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FCA2 Bulletin #625  
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~ ON THE COVER ~

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## Some Top Stories in this Edition

As we look over what we see in this month's magazine we consider what it could mean for the fire sprinkler industry.

In the News we read that Associated Builders and Contractors have named their Tech Alliance Members (page 7). Technology will continue to influence industry, and those that manage it well will benefit greatly.

An item on "Fire Safety Gaps in Older Mobile Homes" (page 7) notes the importance of having fire sprinklers in all structures, especially those where people sleep.

From Colorado, we raise a Cheer to Crested Butte Fire Protection Department Chief Executive Officer Sean Caffrey who asked the town to require sprinklers in all new buildings, including single-family homes. They are currently required in buildings with shared walls, like duplexes and other multi-family units, but not required in single-family homes.

"We would encourage sprinklers in every building," he said (see page 8).

Another Cheer goes out to the fire officials that hosted a sprinkler demonstration in Massachusetts (page 10).

But, Jeers to the Worcester Council that voted down home fire sprinklers. We pray they never see the day that someone dies for their bad decision (page 10).

On page 12, "Property Owners Facing Charges" highlights efforts to enforce stricter fire safety regulations and court actions against two property owners. There is an ever-present need for more inspection, testing, and maintenance, and a continuing need for enforcement and follow-up. How many reports about fire sprinkler systems that need work are out there that are not being addressed?

Also on page 12, The British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association's (BAFSA) ongoing commitment to promote Best Practices in the fire safety domain has now resulted in a new Continuing Professional Development (CPD)-accredited, online learning program aimed at owners and occupiers of buildings where a fire sprinkler system is fitted. The "Owners and Occupiers Guide to Automatic Fire Sprinkler Systems" course offers accessible training aimed at those with an interest in improving their understanding of compliance in relation to critical fire safety systems and meeting their legislative obligations.

Perhaps this course of action will help building owners and managers avoid fines, penalties, and even jailtime.

In the 'good news' category, we have "Construction Planning Booms" on page 13, a possible "Solution to the Designer Shortage" on page 14, and information on a very worthy award recipient on pages 26 and 38.

In other news, "Mergers and Acquisitions Continue" on page 28.

And, we are always pleased to share the industry experience and wisdom of Russ Leavitt (page 24), with his poignant points on perseverance.

*And, so much more...*

Proverbs 10:22

*The blessing of the Lord brings wealth,  
without painful toil for it.*

Proverbs 10:22 (New International Version)

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**ASSOCIATE EDITOR & OFFICE MANAGER** Leigh Petersen | **ASSOCIATE EDITOR & OFFICE ASSISTANT** En Brumbeloe  
**FOUNDER** Haden B. Brumbeloe, P.E., F.P.E.

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# Collector's Corner



From FPC magazine March 2023.

## Frederick Grinnell Letter

This photo is of a Power of Attorney letter signed by Frederick Grinnell himself! Framed with the letter and his picture is his first patented "improved sprinkler," circa 1883. Certainly, a prized piece in our collection!

— Pete Kappatos, SET, Jersey Fire Protection  
West Deptford, NJ



Some of the fire sprinklers from the collection of Derik Brooks, Innovative Fire Protection, Inc., Santee, CA. From FPC magazine June 2022.

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## National

### ABC Names Tech Alliance Members

Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) unveiled the members of its fifth annual Tech Alliance – a cohort of leading technology companies built to create construction tech solutions for the Association’s contractor members, which primarily perform work in the commercial and industrial sectors.

“ABC’s Tech Alliance helps drive innovation throughout the Association by helping our members develop their workforce, win work, and deliver that work safely, ethically, and profitably,” said Matt Abeles, ABC’s Vice President of Construction Technology and Innovation.

Comprised of 15 companies, the 2025-2026 Tech Alliance members are industry leaders Arcoro, Autodesk Inc., BuildOps, Datagrid, Document Crunch, Egnyte, Kojo, KPA, Sage, Sentriforce, Smartapp, SmartBuild, SubHQ, Stack, and Trimble.

The Tech Alliance introduces small and mid-sized contractors and subcontractors to construction technology solutions for HR workforce management, project management, field service management, agentic artificial intelligence, contract compliance, cybersecurity, asset management, safety analytics, accounting, billing, jobsite security, estimating, takeoffs, and reality capture, among others. Tech Alliance companies also collaborate on resources for ABC members, including beta testing, free technology programs, and educational webinars, and provide ABC’s 67 Chapters with access to technology products used in the field by ABC contractor members.

For more information visit: [www.abc.org/techalliance](http://www.abc.org/techalliance), [www.abc.org/techmarketplace](http://www.abc.org/techmarketplace).

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## California

### Fire Highlights Fire Safety Gaps in Older Mobile Homes

An article by Perla Shaheen posted September 9, 2025, on the KGTV website, El Cajon, California, said the Co-

ches Fire in Lakeside served as a stark reminder of how quickly wildfires can spread through mobile home parks, particularly in older structures built decades ago.

The fire highlighted significant differences between mobile homes constructed in the 1970s and modern units built with updated fire safety standards.

Edward Jackson at Crown Pacific Homes and Construction in El Cajon

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demonstrated the contrasts between older and newer mobile home construction.

“This house is a 2025 – it has all the fire requirements built into it,” Jackson said.

Modern mobile homes feature non-vented eaves that prevent ember intrusion, a critical fire safety improvement.

“It’s got non-vented eaves. If you look up under here, there’s no vents, so embers can’t crawl up and catch the roof on fire,” Jackson said.

Newer mobile homes incorporate fire-resistant materials including tempered windows, thicker wood framing, roofs with heavy composite materials, and gaps filled with fire-resistant sealant. Interior fire sprinkler systems provide additional protection.

“Here’s one of the fire sprinklers right here. They’re heat sensitive, they hit a certain degree, the caps fall down, and then the head comes out and the water shoots out from there,” Jackson said.

However, most mobile homes in San Diego County lack these modern safety features. Many were built in the 1970s with thinner, cheaper exteriors that make them more susceptible to fire damage.

“They really didn’t have a lot of fire regulations in place,” Jackson said.

## Colorado

# Council Continues to Discuss Building Code Changes

A September 3, 2025, article by Mark Reaman on [www.crestedbuttenews.com](http://www.crestedbuttenews.com), said the Crested Butte Council will continue to gather public feedback and obtain more information on potential changes to the *Building Code*. The main unsettled issue continues to be when to require energy assessments for homeowners doing a remodel and when the town should pay for those assessments.

Based on previous discussions, the Council agreed to not require commercial buildings larger than 5,000 sq. ft. to install solar panels on the roof. But under state *Code*, they will have to be “solar ready.” The town and the Crested Butte Fire Protection District agreed with the town *Code* regulating solar panel setbacks on roofs. The two entities did not however, agree on **the need for fire sprinklers in some buildings.**

**CBFPD Chief Executive Officer Sean Caffrey asked the town to require sprinklers** in all new buildings including single-family homes. Currently they are required in buildings with shared walls, like duplexes and other multi-family units, but not required in such single-family homes.

“We would encourage **sprinklers** in every building,” he said. “If I had

all the money in the world, **I couldn’t build a fire department that got to a fire quicker than a sprinkler system.** Sprinklers can put fires out quickly. We encourage this generational change to make sprinklers required.”

Caffrey said about 4,000 people per year die in fires, with only 17 in Colorado in 2025 and so it’s not likely to happen in the valley.

“I was struck by the sprinkler costs,” said Councilmember Mallika Magner. “Paying \$34,000 for an 1,100 sq. ft. home is a lot. And most homes, even deed restricted ones, are twice that size. I’m also concerned with the cost of increased infrastructure needed to accommodate sprinklers. What are we getting into?”

