

**STUDY MATERIAL FOR THE
CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS FOR
CONSOLIDATED EXAM FOR:**

**STANDPIPE SYSTEMS WITH PRESSURE TANKS,
SPRINKLER SYSTEMS WITH PRESSURE TANKS, AND
SPRINKLER SYSTEMS WITH PRESSURE TANKS COMPLEX-WIDE**

F-96

**ALSO INCLUDED IN THIS BOOKLET YOU WILL
FIND THE FOLLOWING:**

1. NOTICE OF EXAMINATION (NOE)

REVISED 9/02/99

NOTICE OF EXAMINATION FOR

Title: Consolidated Examination for Certificate of Fitness for: Standpipe Systems with Pressure Tank, Sprinkler Systems with Pressure Tank, and Sprinkler Systems with Pressure Tank Complex-wide (F-96)

Date of Test: Written tests are conducted Monday to Friday (except legal holidays)
9:00 AM to 2:30 PM.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.
2. Applicants must have a reasonable understanding of the English language.
3. Applicants must present a letter of recommendation from his/her employer. The letter must be on official letterhead and must state the applicant's full name, character, physical condition, experience, and address of premises where applicant will be employed.
4. Applicants must present two (2) forms of satisfactory identification i.e., driver's license and passport picture ID.
5. Applicants must present a sketch or plan of the system they are applying for.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Application Fees: \$25.00 for originals and \$15.00 for renewals. The fee may be paid in cash, money order, or personal check payable to New York City Fire Department. The \$25.00 fee must be payable by all applicants prior to taking the Certificate of Fitness test. Application forms are available at the Public Certification Unit, 1st floor, 9 MetroTech Center, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

TEST INFORMATION

Test: The test will be of the written, multiple choice type. A passing score of at least 70% is required in order to secure a Certificate of Fitness. Individuals with a license as a Master Fire Suppression Pipe Contractor (Dept. of Buildings) Class A or B; or as a Master Plumber (Dept. of Buildings); or a certification as a Fire Protection Engineering Technician-Automatic Sprinkler System Layout Levels II or III (NICET) or Fire Protection Engineering Technician-Special Hazards Systems Layout III or IV (NICET) may have the written test waived. This procedure is the **Alternative Issuance Policy**. Call (718) 999-1986 for additional information and forms.

This study material, in addition to any formal courses you have taken, will help you prepare for the examination for the Certificate of Fitness for the consolidated examination for Standpipe and Sprinkler systems F-96. The study material includes information taken from the Fire Prevention Code and the Fire Prevention Directives of the Bureau of Fire Prevention, NYFD. The study material does not contain all of the information you need to know in order to perform the job as a certificate of fitness holder under this consolidated series. In addition to other requirements of the Certificates of Fitness covered under this consolidated series it is your responsibility to become familiar with all applicable rules and regulations of the City of New York, even if they are not covered in this document.

All questions on the Certificate of Fitness examination are multiple choice, with four alternative answers to each question. Only one answer is correct for each question. If you do not answer a question or mark more than one alternative your answer will be scored as incorrect. A score of 70% correct is required on the examination in order to qualify for the Certificate of Fitness. Read each question carefully before marking your answer. There is no penalty for guessing.

Sample Questions

- _____1. The minimum water pressure at the level of the highest sprinkler head should be:
- (A) 15 psi.
 - (B) 25 psi.
 - (C) 50 psi.
 - (D) 100 psi.

The correct answer is "A". You would mark "A" on your answer sheet.

- _____2. When a gravity tank is required in a yard system the tank should be:
- (A) underground.
 - (B) on the ground level.
 - (C) elevated above ground level.
 - (D) filled with compressed foam.

The correct answer is "C". You would mark "C" on your answer sheet.

PROVISIONS OF THE FIRE PREVENTION CODE OF NEW YORK

All multiple dwellings, factories, office buildings, warehouses, stores and offices, theaters and music halls, and all hospitals and asylums, and all public schools and other public buildings, churches and other places where large numbers of persons are congregated for purposes of worship, instruction or amusement, and all piers, bulkheads, wharves, pier sheds, bulkhead sheds or other waterfront structures shall provide such fire hose, fire extinguishers, buckets, axes, fire hooks, fire doors and other means of preventing and extinguishing fires as the commissioner may direct.

Sprinkler systems in garment factories and factories using flammable oil for processing.

A one source automatic wet pipe sprinkler system shall be provided in every non-fireproof building in which there is a garment factory or a factory engaged in the processing of combustible fabrics with a flammable oil, and which exceeds three stories in height, and in which more than fifty persons are employed above the street floor. A flammable oil is defined as an oil which emits a flammable vapor below one hundred twenty-five degrees Fahrenheit. An automatic dry pipe sprinkler system is acceptable in place of an automatic wet pipe sprinkler system where low temperatures or other conditions would prevent the installation of a wet pipe system. The sprinkler systems shall be provided in all parts of such buildings.

Sprinkler and/or standpipe system maintenance and inspections.

1. Automatic and non-automatic sprinkler systems shall be inspected at least once a month by a competent person holding a certificate of fitness, employed by the owner, to see that all parts of the system are in perfect working order, and that the Fire Department connection or connections, if any, are ready for immediate use by the Fire Department. A detailed record of each inspection shall be kept by the Certificate of Fitness Holder for examination by a representative of the Fire Department.
2. A supply of at least six extra sprinkler heads with the appropriate wrench shall be kept available on the premises, to replace promptly any fused or damaged sprinklers. Any head which has opened or has been damaged shall be replaced immediately with an appropriate sprinkler head. One or more employees shall be instructed in the maintenance of sprinkler systems.
3. At least once in five years, the Fire Department connection or connections, if any, for a sprinkler and/or standpipe system shall be subjected to a hydrostatic pressure test and the standpipe system shall also be subjected to a flow and pressure test to demonstrate its suitability for Fire Department use. The test shall be conducted by the owner's representative before a representative of the Fire Department.

Maintenance and inspections of standpipe and sprinkler pumps and accessories.

Valves, hose, tools and other accessory fire fighting appliances shall be kept readily available and in good working order. Fire pumps shall be operated at least once in thirty days in a manner which will subject the standpipe system to a hydrostatic pressure of at least fifty pounds per square inch at the top story hose outlet. The qualified operator shall maintain a suitable record of his or her compliance with this requirement for inspection by the Fire Department. The installation of fire and booster pumps shall be subject to inspection and/or test in the presence of an inspector from the Bureau of Fire Prevention.

PROVISIONS OF BUREAU OF FIRE PREVENTION FIRE DIRECTIVE 4-82

Record keeping. The Certificate of Fitness Holder shall maintain a detailed record of all inspections. A record card with the date of each inspection, the Certificate of Fitness number, and the signature of the Certificate of Fitness holder shall be posted near the main control valve.

The detailed inspection report shall include information relative to conditions of water supply, gravity and pressure tanks and levels therein, valves, risers, piping, sprinkler heads, hose valves, hoses and nozzles, siamese connections, alarms, fire pumps, obstructions, and conditions of all other system equipment and appurtenances. All defects of violations shall be noted on the report. Records should be kept for one year and be made available to any representative of the Fire Department.

Reporting of defects or violations. The Certificate of Fitness holder must report all major defects immediately to:

1. the local Fire house
2. the owner or manager of the building
3. the Bureau of Fire Prevention

Major defects or violations include: empty tank, break or major leak in system water piping, inoperative or shut water supply valves; or complete or partial shut down of sprinkler and/or standpipe systems for repairs or other reason, and defective siamese connections.

