

# Automatic Sprinkler Systems Provide The “First Line of Defense” Against Fire

Automatic sprinkler systems provide the “first line of defense” against fire if the system is properly maintained.

## Functions of the sprinkler system

When the fire strikes, the automatic sprinkler system will be ready providing, of course, that the system has been given proper care.

Automatic sprinkler systems have four major functions:

- Automatically detects the fire.
- Immediately sounds an alarm.
- Opens sprinkler heads and suppresses or extinguishes the fire.
- Remains in operation as long as the fire constitutes a danger.

When systems are properly installed and maintained, they are a highly effective safeguard against the loss of life and property. Keep your system ready!

## Prevent unauthorized valve closing

Effective property protection requires management controls to keep automatic sprinkler protection in service.

Disastrous industrial fires have occurred when the sprinkler system was out of service—even temporarily.

Controls should be established to make certain sprinkler valves are in the “Open position” at all times.

- A reliable building self inspection schedule, conducted by responsible employees, should include the inspection of every fire protection valve on the property.
- Valves should be tested, to be certain they are in an open position, then “locked” or “sealed” to prevent unauthorized closing.
- Electrical supervising tamper controls, on each valve, should be tested periodically and closely inspected for defects or possible electrical interruptions.

If a closed valve is found, emergency procedures should be implemented immediately.

- Top management should be notified.
- Employees familiar with the system should investigate the reason the valve was closed.
- Corrections or repairs should be started immediately and sprinkler service should be restored as soon as possible.
- A watchman should be assigned to the effected area until full service is restored.

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**Sprinkler alarms are essential**

When a fire starts, a well maintained sprinkler system will react quickly to control and contain the fire to the area of origin. It is important to “sound the alarm” when the sprinkler system is activated to notify employees and the local fire department of impending danger.

Prompt response to the alarm will also permit early shut down of the sprinkler system when the fire is extinguished. This will reduce potential water damage to contents, equipment and building.

Local alarms, signals operating on the premises, and alarm connections terminating in fire departments, central station offices or other reliable locations, are important to the safety of your employees and to the reduction of damage to building and contents.

**Alarms should be tested monthly for reliability**

If all valves are open, if the system is properly maintained and installed, if the alarms operate promptly — your system is now ready!

The loss prevention information and advice presented in this brochure are intended only to advise our insureds and their managers of a variety of methods and strategies based on generally accepted safe practices, for controlling potentially loss producing situations commonly occurring in business premises and/or operations. They are not intended to warrant that all potential hazards or conditions have been evaluated or can be controlled. They are not intended as an offer to write insurance coverage for such conditions or exposures, or to simply that Great American Insurance Company will write such coverage. The liability of Great American Insurance Company is limited to the specific terms, limits and conditions of the insurance policies issued.  
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