“There are ways to use sprinklers that are less expensive than the old systems,” said Caffrey. “I think the sprinkler technology is getting better. There are ways to connect it to the domestic plumbing and drive costs down by about two-thirds. We’ve not seen a lot of sprinkler system failures in the last five years. If you install sprinklers there is no need for a fire wall in multi-family units so there is some cost savings there. But a firewall won’t put a fire out.”

“I’m in favor of keeping it the way it is now,” said Councilmember Kent Cowherd.

“I agree but could be convinced to pull it back under certain circumstances,” said Councilmember Beth Goldstone, who expressed some concern about

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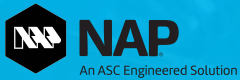
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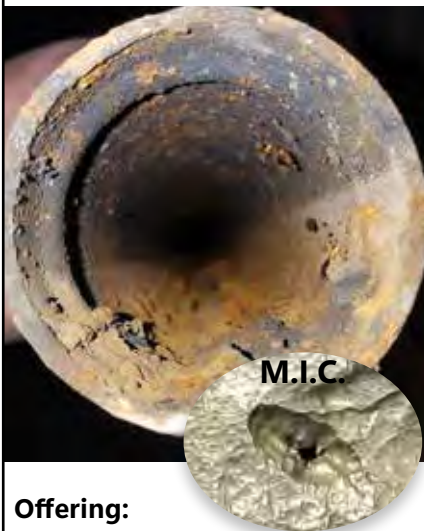
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the toxic gases released during a fire with modern building materials. “My concern is not only with toxic gases but the higher carbon footprint of modern building materials compared to natural materials, which also burn slower in a fire.”

“I would consider going back to not requiring sprinklers for duplexes but require them for larger units,” said Councilmember John O’Neal.

The Council wants public feedback.

### Massachusetts

## **Fire Officials Demo Life-Saving Power of Home Sprinklers**

An article by Beth McDermott posted September 8, 2025, on [www.metrowestdailynews.com](http://www.metrowestdailynews.com), said Hopkinton Fire Chief Gary T. Daugherty Jr., Hopkinton firefighters, and the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services teamed up to demonstrate the life-saving power of home fire sprinklers, according to a community announcement.

An event featuring real fires in simulated residential environments using the Department of Fire Services’ side-by-side sprinkler trailer was scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 13, at the Hopkinton Middle School parking lot, 88 Hayden Rowe St., during Hopkinton Family Day.

Two common household fires were set in identical rooms, one of which is protected by home fire sprinklers. Spectators saw that properly installed and maintained sprinklers can contain or even extinguish a fire in its early stages, giving residents time to escape as firefighters respond.

Due to changes in building construction, residential fires today burn faster than ever before, according to the announcement. Synthetic furnishings release toxic chemical smoke when they burn. As a result, a typical house fire can become deadly in three minutes or less.

In Massachusetts, more than 70% of all fire-related injuries and deaths take place at home, yet residential occupancies are the least likely to be protected by fire sprinklers, according to the announcement.

Most residential fires can be quickly contained or extinguished by a single

sprinkler head, which puts out about 12 to 15 gallons of water per minute, according to the announcement. Conversely, an uncontrolled fire in the same environment can double in size every 30 seconds, requiring firefighters to use hundreds or thousands of gallons of water to extinguish it.

Also, fires quickly extinguished by sprinklers release fewer greenhouse gases and less toxic runoff.

### Massachusetts

## **Worcester City Council Votes Down Residential Fire Sprinklers**

An item in the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette* said the City Council narrowly voted to file the City Manager’s recommendation to adopt a state law mandating sprinklers in many multiunit residential buildings.

The 6-4 vote came after the Standing Committee on Public Safety voted to recommend that the Council file the order. In the full-Council vote, voting in favor of filing were Councilor-at-Large Morris A. Bergman, Councilor-at-Large Donna Colorio, District 2 Councilor Candy Mero-Carlson, District 3 Councilor George J. Russell, Mayor Joseph M. Petty, and Councilor-at-Large Kathleen M. Toomey.

Under the statute, any community that chooses to accept the section and its provisions must ensure that any new residential building, or a residential building that is being renovated to the point of it being classified as new construction, must have an approved automatic fire sprinkler system installed as part of the state’s *Building Code*.

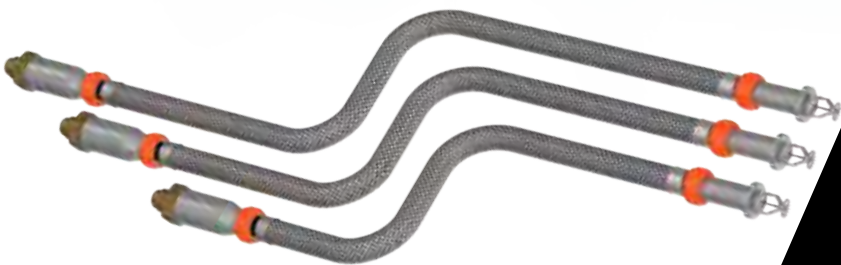
The buildings include, but are not limited to, lodging houses, boarding houses, fraternity houses, dormitories, apartments, townhouses, condominiums, hotels, motels, and group residences – according to the section.

District 5 Councilor Etel Haxhij first submitted the order to the Council in December 2024. And it was put before the Council floor on April 1, which shuttled it off to the panel’s Public Safety Committee, chaired by Councilor-at-Large Kathleen Toomey.

Haxhij’s district saw two fires take



## SETTING THE INDUSTRY STANDARD IN DRY SPRINKLER TECHNOLOGY

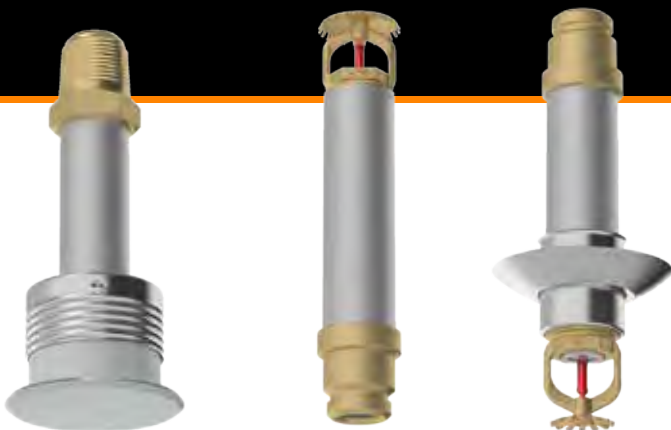


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place at the Washington Heights apartment complex near Mill Street in about six months.

The first fire took place in June 2024, which resulted in the displacement of more than 30 people and a total loss of 36 units.

The second fire happened last month, resulting in the displacement of 28 people and a total loss of 24 apartment units, according to reporting from the *Telegram* and *Gazette*.

“Automatic fire sprinkler systems have been instrumental in reducing fire fatalities and injuries in Worcester,” Batista wrote to the Council in February. “By containing fires in their early stages, these systems also reduce property damage, which helps prevent tenant displacement – an important factor in maintaining stable housing stock.”

### Massachusetts

## Property Owners Facing Charges for Violations

An item on [www.newbedfordguide.com](http://www.newbedfordguide.com) posted September 6, 2025, said in New Bedford, Massachusetts, efforts to enforce stricter fire safety regulations have recently led to court actions against two property owners in the city’s North End.

Edward McPherson and Carlton Neves were both ruled in contempt by Southeast Housing Court Judge Donna Salvidio for ignoring mandated safety protocols at their large industrial sites, raising concerns for surrounding communities.

McPherson, based in Marshfield and managing his holdings under Proactive Philanthropy Inc., controls a sprawling complex on King Street that formerly served as the Chamberlain Manufacturing munitions plant. This nearly 1.7-million-sq.-ft. facility has faced scrutiny since 2022 for persistent issues like faulty fire alarms, **neglected sprinkler testing**, and the absence of round-the-clock monitoring.