Other defects or violations which are minor should be reported to the owner or manager of the building. If the defects are not corrected within 30 days, the defects should be reported in writing to the Bureau of Fire Prevention.

Failure to make inspections, maintain records, and report defects or violations may be cause for revocation of the Certificate of Fitness and court enforcement proceedings.

PROVISIONS OF THE NEW YORK BUILDING CODE

Sources of water supply for sprinkler systems.

Automatic sources of water supply for sprinkler systems include a gravity tank, pressure tank, automatic fire pump, or direct connection to the public water system. Auxiliary sources of water supply for sprinkler systems include manually activated fire pumps or siamese connections. Tanks used to provide the required primary water supply to a standpipe system may also be used as a supply for an automatic sprinkler system. Non-automatic sources of supply for sprinkler systems shall include siamese connections. Where siamese connections are installed, metal signs shall be fastened to or above the siamese connection indicating the area protected. Where the building has two or more frontages, additional metal signs shall be installed indicating the location of the siamese connection. The installation and construction of siamese connections shall be the same as required for fire standpipe systems, except that the caps of each automatic sprinkler siamese connection shall be painted green. The entire siamese connection of a non-automatic sprinkler system shall be painted aluminum. The caps of each siamese connection used for combination standpipe and sprinkler systems shall be painted yellow and signs shall be provided.

At least one automatic source of water supply shall be provided for sprinklers installed in all occupancy groups, except that:

- (a) Two automatic sources of water supply shall be provided for sprinklers in:
 - (1) Buildings classified in occupancy group A.
 - (2) Buildings classified in occupancy group C when the area on one floor exceeds twenty thousand square feet.
 - (3) Buildings classified in occupancy group F-1 when open heads are required for stages of unlimited size.

- (b) The domestic water supply may be used to supply a sprinkler system when installed in buildings classified in occupancy groups E, G, H and J. The domestic water supply may be used to supply sprinklers if all of the following conditions are met:
- (1) The domestic water supply line from the tank or street has the required pressure (as described below).
 - (2) An O.S. & Y. valve or an approved valve having visual indication, sealed open, is installed in the sprinkler supply branch.
 - (3) The number of heads in each fire section does not exceed twenty, and no more than ten heads are supplied from any one domestic water riser.
 - (4) The connection is made at the supply or riser side of any domestic branch control valves.

Direct connection of sprinklers to the public water system.

Direct connection of sprinklers to a city water main is acceptable as an automatic water supply provided the main is capable of maintaining a pressure of at least fifteen psig at the top of the highest sprinkler riser, with five hundred gpm of water flowing from a two and one-half inch hydrant outlet located at the street level within 250 feet of the building. The size of each connection shall be as large as that of the main riser and, except in sprinkler systems in multiple dwellings, shall be at least three inches and shall be controlled by an accessible shutoff valve.

Each service shall be equipped, under the sidewalk, with a control valve in a flush sidewalk box located within two feet of the front wall of the building or street line as required by the department of environmental protection. The location of the control valve shall be indicated by a sign placed on the structure directly opposite the sidewalk flush box, and shall have a white background with one inch red letters reading: "Automatic Sprinkler Shutoff Valve ... Feet Opposite This Sign". Brass, bronze, or other metal signs with one-inch letters, raised or counter-sunk one-eighth of an inch may also be used.

Sprinkler booster pumps.

Where the pressure from the city water main is less than 15 psig as described above but is sufficient to give at least five psig at the highest line of sprinklers as determined by test, an automatic, electrically driven pump installed for the purpose of boosting or increasing the city water pressure in the sprinkler system may be accepted subject to the following requirements:

- (a) Pumps shall be of approved centrifugal type, capable of delivering at least two hundred gpm, and shall be capable of supplying twenty-five per cent of the heads, in the largest area supplied, at twenty gpm, at a pressure of at least twenty-five psig at the top of the highest sprinkler riser.
- (b) Pumps shall be maintained under approved automatic control with closed circuit supervisory attachment. The supervisory attachments shall be directly connected to an office where maintenance personnel are in attendance twenty-four hours a day; or, in lieu thereof, the supervisory attachment may be directly connected to the central station of an approved operating fire alarm company. The supervisory alarm services shall be arranged so as to provide positive indication at an approved central office or sprinkler alarm panel board that the pump has operated or that the source of electrical supply has failed.

When sprinklers are not directly connected to the public water system and a sprinkler booster pump is not present a pressure or gravity tank shall be used.

Protection of sprinkler system.

All parts of an automatic system exposed to freezing temperatures shall be protected from freezing or in lieu thereof, an automatic drypipe system or a system filled with a nonfreezing, noncombustible solution shall be used. When a system filled with nonfreezing solution is used and the system is connected to a potable water supply, it shall be subject to the requirements of the Health Department and the Bureau of Water Supply of the Department of Environmental Protection. Sprinkler heads subject to damage shall be protected.

Inspection and tests.

(a) **Automatic wet and dry systems.** Automatic wet and dry sprinkler systems shall be subjected to a hydrostatic pressure test for a period of one hour at a pressure of at least one hundred psig at the topmost sprinkler head and at least two hundred psig at the lowest cross connection to the siamese connections.

(b) **Automatic dry pipe systems.** In addition to the hydrostatic test the automatic dry pipe systems shall also be tested to forty psig air pressure for a twenty-four hour period with the pressure loss not to exceed one and one-half psig.

(c) **Non-automatic sprinkler systems.** Non-automatic sprinkler systems shall be subjected to a hydrostatic pressure test of fifty psig at the topmost sprinkler head, with the test pressure maintained for a period of at least one hour.

(d) **Pressure tanks.** Pressure tanks shall be hydrostatically tested to a pressure of at least one and one-half times the working pressure for a period of one hour.

(e) **Sprinkler branches and heads supplied from domestic water.** Sprinkler branches and heads shall be tested at the pressure required by this section or at the pressure of the domestic water supply, whichever is greater.

PROVISIONS OF REFERENCE STANDARD RS 17-2

Chapter 2 - Water Supplies

Pumps. In light hazard occupancies with only limited ordinary hazard areas, an automatic fire pump serving the lower 300 feet of the standpipe system may be used as the primary supply to the sprinkler system, if a secondary automatic switching power supply is available to drive the pump. In hydraulically designed sprinkler systems supplied from a gravity tank, the pressure may be increased by means of an automatic, special service fire pump. The pump shall be arranged in a bypass to permit the portion of the system so supplied to be served by the system's siamese connections. If the pump is not supplied from the street side of the building service switch, the electrical service and pump operation shall be fully supervised; provided that a secondary automatic switching power supply is available to drive the pumps.

Pressure Tanks. A pressure tank in accordance with Fire Department's requirements is an acceptable water supply source. The total available quantity of water in pressure tanks need not exceed 15,000 gallons when there is a secondary source of water supply available from a gravity tank or a street connection acceptable to the Commissioner of Buildings. The maximum gross capacity of a single pressure tank shall be 9,000 gallons.

Each tank shall be kept at a maximum of 2/3 full of water and a minimum of 1/3 full of air maintained under a minimum pressure of 75 psig. The water-to-air ratio shall be so proportioned and the tank so located that a minimum pressure of 15 psig will be available on the highest line of sprinklers below the main roof when all

the water is being discharged from the tank. The tanks shall be supplied with water through a fixed pipe, independent of the sprinkler piping, and at least 2 inches in size. The water supply and connection shall be capable of supplying the tank at a rate of at least 65 gpm without reducing the pressure in the tank. The tank shall have a fixed water level plate on the end of the tank opposite the gauge glass, or equivalent devices, to indicate the level of the water in the tank.

