



Better Utilization of the Contractor's Material and Test Certificate In the Transfer of Responsibility for Maintaining Sprinkler Systems

*Proper documentation will confirm the quality of your workmanship, and if needed is an essential part of defending against potential claims. Just as the acceptance testing of a new system is important to ensure that the system is installed and functioning properly, the documentation of this testing is critical in transferring the responsibility of the system from the installing contractor over to the property owner. That is why the property owner must sign the *Contractor's Material and Test Certificate for Aboveground Piping*, receive a copy of NFPA 25 and be educated as to the care needed to maintain the fire protection system(s).*

Please take a few minutes to reflect on your company's current acceptance testing practices and associated customer education on maintaining sprinkler systems.

Does Your Company:

- Have a standard practice of first ensuring system integrity, such as air testing or blow back procedures, before introducing water into the system for acceptance testing
- Use the most current NFPA forms (2002 Ed) for *Contractor's Material and Test Certificate for Aboveground Piping* and *Contractor's Material and Test Certificate for Belowground Piping*
- Complete all sections of the applicable certificate forms, gain signatures and use the comments section to identify any deviations
- Have a standard practice of performing acceptance testing and completing test certificate documents for all additions made to existing systems or modifications made to existing systems that affects more than 20 sprinklers

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- Supply a copy of NFPA 25 to every customer where a new system is installed, an addition is made to an existing system or a modification is made to an existing system that affects more than 20 sprinklers
- Take the time to go over the sprinkler system and NFPA 25 with the building owner or representative to ensure all questions about the maintenance and testing of the fire protection system are answered.

If you answered *NO* to any of these items, establish a procedure for performing and documenting test procedures, along with educating building owners as to the inspection, testing and maintenance needs of their system.

Other enhancements to consider in your standard procedures include:

- Incorporate the use of the attached Addendum form, or similar form, into all work requiring system acceptance testing.
- Use a modified version of the attached form whenever work is completed on a system but an acceptance test was not needed and you do not have a service contract in place to maintain the fire protection system(s) per NFPA 25.
- Affix a copy of NFPA 25 to the riser or wall of the room housing the sprinkler control valve(s).
- Number each low point drain. Hang a placard on each dry pipe riser listing the number and location of each low point drain. This will ensure all drains are properly identified for regular draining by the property owner or contracted service.
- Maintain job files for a minimum of ten years. Files should include, but not be limited to, a copy of the Contractor's Material and Test Certificates, addendum forms, field notes, materials list, and as-built drawings.

When a claim is generated from sprinkler system problems, more times than not, every sprinkler contractor who ever touched the system is brought into question. The most effective way of quickly redirecting the claim to the appropriate avenue is through written records that clearly communicate the level of quality workmanship and adherence to recognized standards. Proper documentation of good work practices will save time, money and frustration in the future. It may also be your best defense in the event of a claim.

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Addendum to Contractor's Material and Test Certificate

Job Name: _____ Job Number: _____
Address: _____
_____ Date of Test: _____

- Contractor's Material and Test Certificate for Aboveground Piping
 Contractor's Material and Test Certificate for Underground Piping
 Copies given to: _____ SIGNATURE NEEDED _____ PROPERTY REP OR CONSTRUCTION MGR
_____ TITLE/COMPANY
_____ SIGNATURE NEEDED _____ LIST OTHERS WITH TITLES
- Alarms devices were active for test _____ LIST EQUIPMENT _____
 Alarms not active, to be installed 'by others' _____ LIST EQUIPMENT _____

NFPA 25, 2002 Ed.

- Reviewed with: _____ SIGNATURE/TITLE/COMPANY _____ PROPERTY REP OR CONSTRUCTION MGR
_____ SIGNATURE/TITLE/COMPANY _____
_____ SIGNATURE/TITLE/COMPANY _____
- Dry Sprinkler System – Reviewed location of low point drains and owner's need to drain regularly
- Supplied to: _____ SIGNATURE NEEDED _____ PROPERTY REP OR CONSTRUCTION MGR
- Placed in an envelope and posted on the property _____ (LOCATION POSTED) _____
- Property Rep understands responsibility for maintaining fire protection systems per NFPA 25 is that of the owner of the property _____ SIGNATURE NEEDED _____
- OR**
- Construction Manager understands responsibility for maintaining fire protection systems per NFPA 25 is that of the owner of the property and will supply test certificates, this Addendum, NFPA 25 and other pertinent materials, along with the proper education to the appropriate property rep(s).
_____ SIGNATURE NEEDED _____

_____ Company
_____ Address
_____ Date
_____ SIGNATURE NEEDED _____ Company Rep

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