The local fire department logged 14 responses to false alarms at the location across 2022 and 2023, highlighting the strain on emergency services. Judicial intervention started with a March 2024 order for ongoing fire oversight, followed by requirements in late 2024 to engage an external security provider. However, follow-up checks in spring 2025 showed no compliance, culminating in McPherson’s contempt finding on August 15, 2025.

He spent a short time in custody at the Bristol County facility in Dartmouth before securing release with an \$8,000 bond.

In a parallel situation, Neves oversees buildings at 12 and 19 Coffin Avenue, once home to the Star Plating metalworks. Inspections uncovered problems such as **disabled sprinklers**, mishandled dangerous substances, and skipped fire patrols, prompting the city to file suit in June 2025. Judge Salvidio issued a contempt ruling against him on August 29, 2025.

Pending resolution, the Fire Department is maintaining constant surveillance with two personnel on-site, billing Neves approximately \$50 hourly per firefighter.

These incidents underscore a broader push for accountability in New Bedford, intensified after a tragic 2023 blaze at a North End boarding house that claimed lives and exposed enforcement gaps. In response, the city created a specialized inspector position for at-risk buildings, aiming to prevent resource-draining false alarms that could hinder real crises.

### United Kingdom

## BAFSA Launches Sprinkler System Course for Owners and Occupiers

The British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association’s (BAFSA) ongoing commitment to promote Best Practice in the

fire safety domain has now resulted in a new Continuing Professional Development (CPD)-accredited online learning program aimed at owners and occupiers of buildings where a fire sprinkler system is fitted.

*The Owners and Occupiers Guide to Automatic Fire Sprinkler Systems* course offers accessible training aimed at those with an interest in improving their understanding of compliance in relation to critical fire safety systems and meeting their legislative obligations.

The self-paced program covers a wide range of essential topics, including: The purpose and function of automatic fire sprinkler systems; testing, inspection, and maintenance requirements; pumps and system components; recognizing and mitigating hazards; applicable *Standards* and regulations; procedures for shutdowns and emergency scenarios; system activations and post-activation actions; roles and responsibilities of owners and occupiers.

Structured across six modules, the free online course provides approximately 90 minutes of engaging content that learners can complete at their convenience. To earn a CPD service-endorsed certificate, participants must complete all modules and then pass a short, multiple choice-style assessment.

This initiative forms part of BAFSA’s ongoing commitment to promote Best Practice, safety, and professional development within the fire protection industry and support those responsible for the maintenance of automatic fire suppression systems.

“Once a fire sprinkler system is handed over to its owners, the responsibility for the equipment will rest with them,” explained Ruth Oliver, BAFSA’s Head of Skills and Development. “The UK’s legislative system imposes significant liabilities on those who fail to maintain fire safety equipment intended for the protection of life from fire.

The new course needs to be completed within six weeks of enrollment.

For more information visit: <https://training.bafsa.org.uk>. □

### Let us hear from you!

FPC magazine is gathering insights for our annual **National Market Conditions** report – and we need your input. Please take a few minutes to fill out our quick survey found on [www.fpcmag.com](http://www.fpcmag.com) and help shape the industry’s independent snapshot. *Your view point matters. Let’s make it count.*

## Construction Planning Booms

According to an article by Sebastian Obando posted September 10, 2025, on [www.constructiondive.com](http://www.constructiondive.com), the Dodge Momentum Index (DMI), which tracks nonresidential projects entering the planning stages and leads actual construction spending by a full year, jumped 7.5% in August. Commercial planning increased 8.7%, along with a 5.4% growth in institutional activity, such as education and healthcare projects.

The gain stacks up on July's 20.8% spike and brings year-to-date planning activity 30% higher than the same period in 2024, according to Dodge Construction Network.

"The DMI continues to point to stronger construction activity in late 2026 or early 2027 with specific sectors," said Sarah Martin, Associate Director of Forecasting at Dodge Construction Network.

Commercial growth continues to sustain momentum, led by strength in **data centers, warehouses, and hotels.**

In the institutional sector, planning around education and healthcare projects decelerated from last month, but still remained positive. Meanwhile, a number of detention facilities and court building projects drove lofty gains in the public building sector throughout August, according to the report.

Compared to August 2024, overall planning activity jumped 51%. Commercial planning ticked up 38% year over year, and institutional planning surged 84%.

## Nonresidential Construction

National nonresidential construction spending decreased 0.2% in July, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) analysis of data published by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Spending was down on a monthly basis in seven of the 16 nonresidential subcategories. Private nonresidential spending was down 0.5%, while public nonresidential construction spending was up 0.3% in July.

"Nonresidential construction spending fell for a third consecutive month in July and is now down 2.5% from the December 2023 record high," said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. "Of course, that's in nominal terms. With construction materials prices rising rapidly in recent months and set to continue as higher tariff rates go into effect, the recent decline in construction activity is even larger than this data series suggests."

## Construction Quit Rate Plummets to Nine-Year Low

The construction industry had 306,000 job openings on the last day of July, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) analysis of data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS). JOLTS defines a job opening as any unfilled position for which an employer is actively recruiting. Industry job

openings increased by 64,000 last month and are up by 77,000 from the same time last year.

"The construction job opening rate rose to the highest level in over a year during July," said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. "Given the ongoing decline in nonresidential construction spending, however, that increase is likely attributable to immigration policy and its effects on the industry's labor force rather than any increases in the demand for workers.

"Indeed, other portions of this data release suggest an alarming deterioration in industrywide labor demand. **Fewer construction workers quit their jobs in July** than in any month over the past nine years.

"That said, JOLTS data can be volatile from month to month, and it's difficult to know the degree to which undocumented workers are or are not captured in the data. More than 55% of ABC members expect to increase their staffing levels over the next six months, according to the July reading of the Construction Confidence Index. That measure will be critical to monitor in the months ahead."



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## A Technical Solution to the Fire Sprinkler Designer Shortage

By Daniel Price

I'll make a wager: within the next three years, designers who integrate AI into their workflow will be two to three times more productive than those who don't. If I'm wrong, feel free to track me down in 2028 – I'll personally help you resolve your most aggravating plan review comment.

Regarding my vantage point, my background straddles both fire protection and technology. I'm a licensed fire protection engineer and NICET III, but prior to fire protection I spent years in Silicon Valley building tech startups, raising venture capital, and yes – stuffing pitch decks full of AI buzzwords. Back in 2015, "AI" was hype. Today, it's still a buzzword, but it's also a set of practical tools ready to change how we design and document fire sprinkler systems.

### What Today's AI Can (and Can't) Do

The most visible form of AI right now is generative AI – large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, Claude, and Grok. These tools can write poetry, search the web and write reasoned research articles, create a travel itinerary to Europe, among a multitude of other things. If you have not tried one of these models before, I encourage you to do so. Most are free to use.

In fire protection, I have found AI to be –

#### Good at:

- Instantly reviewing *Codes* and *Standards* for relevant sections.
- Tracking AHJ-specific requirements across jurisdictions and code years.
- Writing clear project notes, scopes, and submittal letters.
- Spotting discrepancies in hydraulic calculations.

#### Not so good at:

- Interpreting architectural blueprints (plans combine images, symbols, and text in ways AI still struggles with).
- Building a 3D mental model from sections and elevations.
- Manipulating CAD or BIM software directly.
- Outputting technical drawings or diagrams.

Additionally, AI is not without pitfalls for the unwary. There's always the risk of "hallucination" – AI generating confident but factually-incorrect statements. Users of AI tools must make it their own responsibility to use judgement and check all outputs for correctness.

### Why It Matters

Fire sprinkler design is a discipline of precision under deadlines. At the same time, our industry faces a labor shortage. Experienced designers are hard to find, and new ones take years to train.