The air compressor shall be provided with automatic controls for maintaining the air pressure. The capacity of the compressor shall be sufficient to build up the tank pressure to 75 psig within 3 hours or less. Pressure tanks shall be provided with approved closed circuit high and low water and high low air alarms. Pressure tanks shall be located at or above the top level of sprinklers.

AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Automatic sprinkler systems are designed to automatically distribute water on a fire. The sprinkler system is designed to extinguish the fire entirely, or to prevent the spread of the fire. An automatic sprinkler system consists of a series of pipes at or near the ceiling in a building. The sprinkler system is fitted with automatic devices designed to release water on a fire. These devices are called sprinkler heads. The sprinkler heads are normally closed by a disk or cap. This cap is held in place by a heat sensitive releasing element. A rise in temperature to a predetermined heat causes the sprinkler head to open. Water is then discharged in the form of spray. When the sprinkler heads open they are said to have fused. The sprinkler heads are fitted at standard intervals on the piping. If more than one head opens, the area sprayed by each overlaps that of the sprinkler head next to it.

Sprinkler systems are required by law in various occupancies. They also may be installed voluntarily by the owner of the building. Sprinkler systems are installed to protect the building and its occupants. The installation of sprinklers has a major effect in reducing fire losses. Statistical evidence shows that about 96% of the fires are extinguished or controlled when sprinklers are installed. The 4% failure was due to a variety of causes including burst piping, closed supply valves, frozen water lines, etc.

Automatic sprinklers are very effective for life safety. They signal the existence of a fire. At the same time they discharge water to the burning area. When sprinklers are installed there are rarely problems getting to the seat of the fire. They also reduce interference with visibility for fire fighting due to smoke. The downward force of the water sprayed from sprinkler heads lowers the smoke level in the room. Sprinkler systems also serve to cool the smoke. This makes it possible for persons to remain in the area much longer than they could if the room were without sprinklers.

Most standard sprinkler systems have devices that automatically give an alarm when a sprinkler head discharges water. This alarm is usually an audible signal in the building. In many cases they also give an alarm at a remote location, such as the local fire house or a central station company. The central station company monitors the entire fire protection system for water discharge and problems with the equipment. When water discharge or equipment problems are identified the local fire house is immediately notified. This allows the Fire Department to gain control of a fire as quickly as possible. Water is rarely discharged accidentally from sprinkler heads.

SPRINKLER HEADS

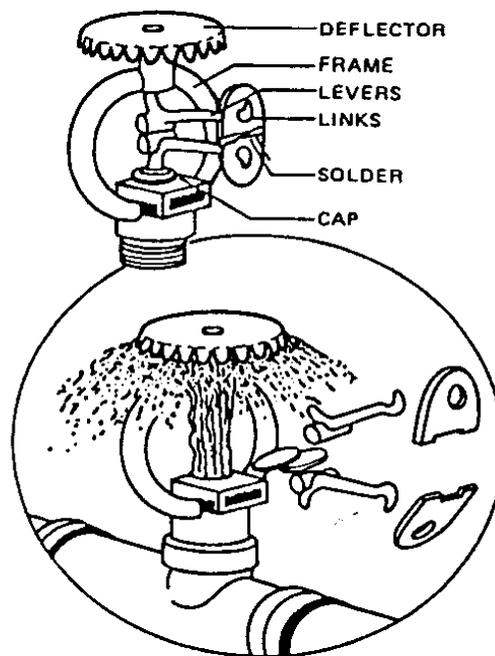
Sprinkler heads are made of metal. They are screwed into the piping at standard intervals. The water is prevented from leaving the sprinkler head by an arrangement of levers and links. The levers and links are soldered together on the sprinkler head. The solder is a metal alloy with a fixed melting point. Other types of sprinkler heads use a quartz bulb which expands and breaks under heat. Still another type uses a solid chemical held in a cylinder which is broken by heat action. The sprinkler head is designed to withstand at

least 500 psi without injury or leakage. If properly installed, there is little danger of the sprinkler head breaking apart unless it is damaged.

The latest type of sprinkler head is called the "cycling sprinkler". This sprinkler head cycles water on and off depending on the temperature. When the disk reaches a temperature of 165°F, the valve opens, permitting water to flow. When the disk temperature cools the valve closes to shut off the water.

Some sprinkler heads are designed to be used in special situations. Sprinkler heads exposed to corrosive conditions are often covered with a protective coat of wax or lead. Corrosive vapors are likely to make automatic sprinklers inoperative or slow down the speed of operation. They can also seriously block the spray nozzles in the sprinkler heads. They can damage, weaken or destroy the delicate parts of the sprinkler heads. In most cases such corrosive action takes place over a long time. For this reason the sprinkler heads must be carefully watched for signs of corrosion. Care must be taken to make sure that the protective coating is not damaged when handling or replacing the heads.

A typical fusible link type sprinkler head is shown in the picture below.



A typical sprinkler head

Spray Pattern of Sprinklers. The best way to put out a fire is to spray the water from the sprinkler head downward and horizontally. The spray pattern will also prevent the spread of the fire. The force of the water against the deflector creates a heavy spray which is directed outward and downward. The shape of the deflector determines the spray pattern of the water discharged from the sprinkler head. Usually, this is an umbrella-shaped spray pattern. At a distance of 4 feet below the deflector, the spray covers a circular area having a diameter of approximately 16 feet when the sprinkler is discharging 15 gpm. The newest kinds of sprinkler heads allow the sprinklers to be placed farther apart needing lower flow rates to give coverage to an area. These new heads offer more effective fire protection and are less likely to cause water damage than the old sprinkler heads.

Systems Using Large Drop Sprinklers Heads. Large drop sprinkler heads are special sprinklers designed to discharge large drops of water from the head. These sprinkler heads are used to break through the strong updrafts of high challenge fires.

Temperature Ratings of Sprinkler Heads. Automatic sprinkler heads have various temperature ratings which state the temperatures at which they will fuse. The temperature rating of all solder type automatic sprinklers is stamped on the soldered link. For other heat sensitive units, the temperature rating is stamped on one of the releasing parts. The temperature ratings of sprinkler are also indicated by a color coding system. See color codes below.

<u>Temperature Ratings</u>	<u>Color Code</u>
135° to 170°	Uncolored
175° to 225°	White
230° to 300°	Blue

In places where the temperature is normally high (e.g. boilers, ovens and drying rooms) a sprinkler head with a higher temperature rating must be used. This is to make sure that the sprinkler head does not discharge water at the wrong time. If heads with a high temperature rating are used in ordinary rooms (e.g., an office, an apartment, or a store) the value of the sprinkler protection is greatly reduced. This is because the temperature will have to increase much higher for the sprinkler head to open.

Sprinkler systems are excellent for controlling fires. However, they can cause water damage if they are not shut down soon after the fire has been extinguished. No control valve on the system should be closed except on the order of the fire officer in charge. Sometimes the Fire Department has a difficult time finding the control valve to shut down the system. This problem can be prevented by keeping a small sketch of the sprinkler system and the position of the control valves. This sketch should always be readily available. This sketch is very helpful to the fire fighters when they have to work with the sprinkler system.

Build up of Foreign Material on Sprinklers Heads. Sometimes conditions exist which cause a build-up of foreign material on sprinkler heads. This may prevent the sprinkler head from working properly. This build-up is commonly called loading. The build-up of foreign material insulates the sprinkler head. This insulation prevents the sprinkler head from opening at the temperature it is designed to.

