

Sprinklered Facilities

A list of best practices for loss prevention to help Ohio Mutual agent partners and members identify the most common hazards that Sprinklered Facilities every day.



Best Practices

- Locate all of your property's risers, i.e., where the sprinkler system water enters the building, and ensure that clear access is always maintained:

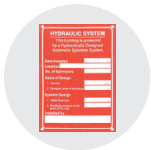


If yours is a dry pipe (no water in the lines until a sprinkler head is tripped, often found in unheated buildings), it is critical that maintenance level heat is near those risers with a permanent (as opposed to portable) heat source.



Also at the riser, additional sprinkler heads, and a wrench, matched to the property's system, should be kept in a box adjacent for quick repairs in the event a head is accidentally damaged.

- Most systems require annual inspection and drain tests that must be conducted by a qualified contractor. Concurrently, alarms, e.g., tamper, flow, low temperature, etc.) should also be tested to ensure they are operational. An inspector's tag showing static and residual pressures, date of the inspection, and previous inspection data should be found at the riser.



- Know your system's capabilities or design data, as it is critical information to advise you how you can store your commodities (contents) and what type(s) of commodities are permitted or considered for the design density of a suppression system. If this

information isn't available, it is worth the time to find it, or to have the system reverse-engineered by a qualified consultant to determine its adequacy.



- OS&Y (outside stem & yolk) valves can and should be chained in the open position, even if they are connected to a tamper alarm. Exterior water valves should also be chained in the open position to prevent accidental or intentional closing.



- Do you have exterior fire department connections (FDCs) (See image 5)? If so, they are required to have appropriate cover plates to prevent them from being blocked with foreign materials or vermin.

- Sprinkler heads, whether pendant or upright, are required to have a minimum clear space of eighteen inches from the bottom of the heads to allow them to disperse water effectively. Have an early suppression, fast response (ESFR) system? The large heads that usually actuate at a higher temperature and have higher water flow, will require three feet of clear space.

- Connect the sprinkler system to a qualified central station to monitor any alarm trips or notifications so appropriate emergency response teams (fire department, maintenance personnel or management team) can be immediately summoned.

- An often observed deficiency is existing sprinkler heads that have been "covered up" by suspended ceiling panels or even drywall, negating the impact of having a suppression system. If at all possible, any such obstructions should be removed.