I believe LLMs offer a compelling path forward. They won't replace designers, but they will amplify what our current workforce can produce. They can also help onboard new talent faster by serving as internal tutors and knowledge bases. This is why I believe AI will be a bigger step change in our industry than the shift from paper to CAD, or CAD to BIM.

### Our Experience With Caident

At Engineered Fire Systems, we've been working with Caident ([www.caident.co](http://www.caident.co)), a company focused on AI tools for the fire sprinkler industry. Their team brings deep product development experience and has collaborated closely with practitioners.

Here are a few examples of what we've implemented and worked on together:

- AI-assisted CAD cleanup tools that accelerate final drawing preparation.
- Integrated CAD commands that can place sprinklers, piping, hangers, and bracing based on design constraints.
- A searchable database of past jobs, invaluable when one of our team asks, "What was that project where we had to do X...?"
- A jurisdictional compendium with searchable requirements for each AHJ we work with.
- A material submittal generator that saves hours of repetitive documentation.
- An internal knowledge base that doubles as a customized training platform for new designers.

*“AI is not without pitfalls for the unwary. There’s always the risk of “hallucination” – AI generating confident but factually-incorrect statements. Users of AI tools must make it their own responsibility to use judgement and check all outputs for correctness.”*

Together, these tools haven’t eliminated the need for experienced designers, but they have increased our efficiency and reduced the friction in day-to-day work.

Most of the work we have done with Caident has been on custom tools for Engineered Fire Systems, however Caident has publicly available hydraulic calculation platform. It’s modern, affordable, and comes with floating licenses, qualities that feel long overdue in our industry. More importantly, it integrates smoothly with AI-driven workflows: running checks earlier in the process, surfacing errors sooner, and letting designers focus on engineering judgment rather than keystrokes.

## **Looking Ahead**

AI isn’t here to replace us, but to enable us to do more with less. In a time when every company is feeling the pinch of the labor shortage, adopting time-saving tools is shifting from optional to critical.

For me, AI has already transitioned from theory to practice. It is helping us design and deliver projects faster, with fewer corrections, and with more consistency across our team. If you’re curious about how it could help your company, I encourage you to start experimenting. Please feel welcome to reach out and I would be happy to share my experiences.

The future of design in fire protection will not be humans or AI. It will be humans with AI – better together.

## **About the Author:**

Daniel Price, P.E., is a licensed fire protection engineer and technology entrepreneur. Daniel has 15+ years of experience leading engineering teams, founding and scaling companies, VC investing, and delivering innovative fire protection and technology solutions. As Principal at Engineered Fire Systems, Daniel oversees residential and commercial fire protection design and consulting. Daniel holds NICET certifications in water-based system design and fire alarm design. Daniel is Rhodes Scholar with dual degrees from Oxford University (MBA and engineering MS) and summa cum laude graduate of UC Berkeley (two engineering BS degrees and Physics minor). Daniel has presented at numerous local and national conferences and given a TEDx on the tech trends into the future.

He may be reached at: [dprice@engfire.com](mailto:dprice@engfire.com), (530) 615-3474.

## Fire Safety: A Compelling Market for Investors and Employees in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

By John McKernan

**O**n November 30, 2022, employees, executives, and investors across the globe encountered a generational opportunity and threat when OpenAI released ChatGPT to the public for the first time. Over the past three years, individuals across industries have asked themselves what the advent of artificial intelligence (AI) means for their companies, industries, and careers. Billions of dollars are pouring into artificial intelligence in hopes of capturing a once in a generation opportunity.

This leaves many investors searching for less speculative alternatives to deliver attractive returns – ideally, markets where AI can increase efficiency without upending the entire business model. Private equity investors are flocking to invest in fire safety businesses, particularly those with an emphasis on sprinkler, alarm, and extinguisher inspection, repair, and monitoring services. This trend presents a significant opportunity for not only investors in the space but employees as well.

Fire safety businesses have long been an attractive investment opportunity in the public and private markets. The market is massive at over \$30 billion. Continued commercial construction on new buildings and renovations is driving growth in the market, and there are many businesses owned by entrepreneurs looking to retire that can be acquired to consolidate a region. In fact, over \$10 billion of the market is controlled by smaller local operators. A well-executed acquisition and integration strategy can grow a small local business into a great regional business with over nine figures in revenue. The emergence of artificial intelligence is making this already attractive business

*“Continued commercial construction on new buildings and renovations is driving growth in the market, and there are many businesses owned by entrepreneurs looking to retire that can be acquired to consolidate a region.”*

even more compelling as investors look to allocate capital in an increasingly uncertain world.

Fire safety is becoming even more attractive to investors because it is one of the few industries that offers upside from investing in artificial intelligence to improve back-office

*“Fire safety is becoming even more attractive to investors because it is one of the few industries that offers upside from investing in artificial intelligence to improve back-office workflows while mitigating many of the near-term AI threats.”*

workflows while mitigating many of the near-term AI threats. Technicians combine complicated technical knowledge of sophisticated systems with fine motor skills to create a barrier to imminent disruption. While AI monitoring may be possible, liability concerns and regulations require inspections to be performed by humans rather than artificial intelligence or robots. Further, fine motor skills are much more complicated to automate relative to creating research reports, building spreadsheets, or writing articles like this (a human wrote it, but AI helped edit!).

The confluence of these factors not only makes fire safety a great place to invest, it also provides a great opportunity for employees to build a career. Starting as young as 18, professionals can find a path to earning significantly more than the average college graduate by the time they are both 23 years old.

The Riverside Company likes the fire safety space so much we have invested in more than 45 fire safety companies across three regional platforms over the last seven years. These companies fit squarely into our Safety, Security, Compliance, and Risk Mitigation thematic focus. These are companies that provide often required services that help customers avoid risk and prevent bad outcomes. They also enjoy tailwinds thanks

*“We expect our executives to be in the field talking to branch managers, project managers, and technicians to understand how we can reach our goals together. While we can’t make every idea a reality, the most transformative initiatives have come from the field – not the Boardroom.”*

to increasing regulations, more complex systems, and growing customer demand.

Making the investments is the easy part. The hard part is creating a business that creates lasting value and provides employees with a great place to work.

We have developed a playbook that we are constantly refining with four core principles:

**1. Customers First:** We exist to keep our customers safe and compliant with local regulations and insurance requirements. We strive to deliver the highest level of technical knowledge, professionalism, and customer service in the industry.

**2. One Team:** It is tempting to allow businesses we invest in to remain independent. By definition we invested in the company because they were successful. However, we are firm believers in the power of a cohesive team. That means having everyone working on the same systems, with the same expectations, on the same pay scale, with aligned incentives and career progression opportunities.

**3. Constant Communication:** Management and investors never get it all right without help from the field. We expect our executives to be in the field talking to branch managers, project managers, and technicians to understand how we can reach our goals together. While we can’t make every idea a reality, the most transformative initiatives have come from the field – not the Boardroom.

**4. Clear and Attractive Career Paths:** Our people will always be our greatest asset. We strive to provide individualized career paths to our employees to show them how they can build a career with us that is best for them and their family.

Investment trends have varying lifespans, but fire safety has been enduring for the past 15 years because of the characteristics discussed above. There have been many investments in the space but the most successful involve clear goals, a principled approach, and a strong and capable partner.



**About the Author:**

John McKernan is a Partner with Riverside Micro-Cap Fund and the firm’s Healthcare Industry Sector Head, where he helps evaluate and grow healthcare opportunities. Prior to joining Riverside, John was an Associate at First Capital Partners and an Analyst at First National Investment Banking. He holds a BS in Finance and Accounting, magna cum laude, from Creighton University and is a CFA Charterholder.

For more information visit: [www.riversidecompany.com](http://www.riversidecompany.com).