If the build-up is hard, it may prevent the sprinkler head from opening. The best practice is to replace loaded sprinkler heads with new sprinkler heads rather than to attempt to clean them. If the deposits are hard, attempts to clean the heads are likely to damage them. This damage may prevent the sprinkler heads from working properly. The damage may also cause the sprinkler heads to leak.

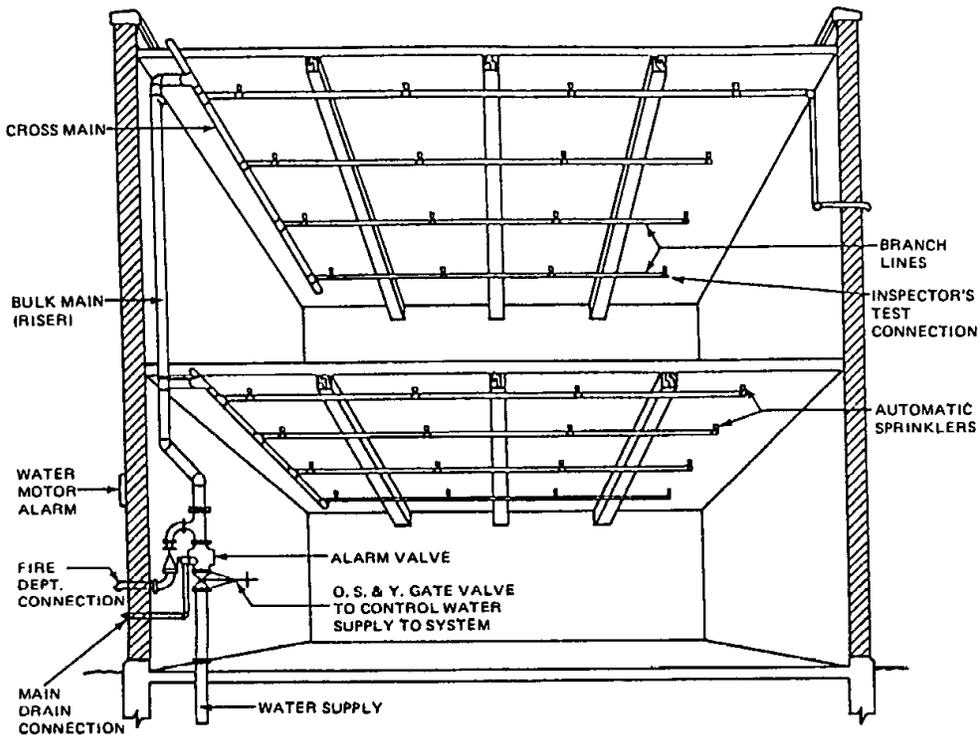
Deposits of light dust are less serious than hard deposits. Dust build-up may delay the operation of sprinkler heads. However, it will not prevent the eventual discharge of water. Dust deposits can be blown or brushed off. If a brush is used, it should be soft to avoid possible injury to sprinkler parts. Scouring or acidic liquids are likely to damage the sprinklers heads and should not be used for cleaning. Hot solutions of any kind should never be used to clean the sprinkler heads.

Sometimes sprinklers need to be protected when ceilings or piping are being painted. Usually a small lightweight paper bag or a sheet of lightweight paper is placed over the heads until the painting is completed. The bag or the sheet of paper should be secured with a rubber band. The bags are likely to delay the operation of the sprinkler heads and should be removed immediately after the painting is completed. There is no known method to safely remove paint from under the water cap or on the fusible link. Sprinkler heads that have been painted other than by the manufacturer must be replaced with new units.

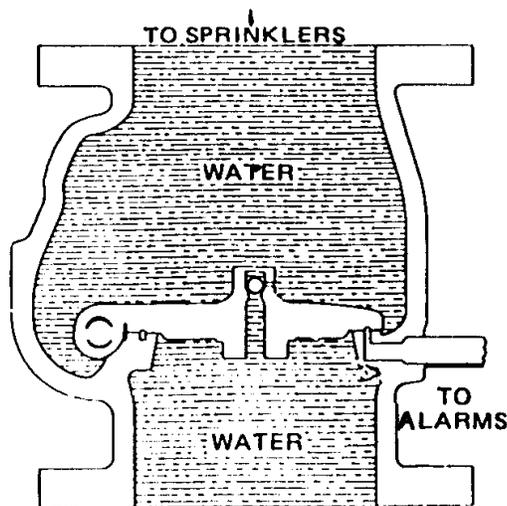
A supply of at least six extra sprinkler heads with the appropriate wrench should always be kept in a sprinkler cabinet. This extra supply should be used to promptly replace any sprinkler heads that have opened or have been damaged. The extra supply of sprinkler heads should be exactly the same as the sprinkler heads already installed in the system. It is very important that the replacement sprinkler heads have the same temperature rating as those installed in the system.

WET PIPE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Wet pipe sprinkler systems have water in the piping at all times. This type of system is used where there is no danger of the water supply freezing. A typical wet pipe system is shown in the picture below. A typical wet pipe sprinkler valve is shown on the following page.



A typical wet pipe system



A typical wet pipe sprinkler valve

Where temperatures drop below freezing the ordinary wet pipe system cannot be used. There are two methods for using automatic sprinkler systems in places exposed to freezing temperatures. One method is to design a system where water enters the sprinkler piping only after a control valve is opened. These are dry pipe systems, deluge systems, or preaction systems. The other method adds an antifreeze solution to the water in the wet pipe system. The antifreeze solution is a mixture of chemicals designed to prevent the water from freezing.

Antifreeze Solutions. Antifreeze is added to the water in piping exposed to freezing temperatures. When the sprinkler heads fuse the system works in the same way a wet pipe system. Antifreeze solutions are costly and may be difficult to maintain. Antifreeze is usually used for small unheated areas. Antifreeze solutions may be used only in accordance with applicable local health regulations.

Cold Weather Valves. An automatic sprinkler system should not be shut off and drained to avoid freezing during cold weather. However, parts of the sprinkler system may be shut down. Permission must be obtained from the local fire house. Permission may be given to shut off a maximum of 10 sprinklers on a wet pipe system. These shutoff valves are commonly referred to as cold weather valves.

WATER SUPPLY SOURCES FOR SPRINKLER AND STANDPIPE SYSTEMS

The sources used to supply water to sprinkler systems are the same as those for standpipe systems. Sprinkler and standpipe systems may be supplied from one or a combination of sources. For example, they may be supplied by public mains, gravity tanks, pressure tanks, reservoirs, rivers, or lakes. A single water supply would appear to be all that is needed to supply a sprinkler or a standpipe fire protection system. This assumes that there is enough water at an acceptable pressure. However, there are a few reasons why it is good to have a second water supply source. These reasons include: 1) a single supply source may be out of service (for maintenance or repair) during a fire emergency; 2) a single supply source may be disabled during fire or before the fire is fully extinguished; 3) the water supply source may fall below normal pressure or volume during an emergency.

In some cases it is required by law to have a second water supply source. Whether a second supply source is needed depends on several factors. These factors include the strength and reliability of the primary supply, the value of the property, the height, area and design of the building.

When a sprinkler or a standpipe system is supplied from a public water main, the entire system may be closed down by closing a control valve. This valve is located between the building and the water main in a box that is recessed into the sidewalk. The location of the box is found by reading a sign on a building or post nearby. For example, the sign might read "**Shutoff for Sprinkler System Located 6 Feet from This Sign,**" or it will have similar instructions. A special key may be required to operate this valve.

