiring.
- Defeated or compromised overcurrent protection.
- Misuse of extension cords and makeshift circuit extensions.
- Worn-out wiring devices not being replaced.
- Poorly done electrical repairs.
- Socioeconomic considerations resulting in unsafe installations.

With over 100 years of residential electrification in many cities and towns, the aging of the residential electrical infrastructure is beginning to raise concerns within the electrical and firefighting communities. Besides the natural effects that age can have on wire insulation and electrical equipment over time, residential electrical systems are seldom inspected after their original installation. In addition, the quality of the original installation may be a factor, as well as inappropriate upgrades or additions that may have been done by unqualified homeowners or others throughout the years.

The FPRF conducted a research project to characterize the condition of various age groups of residential electrical components by surveying, recovering, and analyzing representative samples of actual installed residential wiring systems, wiring devices, and similar distribution and utilization equipment. The data and analysis of this equipment is intended to provide critical information to code writers, especially for NFPA 73 Electrical Inspection Code for Existing Dwellings, and the National Electrical Code

(NEC®), as well as AHJs, electrical equipment manufacturers, testing laboratories, installers, property owners and insurers.

FPRF is seeking proposals from public relations professionals who will perform the following:

- Develop a communication strategy to release the findings of the report.
- Based on the report, work with FPRF to develop clear, concise messaging summarizing the key findings.
- With guidance from the Foundation's oversight Panel, identify the key audiences for the report and messages and strategies to reach them.
- Develop several communication tools to convey the messages (i.e. powerpoint presentations, articles, etc.) that can be used by others to communicate the report and further the goal of electrical safety. An emphasis should be placed on cost-effective web based tools.
- Attend two meetings of the Foundation's oversight Panel.

Evaluation of RFP

FPRF will evaluate RFP's based on the following criteria:

- Familiarity with the electrical industry and media outlets for its audiences
- Proven track record in achieving measurable results from public awareness campaigns
- Scope and approach
- Cost effectiveness versus anticipated reach

Project Costs

The budget for this project is not to exceed \$100,000. This sum is inclusive of all agency and production costs as well as travel expenses for attendance at the two meetings for the oversight panel.

Implementation:

The project will be conducted under the auspices of the Fire Protection Research Foundation. A project advisory committee will provide guidance on technical aspects and assistance with their knowledge of the industry and will review project deliverables.

Intellectual Property: The Research Foundation will retain rights to all project materials.

Project Milestones and Approximate Schedule

Proposals Due	March 14, 2008
Selection of Contractor	April 1, 2008
Messages and Strategy	May 15, 2008
Approved electronic version of tools	July 1, 2008

How To Respond

Letter proposals (not to exceed four pages) shall be submitted electronically to Kathleen Almand, Executive Director of the Foundation, at kalmand@nfpa.org no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT March 14, 2008.

About Fire Protection Research Foundation

The [Fire Protection Research Foundation](#) plans, manages and communicates consortium-funded research on a broad range of fire safety issues in collaboration with scientists and laboratories around the world. The Foundation is an affiliate of the National Fire Protection Association.