*“Making the investments is the easy part. The hard part is creating a business that creates lasting value and provides employees with a great place to work. We have developed a playbook that we are constantly refining with four core principles.”*

## Time Management

# Seven Habits to Stay Focused in a World Full of Distractions

By Rebecca Knight, Reprinted from [www.hbr.org](http://www.hbr.org)

### Summary.

Interruptions, both external and self-inflicted, are no longer the exception; they've become our default mode. How can you strengthen your attention and stay on track?

Here are seven simple techniques to help you cut down on interruptions and increase your focus.

You sit down at your computer ready to tackle the work you've been promising yourself you'd do. But inevitably, your inbox pings and your phone rings. Then, just as you're about to dive in, you reflexively reach for your phone, scan headlines, and scroll social media – your focus fragmenting with each digital detour.

These interruptions, both external and self-inflicted, are no longer the exception; they've become our default mode, says Zelana Montminy, a positive psychologist and the author of *Finding Focus: Own Your Attention in an Age of Distraction*. “We've trained our brain to need and want interruptions,” she says. “It's almost like we're addicted to distractedness.”

It isn't accidental. Our devices are engineered to exploit this vulnerability. “They provide fleeting hits of dopamine through notifications, likes, and messages, keeping us in a constant cycle of seeking digital validation.”

Many of us believe we're adept at juggling interruptions, but research tells a different story, according to Gloria Mark, Chancellor's Professor of Informatics at the University of California, Irvine, and the author of *Attention Span: A Groundbreaking Way to Restore Balance, Happiness, and Productivity*. “Think of your mind as a whiteboard,” she says. “Each task or topic you focus on is like writing on that whiteboard. When you multitask, you're constantly erasing and rewriting different information.”

All that switching comes at a cost. Studies show that multitasking leads to longer completion times, more errors, and

increased stress. “Your executive function – your brain's CEO – gets fatigued,” says Mark. “And it struggles to filter out distractions or make decisions, leaving you even more susceptible to interruptions.”

So how can you strengthen your focus skills and stay on track? What simple techniques can help you cut down on interruptions? And how can you create an environment that supports better concentration? Here's what experts suggest.

### Lay the groundwork.

Optimizing your brain for focus starts with fundamental self-care, according to Montminy. “You need to prioritize foundational habits like sleep, hydration, and physical activity,” she says. “You could try all the mental health hacks in the world, and you're not going to get anywhere if you're not sleeping well and not hydrating.”

Creating consistent environmental cues is also key. Montminy recommends establishing “focus rituals,” or signals that tell your brain it's time to concentrate – like a dedicated workspace, a particular desk setup, or a consistent routine that primes you for deep work. Mark suggests practical steps to eliminate distractions: turn off notifications, lock away your phone when working, and use app blockers to hide digital temptations. The goal is to “create friction” and make it harder to be distracted, she says.

### Train your brain's attention.

With the fundamentals in place, you next need to harness your natural focus. Our attention is goal-directed, meaning we naturally concentrate on what aligns with our objectives and priorities, explains Mark. This principle is rooted in the work of William James, widely considered the father of American psychology. “If your goals are very clear, that's going to keep you focused.” To tap into this attentional bias and selectively focus on certain stimuli while ignoring others, Mark recommends a concrete approach: “Write down your goals and

*“Think of your mind as a whiteboard. Each task or topic you focus on is like writing on that whiteboard. When you multitask, you're constantly erasing and rewriting different information.”*

put them in a place where they're in your visual field," she says. "Put them on a post-it if that's what it takes for you to be constantly reminded of what you're trying to accomplish." Surrounding yourself with visual reminders of your goals helps train your brain to zero in on what's essential.

### Direct your emotions.

Goal setting isn't just about accomplishing tasks; it's also a powerful strategy for regulating and managing emotions. "People who feel more positive can actually focus better, do more, and be more creative," says Mark. She recommends envisioning your desired emotional state to guide behavior. So, ask yourself: "At 7:00 p.m., how do I want to feel?" You might, for instance, picture yourself peaceful and relaxed, enjoying a quiet moment on the couch with a book, or happily unwinding with friends. By setting emotional goals, you're creating a neurobiological roadmap that helps your brain seek balance and reduce stress. "Picture the end result," Montminy advises. "Visualize what it looks like, sit in the feeling of it, and imagine the relief." The aim is to preemptively savor a sense of accomplishment, which can sharpen your focus.

### Interrupt your autopilot.

Attention comes in different forms, says Mark. There's the intentional kind, where we're consciously focused on a specific task, such as writing a complex report; and the automatic kind, where actions occur without deliberate thought – like when you reflexively grab your phone, swipe it open, and scroll through Instagram mid-workday. To break these unconscious habits, Mark says you need to cultivate meta-awareness: observing your mental processes as they unfold. "It's like slapping yourself awake and saying, 'Pay attention!'" When you feel the impulse to check social media, pause, and ask yourself: What's driving this behavior? Am I procrastinating? Am I avoiding challenging work? Asking these questions transforms an unconscious habit into a deliberate choice. "Meta-awareness is like a muscle – the more you practice catching and redirecting your attention, the stronger it becomes."

*"Pay attention! When you feel the impulse to check social media, pause, and ask yourself: What's driving this behavior? Am I procrastinating? Am I avoiding challenging work? Asking these questions transforms an unconscious habit into a deliberate choice."*

Montminy suggests keeping alternatives to your phone nearby – a magazine or notepad, for instance – to satisfy your underlying need for escape or stress relief. "Don't use your device as a pacifier," she says.

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*“To improve your focus and rebuild connection, Montminy recommends making a deliberate effort to practice active listening. This involves maintaining eye contact, tuning into what the other person is saying, and asking thoughtful questions.”*

### **Tune into your energy patterns.**

Your attention at work has a rhythm, says Mark. Your peak focus times are affected by your chronotype, or your natural circadian rhythm. Mark’s research finds that most people have peak focus times around 11:00 a.m. and mid-afternoon, though this varies depending on whether you’re an early bird or night owl. To discover your personal rhythm, keep a diary tracking your energy and concentration levels throughout the day. “The desire to scroll or check your socials is a sign of your focus starting to quiver, usually toward the end of one of your cycles,” says Montminy. Then, schedule demanding tasks during your peak cognitive hours and reserve less-complex work, like e-mail, for when your energy dips. “Understanding and adapting to your energy fluctuations helps you align your work schedule with your personal rhythm,” she says.

### **Practice active listening.**

One of the places where many people lose focus is during conversations, notes Montminy. This occurs in team meetings on Zoom (you really think no one notices when you check your e-mail in another tab?) and can happen even in person when you’re talking with a colleague one minute, and the next, you’re mentally elsewhere, distracted by your phone. “We’ve become accustomed to not being present with each other,” she says. “Shallow interactions have become the norm.” To improve your focus and rebuild connection, Montminy recommends making a deliberate effort to practice active listening. This involves maintaining eye contact, tuning into what the other person is saying, and asking thoughtful questions. By doing so, you not only sharpen your concentration but also deepen your connections. “Make intentional changes to prioritize your relationships,” she advises.

### **Replenish your attention reserves.**

Negative space, an art term that refers to the empty areas around the main subjects in an image, offers a metaphor for an essential focus skill: managing mental energy. Just as artists use negative space to create balance, you can learn to strategically recover your cognitive resources by taking purposeful breaks, says Mark. “We tend to pack our days with tasks,” she notes. “We don’t realize we have to build in time for when we’re not working that will help us refuel.” When your reserves are running low, give yourself permission to rest and reset. “But resetting does not mean scrolling socials,” says Montminy. “Consuming content is not taking a break.” Instead,

she recommends stretching, meditating, reading poetry, or taking time to stare out a window. “Give your brain time and space to regroup.”

Recognize the value of your attention and make conscious choices about how you allocate it, adds Mark. “You have limited cognitive resources. They’re very precious.” The crucial question is: “How do you want to distribute them over the course of your day?”

## **Principles to Remember**

### **Do:**

Cultivate meta-awareness by pausing to question your impulses, and redirecting your attention to transform unconscious habits into deliberate choices.