The control valve for the building may also be attached to an upright post, known as a post indicator valve (PIV). The building or section of the building controlled by the valve is usually marked on the post. The position of this valve (open or closed) is shown through a telltale opening in the post. On some posts, a padlock must first be opened or forced to release the operating wrench. On others, an iron strap must first be released by cutting a riveted leather section.

The main water supply for sprinkler and/or standpipe systems may also be controlled by an OS&Y valve (Outside Screw and Yolk valve). The OS&Y valves are found just inside the building wall on the main riser, or outside in protected pits. It is easy to tell at a glance if the valve is open or shut. When the stem is all the way out the valve is open. When the stem is all the way in the valve is closed. Some OS&Y valves may be used to control the water supply for individual floors in a building. The OS&Y valves are also installed to shut off certain sections of an individual floor. Being able to shut off parts of a building allows the Fire Department to have greater control over the fire protection system. When a fire is under control in an area the OS&Y valve can be closed to prevent any further water damage.

Sometimes repairs must be made to the sprinkler or standpipe system. When this happens the OS&Y valves are used to close the water supply to only those sections being repaired. This is good because the rest of the sprinkler system does not have to be shut down.

A building may have both a standpipe and a sprinkler system installed. Each system may have its own water supply source. For example, the standpipe system may be supplied by a gravity tank and the sprinkler system supplied by a pressure tank.

It is quite common for the two systems to share the same water supply source. For example, both systems may use the same gravity tank as a water supply source. The gravity tank is a limited water supply. The amount of water that is allocated to each system is regulated by local building laws.

Acceptable water supplies for the sprinkler or standpipe systems include connection to public or private water mains, connection to fire pumps, pressure tanks, and gravity tanks. These sources may be also used in combination to supply a standpipe and/or a sprinkler system. At least one of the water sources should be able to supply the standpipe or sprinkler system automatically. This supply must have the needed water volume and water pressure for the entire system. The public water works system is the most commonly used water supply source. In tall buildings the connection to the public water system may not have enough water pressure to supply the upper floors. In this situation a second supply source is often required to increase the water pressure. For example, a fire pump may be installed in a building that is more than ten stories high. The higher the building the greater the water pressure needed to supply the standpipe and/or sprinkler system.

Connections to Public Water Works System. While a connection to a reliable public water works system is the preferred primary water supply for standpipe and automatic sprinkler systems, a check valve must be

installed next to the interior connection to the standpipe or sprinkler system. This valve makes sure that the standpipe system does not backflow into the public water supply.

Fire Pumps. The fire pump is designed to draw water from a supply source. The water is then pumped into the fire protection system under high pressure. A fire pump with both a reliable source of power and a reliable suction water supply is a desirable piece of equipment. A suction water supply is simply a source of water that the pump can draw water from. With a good water supply a fire pump can pump water into a sprinkler or standpipe system for a long time. Sometimes more than one fire pump is installed in high rise buildings. The extra fire pumps are needed to maintain the desired water pressure levels at the top floors of the buildings.

Manually started pumps may be used as a secondary supply source if the primary water supply will last long enough to allow the pump to be started. This kind of system must give an automatic water-flow signal to the Certificate of Fitness holder when the pump must be started.

Automatic fire pumps are usually installed where a high water demand may occur immediately. This demand may occur in a deluge system. An automatic fire pump is also used when someone is not always available to activate the manual pump. Automatic fire pumps must have their suction “under a positive head” to avoid delays in drawing water from the supply source. **Under positive head** means that the water supplying the pump must be fed into the fire pump under pressure. This can be achieved by connecting the fire pump to a suction tank. Water is forced into the pump by gravity. Automatic fire pumps are activated as soon as a drop of air or water pressure is noticed in the fire protection system. The drop in pressure occurs when a hoseline is opened or a sprinkler head has fused.

Gravity Tanks. Gravity tanks of adequate capacity and elevation make a good primary supply and may be acceptable as a single supply. A gravity tank may be located on the top of a building or on a tall tower. The water in the tank is distributed throughout the sprinkler or standpipe system because of the pull of gravity.

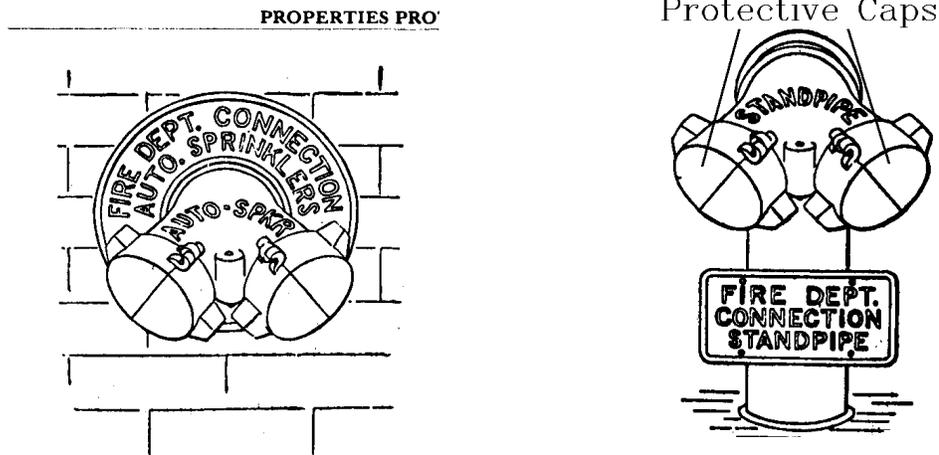
Pressure Tanks. Pressure tanks have several possible uses in automatic sprinkler or standpipe systems. Pressure tanks are often used where there is enough water from a supply source but the water pressure is too low. Pressure tanks may also be used in tall buildings that need the extra water pressure to supply the highest line of sprinklers or the highest line of hoses.

The tank is normally kept two-thirds full of water and one third full of air. The air pressure in the tank should be maintained above 75 psi. The air for pressure tanks is supplied by air compressors. Because the water is always under pressure it can be forcefully distributed throughout the sprinkler or standpipe system. An important limitation is the small amount of water that can be stored in such tanks. Where a small pressure tank is accepted as the water supply, the system is called a Limited Supply System.

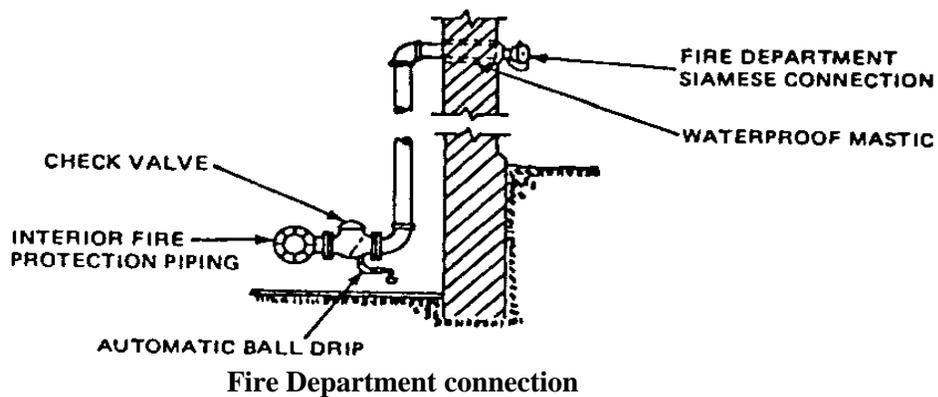
The pressure tank gives a strong starting pressure for the first sprinklers or hoses that open. The flow from the tank may be used while the automatic fire pumps begin to increase the water supply pressure. The pressure tank supplies these sprinklers and/or hoses until the Fire Department begins pumping water into the system