Track your daily energy levels to identify your chronotype and schedule demanding tasks during your peak hours, and less-complex work for when your focus dips.

Set emotional goals by visualizing how you want to feel at the end of your day – calm, proud, or energized – and let those desired emotions guide your behavior and your focus.

### **Don’t:**

Let your goals remain abstract or out of sight; write them down and keep them visible in your workspace to help train your brain to concentrate on what’s most important.

Assume shallow interactions are inevitable; instead, practice active listening by maintaining eye contact, tuning into what others are saying, and asking questions.

Mistake scrolling or consuming content for an actual break. A true break allows your brain to reset and recover.

### **About the Author:**

Rebecca Knight is a journalist who writes about all things related to the changing nature of careers and the workplace. Her essays and reported stories have been featured in *The Boston Globe*, *Business Insider*, *The New York Times*, BBC, and *The Christian Science Monitor*. She was shortlisted as a Reuters Institute Fellow at Oxford University in 2023. Earlier in her career, she spent a decade as an editor and reporter at the *Financial Times* in New York, London, and Boston.

*“Don’t let your goals remain abstract or out of sight; write them down and keep them visible in your workspace to help train your brain to concentrate on what’s most important.”*

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(2025 - Nikki Biernacki, Linda Biernacki, Emily Wrenn)

35 Years and my greatest accomplishment yet has come to fruition. My daughters, Emily and Nikki, have joined Fire Tech Systems. In 2023, Nikki joined me as the Director of Business Development and Manager of the Oxford, MS Brand office. This year Emily joined us as Inspection Sales & Development, along with managing the new Texarkana, TX Branch

As a woman owned business and having two young, goal-oriented women as part of Fire Tech Systems and the fire sprinkler industry gives me hope for the next generation. I know that Emily and Nikki will create their path and engage in amazing things at Fire Tech Systems and within our Industry. Pride and elation abound.



(2005 - Nikki Biernacki, Linda Biernacki, Emily Biernacki)

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## DEWALT's First Cordless 4" Angle Grinder

DEWALT has announced several new ATOMIC 20V MAX\* Grinders they recently debuted at FABTECH. The line includes DEWALT's first cordless 4" Angle Grinder (DCG400) as well as a 4.5" Angle Grinder (DCG402), Die Grinder (DCG420), and Right Angle Die Grinder (DCG422). The tools are designed for applications in confined workspaces and deliver more power than select HP rated pneumatic grinders without the need for hoses, or the hassles of complex pneumatic setup.

DEWALT, a Stanley Black & Decker (NYSE: SWK) brand and leader in total jobsite solutions, introduced the ATOMIC™ 20V MAX\* 4" Angle Grinder (DCG400), the first from the brand that provides high-power users the benefits of a cordless, compact tool without sacrificing performance. Additional products joining the ATOMIC™ 20V MAX\* lineup include the 4.5" Angle Grinder (DCG402), Die Grinder (DCG420), and Right Angle Die Grinder (DCG422). The suite of grinders is designed for applications in confined workspaces and delivers more power than select HP rated pneumatic grinders without the need for hoses, or hassles of complex pneumatic setup.

"The fabrication trades – particularly fitters and welders – perform some of the most demanding applications in the field, making cordless products that meet their performance needs highly advantageous," said Phil Bolton, Director, Product Management, DEWALT. "DEWALT is dedicated to meeting the needs of these trades through innovation and continuing to drive the adoption of cordless tools for safety, maneuverability, and productivity."

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## Brass Knuckle®'s Eye/Face and Hand Protection

On construction sites, whether you're doing demo work, carpentry, or working with steel, pipes, masonry, or roofing, you're likely to need some form of hand protection. Many of these jobs will also require face protection. Brass Knuckle® has the perfect duo of A4 cut resistance and full-face/full range of motion facial and eye protection.

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SmartCut BKCR4420 gloves maintain the dexterity needed in detailed construction environments, providing excellent flexibility and slip resistance, all while meeting the A4 cut resistance requirement. On top of a high-density polyethylene (HDPE) shell, Brass Knuckle adds water-based polyurethane (WBPU) coating as a palm and finger base coat. This helps

reduce penetration of liquids, including light oil. Then the grip is secured with a foam nitrile topcoat.

Vader Combo doubles down on personal protection on construction sites by providing protective eyewear and a full-face shield. Because it's not affixed to a hardhat, that protection goes wherever the wearer's face and eyes move. It's also closer to the face for less risk of splashback.

The face-covering impact shield is an integral piece of the vented goggle. It's one-of-a-kind facial protection against projectiles, debris, and wetness with D3 droplet and splash protection rating plus unparalleled anti-fog properties.

Together, SmartCut BKCR4420 gloves and Vader Combo provide more hand, eye, and face coverage for a wide variety of construction site jobs, making them solid PPE investments.

For more information visit: [www.brassknuckleprotection.com](http://www.brassknuckleprotection.com).

*About Brass Knuckle: Brass Knuckle is a member of the Volk Enterprises family of companies, whose international strategic alliances with documented professional supply partners allow for a full range of safety products, programs, and services to clients across the globe. Brass Knuckle products are found in some of the harshest work environments on earth, where dust, debris, splash, sparks, extreme temperature changes, oil, chemicals, cuts, punctures, scrapes, lifting, kneeling, and crawling are all in a day's work.*

For more information contact: Brass Knuckle® Safety Products, 1335 Ridgeland Parkway, Suite 120, Alpharetta, GA 30004; (770) 674-8930, [www.brassknuckleprotection.com](http://www.brassknuckleprotection.com).



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## Perseverance

By Russ Leavitt

Anyone who is successful in business or life has exhibited a determination to keep trying to achieve something in spite of difficulties. Life is full of challenges and obstacles and meeting them head-on is a key component to experiencing the joy that comes with overcoming obstacles and accomplishing what we set out to do. Former U.S. President Calvin Coolidge stated that the main ingredient needed in one's life to ensure success is perseverance.

When it comes to business, I have often found that when things seem the bleakest or darkest the situation turns positive quickly. A little more work can quickly morph into an awesome success. We only fail when we quit trying or walk away before we even give it a minimum of effort.

Years ago, I was a young General Manager of a fire sprinkler contracting firm. When taking the position, I had no estimating, project management, or business experience. All of my time (five years) in the industry was around the design and layout of systems. The company had a largely absentee owner, one demotivated designer, and a wore out field superintendent. The first day I walked into the office, we had no backlog of work, credit challenges with suppliers, and projects that were behind schedule and over budget. I felt overwhelmed, unqualified, and fought off a strong urge to turn around and walk away.

Ignoring the naysayers who opined that only an idiot would take the job, I assembled a group of incredibly young, inexperienced, but determined team of designers and installers. What we lacked in experience we made up for with long hours of hard work and a willingness to do whatever was needed to succeed. As I look back, it is with fond memories of the shared commitment we had to making it work. Perseverance was our mantra, and we repeated it often.

I remember one instance where we turned a project that should have been an absolute failure into a resounding success. I had put together a bid for a large multi-family residential complex. After the award of the project, the lead designer came to me and pointed out the I had missed an entire wing of the structure, which amounted to about 20% of the building area. Hmmm, no wonder I won the bid. It was a disaster in the making! Everything pointed to it being a six-figure loss based on the numbers.

Our team met and challenged ourselves to do everything we

could to make up as much of the projected loss as possible. We looked for every edge in the design, purchasing of equipment, and installation. Every nut, bolt, and hanger rod mattered – no matter how small. That amazing team, through their dogged efforts, rescued me from my potentially catastrophic mistake and when finished, the project actually turned in a nice profit. The lesson: failure only occurs when we give up. The reality is that even the toughest of challenges can be successfully met when we are willing to put in the thought, time, and effort needed to meet them head on and win.

*“What we lacked in experience we made up for with long hours of hard work and a willingness to do whatever was needed to succeed.”*

Something to consider is that the opposite can be true. What I mean by this is when something appears it will be easy, we may be tempted to get lazy and, as a result, we fail to give it the attention required to be successful. I recall jobs where the bid was “fat,” and we got lazy. The results were not good. Where we made money, it was less than projected and, in a few cases, the project was a loser.

Perseverance is not a one and done attribute. Perseverance is about building resilience that allows us to bounce back from failures and keep moving forward. We know that we will not “win” at everything we take on. There will be losses along the way. However, in the end, success in business or life is having more wins than losses.

So, remember – there is no failure except when we stop trying. Perseverance is the key to our success.

### About the Author:

Russ Leavitt is the Executive Chairman of Telgian Holdings. With over 40 years of experience, he holds a Level IV certification from NICET in Fire Sprinkler Layout and Certified Fire Protection Specialist (CFPS) designation. He is a Board Member and Chair of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and the Chair of the NFPA 13 Sprinkler System Discharge Criteria technical committee. He also serves on the NFPA 13 Installation committee, as well as the NFPA 3, NFPA 4, and NFPA 25 technical committees. Russ conducts seminars internationally on a variety of fire and life safety related subjects and has authored a number of articles and training materials.

For more information visit: [www.telgian.com](http://www.telgian.com).

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OTHER VOICES is *FPC's* opinion piece section; *FPC* welcomes all voices, viewpoints, and opinions on matters concerning fire sprinkler contracting and the fire sprinkler industry!

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**Peg Paul**, President of Peg Paul and Associates (PPA), is the recipient of the International Code Council (ICC) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) 2025 Excellence in Fire and Life Safety Award. The award honors individuals who have dedicated themselves to saving lives and property through strong leadership in fire prevention practices and support of model building and fire codes.

Paul began her career in fire safety in 1992, developing a national consumer education program in collaboration with the water heater industry to prevent injuries and deaths caused by tap water scald burns and flammable vapor ignition. In 1997, she became the Communications Manager for the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC), working to increase awareness about the life-saving benefits of home fire sprinklers.

In 2000, she founded PPA, a marketing communications agency specializing in developing and implementing multi-integrated information and education campaigns. PPA has established a niche in public safety promotion and has been retained for this purpose by several leading safety advocacy organizations. In addition to HFSC, PPA works with the National Fire Protection Association, Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board, Vision 20/20, MPHI Sound Off Smoke Alarm program, Common Voices, and others.

Paul serves on the Board of the IAFC Fire and Life Safety Section (FLSS), the NFPA Research Foundation, and is a past Board Member of The Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors.

According to Chief Greg Rogers, FLSS Chair, “For more than three decades, Peg has worked on saving lives through fire safety education and advocacy. The progress she has helped the industry make in home fire sprinkler awareness is a testament to the dedication of countless partners and champions in the fire service. She helps the Fire and Life Safety Section and all fire and life safety advocates working towards a future where not a single life is lost to preventable home fires.”

For more information contact: Peg Paul & Associates, 21200 S. LaGrange Road, Suite 300, Frankfort, IL 60423; (815) 592-9278, [www.ppacom.com](http://www.ppacom.com).

**Lucy Machado** has joined one of Canada’s largest fire and safety companies, Classic Fire & Life Safety, executive team as Vice President of Human Resources.

Machado brings more than 25 years of HR leadership experience in industries including pharmaceuticals and consulting. She will oversee all aspects of the company’s people and culture strategy, including talent acquisition, employee

engagement, organizational development, total rewards, and HR operations. A key member of the executive leadership team, Machado will guide efforts to strengthen culture and support the company’s long-term growth.

“People are the lifeline of any organization,” says Mike Farren, CEO of Classic Fire & Life Safety. “Lucy understands our goal of building a company culture that puts people first by living our values and prioritizing open, transparent communication.”

With 12 branches spread across Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Alberta, the company employs more than 750 staff and has plans to further expand in 2026.

“It’s great to join a company that values its employees and wants to engrain those values into its culture. This has been clear to me since my first meeting,” said Machado. “I’m looking forward to strengthening our competitive edge, improving communication, and building strong, proud teams that see the value of their work.”

The company is remaining focused on uniting its people around its mission of preventing fires and saving lives. Over the past three years, it has grown through acquisitions, creating a wide network of companies united by its mission and values.

**Andrew Jacobs** has joined one of Canada’s largest fire and safety companies, Classic Fire & Life Safety, executive team **Vice President of Information Technology**.

Jacobs brings more than two decades of experience in IT leadership across international markets, and will oversee the company’s technology strategy, infrastructure, and digital transformation initiatives to support its continued growth and commitment for service excellence.

“Technology is a critical enabler of our mission to protect people and property,” says Mike Farren, CEO of Classic Fire & Life Safety. “Jacobs’ extensive experience, expertise, and people-first leadership style will be instrumental as we advance our capabilities and continue delivering industry-leading service to our customers.”

Jacobs began his career in IT support at a UK-based market research organization, advancing to IT Manager for multiple companies within the overseas group. He later took on various leadership roles at Vipond Fire Protection.

In his new role, Jacobs will focus on enhancing IT infrastructure, improving operational efficiencies, and ensuring technology systems align seamlessly with the company’s strategic objectives. His leadership philosophy emphasizes transparency, collaboration, and engagement across all levels of the organization.

“Throughout my career, I’ve made a commitment to shining a light on IT – ensuring our team’s actions, systems, vendors, and decisions are transparent,” says Jacobs. “We will always share the ‘why’ behind the ‘what’ of what we do, as well as encouraging ongoing dialogue and questions. My goal is to involve the entire organization in the IT journey, making it meaningful, productive, and rewarding on various levels.” □

## In Memoriam

**William (Bill) J. Tomes** – It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of **William (Bill) J. Tomes** of Encinitas, California, who died on August 30, 2025, at the age of 83. He leaves behind family, friends, and colleagues who will forever remember his remarkable life, career, and contributions to the fire protection industry.

Bill Tomes began his career as a firefighter in 1964. After retiring as Fire Marshal of the City of San Diego in 1985, he launched a second career as Founder and CEO of Tomes and Associates, which became the foundation of what is today Telgian Holdings, Inc. In 1988, he co-founded Tomes, Van Rickley & Associates (TVA), providing fire and life safety consulting services for businesses and government agencies, including code interpretation, risk analysis, hazard evaluation, plan review, fire sprinkler system design, and industry training.

“Bill Tomes had a profound impact on the careers and lives of many in the fire and life safety profession,” said Russ Leavitt, Executive Chair of Telgian Holdings, Inc. Leavitt continued, “He was instrumental in the development of current industry leaders, including company executive officers, Association leaders, and fire service professionals. He shared with everyone his passion for the mission of saving lives and protecting property. He will be missed by all who knew and worked alongside him.”

From 1992 to 2002, Tomes served as Chairman of the Board and CEO of TVA Fire and Life Safety, leading the company to international recognition as a market leader in applying emerging fire protection technologies. In 2007, the Telgian brand was formed to more accurately reflect the diversity of the company’s many and varied fire, life safety, and security services. The word “Telgian” is, in fact, derived from Old English and means “to branch out and grow.” Tomes later served as Chairman Emeritus of Telgian Holdings, Inc. until his retirement in 2023.

Throughout his career, Tomes also served on numerous fire protection, life safety, and hazardous materials committees, authored articles for leading fire protection publications, and taught seminars nationwide. He was a past President of the California Fire Marshals Association and the San Diego Society for Fire Protection Engineers. For eight years, he taught at the National Fire Academy, instructing courses in fire prevention and fire/building codes.