Siamese Connections for Fire Department Use. Normally a sprinkler or a standpipe system is connected to an automatic water supply source. Other sources of water are supplied through Fire Department siamese connections at the building. Siamese connections are a standard part of all sprinkler and standpipe systems. At least one siamese connection must be installed in all sprinkler and all standpipe systems. When responding to an alarm most fire departments supply water to the standpipe system first. The standpipe system supplies water to the fire hoses in the building. Water is then supplied to the sprinkler system through its own siamese connection. Care should be taken that standpipe and the sprinkler connections are

properly marked because the connections look the same. The exact purpose of each siamese connection should be shown nearby or on the siamese connection itself. The New York Building Code requires siamese connections to be color coded. The siamese connection to an automatic sprinkler system should be painted green. The siamese connection to non-automatic sprinkler system should be painted aluminum. The siamese connection to a standpipe should be painted red. Two examples of typical siamese connections are shown below.



Fire Department connections must always be accessible. Each connection should be fitted with a lower check valve. The check valve prevents the backflow of the private water supply into the public water supply. The figure below shows the main features of a Fire Department siamese connection.



The automatic drip device between the lower check valve and the outside hose coupling prevents water from building up in the piping. The ball drip device makes sure that the Fire Department connection is not blocked by water that has frozen in the piping. If water freezes in the piping, the Fire Department will not be able to pump water into the system. Under normal conditions the automatic ball drip should be dry. A wet ball drip device indicates that the lower check valve may be defective. If the lower check valve is defective it should be replaced immediately. Many standpipe and sprinkler systems use the Fire Department siamese connection as the secondary water supply source.

WATER-FLOW ALARMS IN SPRINKLER AND STANDPIPE SYSTEMS SUPERVISION

Sprinkler and standpipe systems should have devices and equipment for signaling when water flows through risers or mains supplying the systems. The flow may be due to fire, leakage, or accidental rupture of the piping. It is important that prompt action is taken when water-flow is noticed or signaled by these devices.

Functions of Alarms and Supervisory Signals. Sprinkler and standpipe systems with a water-flow alarm serve two functions. (1) It is an effective fire extinguishing system. (2) It is an automatic fire alarm. An alarm is signaled as soon as a sprinkler head has fused or a hose has been activated. Water-flow alarms and fire alarms give warning of the actual occurrence of a fire. They also signal when water flows through the system due to broken pipes. Alarms alert occupants and summon the Fire Department. Any signal, whether water-flow or supervisory, may be used to give an audible alarm. It may also send a signal to a central station company. The central station company will then contact the local fire house.

Supervisory devices are often connected to a central station company which monitors the sprinkler and/or standpipe systems for problems with equipment and when sprinkler heads are opened or standpipe hoses have been activated. The central station company should be notified when any control valves are closed for maintenance or repair. This reduces the number of false alarms.

Automatic sprinkler systems are required to have an approved water motor gong or an electric bell, horn, or siren on the outside of the building. An electric bell or other audible signal device may also be located inside the building. Water operated devices must be located near the alarm valve, dry pipe valve, or other water control valves in order to avoid long runs of connecting pipe.

Devices and Equipment Supervised. Sprinkler and/or standpipe system supervision is commonly provided for several purposes. These purposes include the detection of: (1) low water level in water supply tanks, (2) low temperature in water supply tanks or ground level reservoirs, (3) high or low water level in pressure tanks, (4) high or low air pressure in pressure tanks, (5) high or low air pressure in dry pipe sprinkler or standpipe systems, (6) failure of electric power supply to fire pumps, and (8) automatic operation of electric fire pumps.

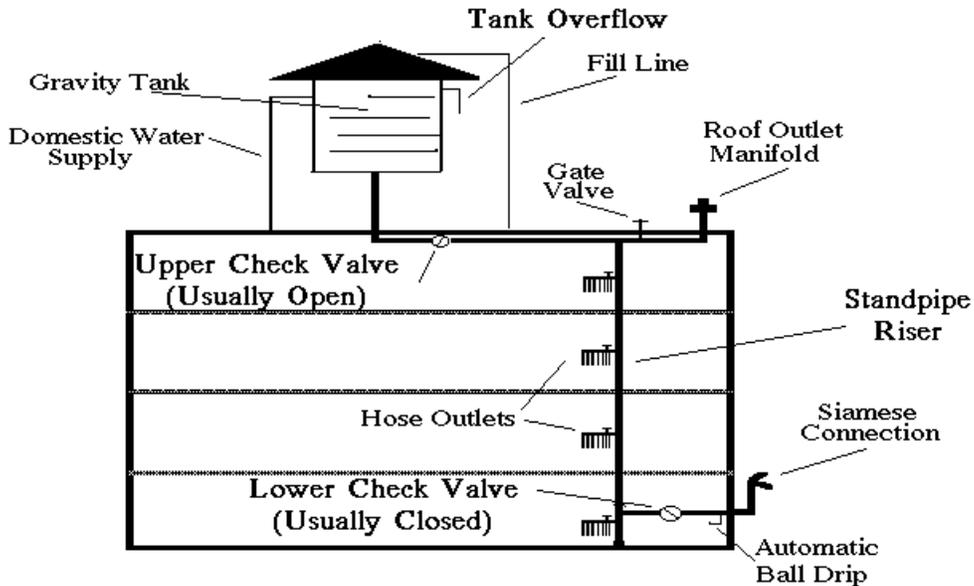
Water-flow Alarm Valves. The basic design of most water-flow alarm valves is that of a check valve which lifts from its seat when water flows into a sprinkler or standpipe system. This alarm then starts an audible signal to alert the occupants in the building that the sprinkler or standpipe system has been activated.

Alarm Retarding Devices. An alarm check valve that is exposed to changing water supply pressure needs an alarm retarding device. This is required to prevent false alarms when the check valve clapper is lifted from its seat by a temporary pressure surge.

Gate Valves. Gate valves of the non-indicating type are provided in water distribution systems. Gate valves allow parts of the sprinkler or standpipe system to be shut off for repairs or maintenance. This is done without reducing protection over a wide area. Such valves are normally a non-rising stem type. They are operated using a special key wrench. A valve box is located over the valve to keep dirt from the valve. The valve box also provides a convenient access point for the valve wrench to the valve nut. A complete record should be made for each valve in the system. This record should include the exact location, the date it was installed, the make, the direction of opening, number of turns to open, and any maintenance that was performed.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF STANDPIPE SYSTEMS

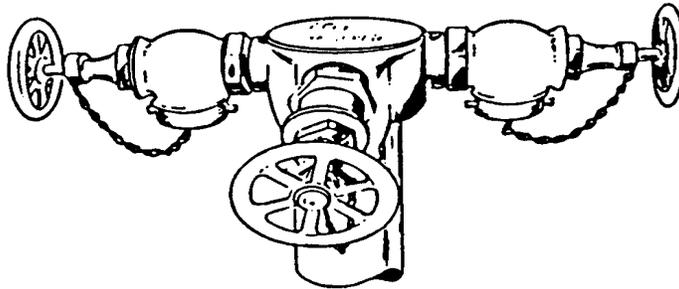
Standpipe systems are an important part of the fire protection system in a building. The standpipe system provides water that fire fighters can manually discharge through hoses onto a fire. Water is fed into a piping system. The piping runs vertically (up and down) and horizontally (side to side) throughout the building. The piping running vertically are usually called risers. The risers are usually located in the staircase enclosures or in the hallways in the building. This piping system supplies water to every floor in the building. When a standpipe system is installed and properly maintained it is a very effective means for extinguishing fires. A typical standpipe system is shown below in the illustration below.



A Typical Standpipe System

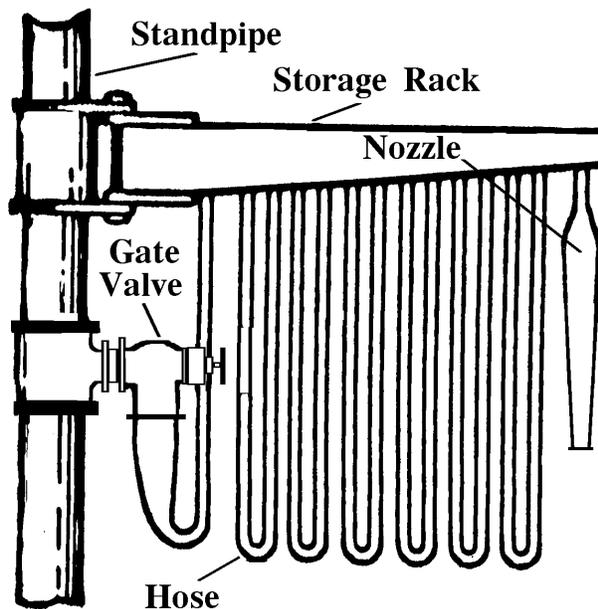
STANDPIPE DESIGN

Standpipe systems are used in buildings where it may be difficult for the Fire Department to pump water on the fire. For example, standpipe systems are required in buildings that are over six stories 75 feet in height. A standpipe system may be combined with an automatic fire protection system. For example, a standpipe system and a sprinkler system may be installed in the same building. The standpipe and the sprinkler systems may even share the same water supply and riser piping. The top of the standpipe riser extends up onto the roof. Three hose connections are attached to the top of the standpipe riser. These three connections make up the roof manifold. The roof manifold is used when extinguishing fires on the roof. It is also used when testing the water flow in the standpipe. An example of a typical roof manifold is shown in the picture on the following page.



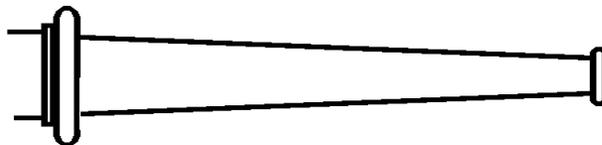
A Typical Roof Manifold

At selected locations in the building the piping is connected to a hose. These connections are controlled by gate valves. No water is allowed into the hose until the valve is opened. The gate valve must be manually opened by the fire fighter. The hose is usually stored on a quick release rack. An example of a typical quick release rack is shown below.



A Typical Fire Hose Outlet and Release Rack

A nozzle is attached at the end of the hose. The nozzle is used to direct the stream of water from the hose. An example of a typical nozzle is shown in the picture below.

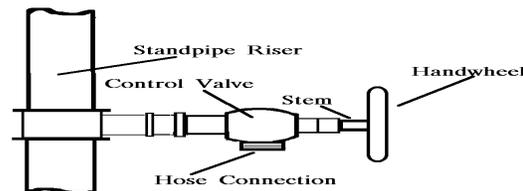


A Typical Nozzle

The hose and nozzle must be easy to reach at all times. The hose outlets are located so that every part of the building may be reached with a hose stream. The maximum length of a single hoseline is 125 feet. Sometimes the hoses are installed in cabinets. If the hoses are installed in cabinets each cabinet should be labeled "FIRE HOSE". When the hose outlets are not easy to see, signs should be posted telling where the hose outlets are located.

A pressure reducing device should be installed in the piping at each hose outlet. An occupant of the building may be injured if a hose is used when the pressure reducing device is not installed. The pressure reducing device may be adjusted or removed by Fire Department personnel during an emergency.

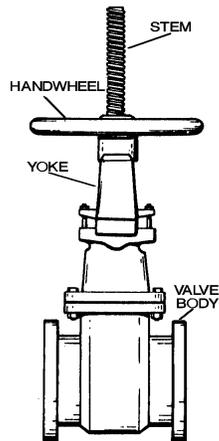
Another kind of connection to the standpipe is found in some systems. A short length of piping is welded to the riser. At the end of this pipe is a control valve and a 2 1/2 inch hose connection. No hose is installed to this connection. The Fire Department attaches its own hose to this connection when fighting a fire. An example of this kind of connection is shown in the picture below.



Fire Department Connection to a Standpipe Riser

Each standpipe system is also fitted with a drain valve. The drain valve is located at the lowest point on the standpipe system. The drain valve is used when the standpipe system is being tested or repaired. The drain valve is usually sealed in the closed position.

OS&Y (Outside Screw and Yoke) gate valves are installed at several places in the system. The OS&Y valves can be used to shut down just a part of the standpipe system. Sections may be shut down when fighting a fire. Sections are also shut down for testing, repairs or maintenance. It is easy to tell if the OS&Y valve is in the open or closed position. If the stem is raised above the control wheel the valve is open. If the stem is flush with the control wheel the valve is closed. A typical OS&Y gate valve is shown below. The valve in the picture is open.



Typical OS&Y valve

TYPES OF STANDPIPE SYSTEMS

Wet Standpipe: This system always has water in the piping. The water in the system is always under pressure. In some cases a fire pump may be used to increase the water pressure. The wetpipe system is the most commonly used standpipe system. It is used in heated buildings where there is no danger of the water in the piping freezing. Any part of the standpipe system that is exposed to freezing temperatures should be insulated. It is very important that the water in the piping does not freeze. Frozen water may prevent the standpipe system from working.

Dry Standpipe with an Automatic Dry Pipe Valve. This system is usually supplied by a public water main. Under normal conditions there is no water in the piping. Instead, there is air under pressure in the piping. A dry pipe valve is installed to prevent water from entering the standpipe system. The dry pipe valve is designed to open when there is drop of air pressure in the standpipe. When a hose is opened it causes a drop in air pressure in the standpipe system. Then the dry pipe valve automatically lets water flow into the standpipe. A control valve is installed at the automatic water supply connection. This valve should be kept open at all times to supply the standpipe system. This system is usually installed in a building that is not heated.

Dry Standpipe with a Manual Control Valve. This system is supplied by a public water main. Under normal conditions this system has no water in the piping. The water is not allowed into the standpipe until a control valve is manually operated. The control valve remains closed until a fire occurs. This system is usually used in a building that is not heated.

Dry Standpipe with No Permanent Water Supply. Under normal conditions this system has no water in the piping. Water is pumped into the standpipe system by the Fire Department. The water is pumped in through the siamese connection. This system cannot be used unless water is supplied by the Fire Department. A sign must be attached to each of the hose outlets. It should read "**Dry Standpipe for Fire Department Use Only**". This system is usually used in a building that is not heated.

CLASSES OF STANDPIPES SYSTEMS

Standpipe systems are classified depending on who is expected to use the system. The three classes are briefly described on the following page.

Class I: This system is designed to be used by professional fire fighters. For example, the system is used by Fire Department and Fire Brigade personnel. The fire hoses in these systems are 2 1/2 inches in diameter. The large hose diameter makes it difficult to control the stream of water from the hose.

Class II: This system is designed to be used by the occupants of a building. The hose and nozzle are connected to the standpipe. They are ready to be used by occupants in case of a fire. The hose is 1 1/2 inches in diameter. The hose stream is easier to control than the Class I hose.

Class III: This system may be used by either professional fire fighters or by occupants of the building. The hosing may be adjusted to either 1 1/2 or 2 1/2 inches in diameter. This is done by attaching special reducing valves to the hose line.

INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

The standpipe system must be regularly inspected by the Certificate of Fitness holder. This is to make sure that the system is working properly at all times. All parts of the standpipe system should be visually checked monthly. This visual inspection should make sure that the system is free from corrosion. The inspection should also make sure that there is no physical damage to the system. Special attention should be paid to any evidence of tampering with the standpipe system. Any part of the system that is damaged or missing should be repaired or replaced immediately.

All valves and connections to the automatic water supply sources should be inspected weekly. The valves should be checked to make sure that they are in the correct position. The valves should also be labeled to show their correct position and purpose. The hose outlets should be checked to make sure that the pressure reducing devices are present. The Fire Department should be notified when any part of the system is shut down for maintenance or repairs. A sign should be posted indicating that the section is shut down. All Fire Department connections must be tested at least once every 5 years.

All major defects in the system should be immediately reported to the local fire house. The owner of the building and the Bureau of Fire Prevention should also be notified. Major defects include: an empty tank, a break or a leak in the system's piping, an inoperative or shut water supply valve, and a defective siamese connection. The defects should be corrected as soon as possible. A complete or partial shutdown of the standpipe system for repairs or any other reason must also be reported.

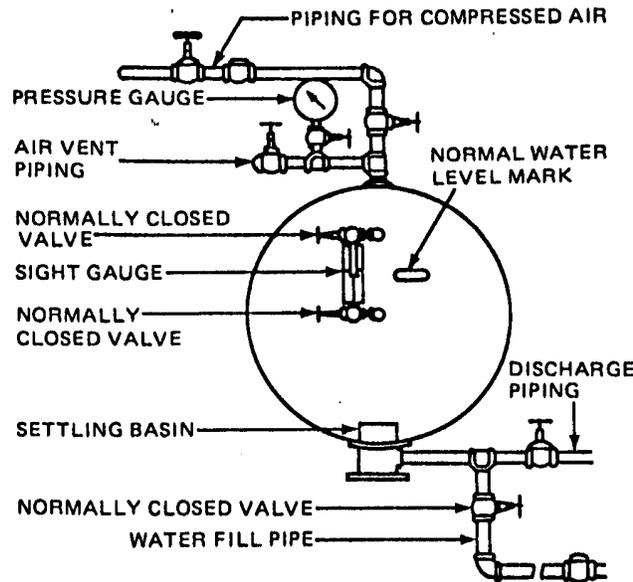
Minor defects should be reported to the owner of the building. The defects should be repaired within 30 days. If the defects are not corrected within 30 days, they must be reported to the Bureau of Fire Prevention.

The date of all inspections, maintenance and repairs made on the system must be recorded on the inspection record card. The record should also include the Certificate of Fitness number and the signature of the Certificate of Fitness holder. This record must be posted near the main control valve. All records must be kept for a period of at least one year. They should be made available to any representative of the Fire Department.

PRESSURE TANKS

Pressure tanks are enclosed water tanks of limited size. Air pressure in the tank permits forceful discharge of water in the tank into the standpipe or sprinkler system. A pressure tank may be used as a primary or secondary water supply for a standpipe or a sprinkler system. A pressure tank is usually housed in an enclosed structure. The temperature in the enclosure is kept at 40° Fahrenheit or above. The heated structure may be located anywhere in the building or even outside the building.

Pressure tanks are usually kept approximately two-thirds full of water and one-third full of pressurized air. The minimum acceptable air pressure inside the tank is 75 psi (pounds per square inch). The air pressure in the tank is automatically maintained by an air compressor. The maximum capacity of pressure tanks is typically 9,000 gallons. Some standpipe and/or sprinkler systems require more than 9,000 gallons of water. If necessary several pressure tanks can be used in combination to supply the system. A sectional view of a standard pressure tank is shown in the diagram below.



A Standard Pressure Tank

Pressure Tank Alarms

All pressure tanks used to provide the required primary water supply of a standpipe or sprinkler system should be equipped with two high and low alarm systems. One system monitors the high and low air pressure. The other system monitors the high and low water levels. The alarm system automatically controls the air-to-water ratio which should always be 1 (air) to 2 (water). An alarm signals the Certificate of Fitness holder when the water level or the air pressure falls too low. When this happens the pressure tank should be adjusted or repaired immediately.

Supervision of the Pressure Tank.

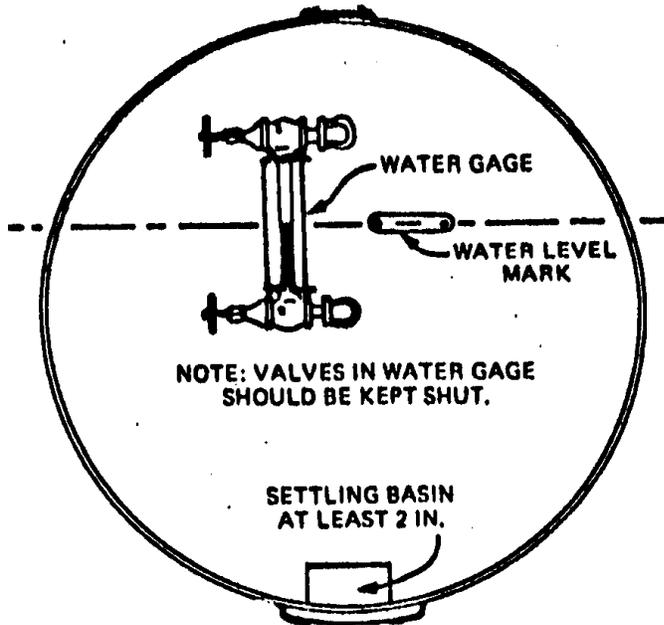
The pressure tank may also be supervised by an approved central station company which monitors the entire standpipe or sprinkler system. Supervisory devices are installed in the pressure tank. These devices alert the central station company when there is a problem with the tank's water level, air pressure, or water temperature. The devices also alert the central station company when water has been discharged from the tank. When water has been discharged through a hose outlet or a sprinkler head the local fire house must be notified.

The central station company notifies the Certificate of Fitness holder when a problem is caused by equipment failure. Repairs and adjustments should be made promptly. It is important that the pressure tank is returned to good working order as soon as possible.

Inspection and Maintenance of Pressure Tanks

The water level and air pressure in pressure tanks should be inspected monthly. The water level and air pressure must provide an adequate water supply to the standpipe or sprinkler system.

The water gauge valve must be opened to examine the water level as shown in the sectional diagram below.



When the valve is opened the water will flow into the gage. This allows the Certificate of Fitness holder to compare the water level in the tank to the desired water level mark. Adjustments to the water level should be made as needed. After visually inspecting the water gauge valve, the valve should be closed. When the valve is closed, the water and air in the tank are isolated from the sight glass. If the gauge glass breaks the volume of water and the air pressure are not affected.

The inside of pressure tanks should be inspected carefully every three years. Rusting in the tank may require repainting or other repairs. The inside of the tank should be thoroughly scraped, wire brushed and repainted. No foreign materials should be allowed to fall into the standpipe system.

The temperature inside the structure housing the pressure tank should be checked daily during cold weather to make sure that the temperature is at least 40° Fahrenheit at all times.