His son, James Tomes, CEO of Telgian, shared: “My father was not only a pioneer in fire protection, but also a mentor, teacher, and visionary who inspired countless professionals in our industry. Telgian’s very foundation is rooted in his values, and we honor him by carrying forward the mission he started four decades ago. His influence will continue to guide Telgian’s future, just as it has shaped its past.”

William J. Tomes will be remembered as a trailblazer whose dedication transformed fire protection practices and whose influence endures through the company he founded and the many lives he touched.

# FREEZE PROTECTION



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**BLUEJACK FIRE & LIFE SAFETY** was created by Agellus Capital with the combination of **FirePro Tech LLC**, **Chase Fire**, and **AAA Fire Protection Services** to create a national fire, life, and safety acquisition platform.

Agellus Capital announced the creation of Bluejack Fire & Life Safety through a series of recent acquisitions. Agellus has combined Texas-based FirePro Tech LLC, New York-based Chase Fire, and California-based AAA Fire Protection Services. Headquartered in Houston, Texas, the combined company will have a national footprint, positioning it to emerge as a leading provider of fire and life safety services.

FirePro Tech LLC, founded in 2014, primarily provides inspection, testing, repair, and maintenance of fire suppression and alarm systems. “We chose the Agellus team because they shared our entrepreneurial culture and focus on growth,” said Oscar Rios and Kory Winters, the co-founders of FirePro.

Chase Fire, founded by Artem Perchenok in 2006, focuses almost exclusively on fire extinguisher services, with a growing kitchen suppression segment. “I saw a great opportunity to grow Chase with the shared resources of the Bluejack platform that Agellus was building,” explained Perchenok.

AAA Fire Protection, founded in 1974, provides primarily maintenance and repair services for fire sprinkler systems, commercial kitchen grease exhaust systems, and portable extinguisher suppression. “We were courted by a number of private equity investors, but we chose Agellus based on their concentrated focus on essential services and enthusiastic references from previous founders they had partnered with,” said Brent and Brian Patterson, the second-generation founders of AAA.

CEO of Bluejack Fire & Life Safety Phil McVey remarked, “We are excited to be collaborating with the talented founders of FirePro, Chase, and AAA, who have built their businesses into regional market leaders.”

Agellus Capital Co-founder and Managing Partner Jeff Aiello said, “The

combination of these great businesses and great people will set the foundation for a best-in-class national platform in the fire and life safety industry.”

Solomon Partners served as financial advisor to Agellus Capital during the creation of the combined company. The Potomac Company ([www.potomaccompany.com](http://www.potomaccompany.com)) served as advisor to Chase Fire. Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP served as legal counsel to Agellus Capital.

*About Agellus Capital: Founded in 2024 and based in Clayton, Missouri, Agellus partners with founders, families, and management teams to drive transformational growth in non-discretionary, essential services businesses in the United States and Canada. Agellus targets platforms of \$2 million to \$20 million of EBITDA in large, fragmented markets and aims to be the partner of choice in the middle market for its portfolio companies, investors, and people. For more information visit: [www.agellus.com](http://www.agellus.com).*

*About Bluejack Fire & Life Safety: Bluejack Fire & Life Safety is committed to providing the highest quality, code-compliant fire protection and life safety solutions to deliver seamless and non-disruptive services tailored to clients' needs. Bluejack strives to be the only fire protection partner customers need by offering market-leading testing, inspection, repairs, and installation services. For more information visit: [www.bluejackfire.com](http://www.bluejackfire.com).*

**ORR PROTECTION**, a provider of mission-critical fire protection solutions, has acquired all of the business assets of **COMPASS FIRE PROTECTION, LLC**, based in the Seattle, Washington area.

The acquisition complements Orr’s established alarm, detection, suppression, and monitoring portfolio and strengthens their presence in the Pacific Northwest.

Compass Fire Protection’s Union sprinkler capabilities in the Puget Sound area also present opportunities for Orr to service its West Region customers in new ways.

Compass Fire has built a strong reputation for excellence in fire alarm and special hazard work alongside Union sprinkler projects serving a diverse customer base with deep technical expertise and responsive service. Their

experienced field teams and proven performance in complex, code-driven environments align with Orr Protection’s mission to safeguard mission-critical facilities across the country.

“Welcoming Compass Fire Protection into the Orr family is a strategic step that gives our customers a true turnkey solution – including sprinkler – from a single provider,” said Woodie Andrawos, CEO of Orr Protection. Their fire alarm, special hazards, and sprinkler expertise, coupled with their culture of quality and safety, expands our reach in the Pacific Northwest and enhances our ability to deliver integrated fire protection solutions – design, installation, inspection, testing, maintenance, and 24/7 remote monitoring – under one roof.”

“We are excited to join Orr Protection and bring our sprinkler capabilities to a broader national platform,” said Aaron Frey, President of Compass Fire Protection. “Our teams share the same commitment to craftsmanship, safety, and customer service. Together we’ll deliver greater value to clients who expect integrated, compliant, and on-time fire protection across their portfolios.”

The integration of Compass Fire into Orr Protection adds sprinkler capacity, expands regional field coverage, and deepens technical bench strength across project delivery and long-term service. Customers will experience a seamless transition as Compass Fire’s offerings become part of Orr’s comprehensive portfolio.

The acquisition is effective immediately, and both organizations are focused on continuity for employees and clients while maintaining the highest standards of safety, quality, and customer satisfaction.

**RIDGID®**, a part of Emerson’s professional tools portfolio, recently welcomed a dynamic group of plumbing and mechanical professionals to its headquarters in Elyria, Ohio, for their annual RIDGID Experience. Now in its eighth year, this VIP event delivered three packed days with behind-the-scenes tours, hands-on tool demos, and chances to swap stories

with fellow experts from across the U.S. and Canada.

"This year's event truly surpassed expectations! We were thrilled to create unforgettable moments for attendees and be able to say 'thank you' for their hard work and dedication to the industry," said Maddie Suvak, Engagement Marketing Manager, RIDGID for Emerson. "Meeting the people who rely on our tools every day is a truly meaningful experience for our entire team."

Shay Lorette from California said this about the trip: "Thank you for the experience! You guys rocked it!" Antonio Ybarra of Arizona said: "Love it!!! Had an amazing time. Met some great people, once again, thank you very much."

RIDGID pulled back the curtain to give pros the ultimate inside look. Each participant assembled their own personalized RIDGID pipe wrench and got an exclusive sneak peek at the latest tools in development, offering feedback and insights directly to the RIDGID team. New this year, each participant created an apprentice kit, complete with essential starter tools, to send to an apprentice of their choice, helping equip and inspire the next generation of tradespeople. Attendees also connected with participants of Greenlee® Experience, a similar event

hosted by another Emerson professional tools brand. The two concurrent events created a full-scale celebration of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing trades.

Emerson's professional tools business, which includes RIDGID, as well as the Greenlee® and Klauke® brands, provides the industry's broadest portfolio of advanced, reliable tools and technologies for the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing trades globally.

For more information visit: [www.emerson.com/professionalttools](http://www.emerson.com/professionalttools).

*About RIDGID: For more than 100 years, RIDGID has been delivering plumbing, mechanical, and HVAC tools designed to help trade professionals install and maintain the world's infrastructure with more ease and efficiency. Inventing the modern-day pipe wrench in 1923, RIDGID today has more than 100 patents and 300 products that are trusted by professionals in over 140 countries. Headquartered in Elyria, Ohio, RIDGID is a part of the Emerson professional tools portfolio that also includes Greenlee® and Klauke®. For more information visit: [www.RIDGID.com](http://www.RIDGID.com).*

*About Emerson: Emerson (NYSE: EMR) is a global technology and software company providing innovative solutions for the world's essential industries. Through its leading automation portfolio, including its majority stake in AspenTech, Emerson helps hybrid,*

*process, and discrete manufacturers optimize operations, protect personnel, reduce emissions, and achieve their sustainability goals. For more information visit: [www.Emerson.com](http://www.Emerson.com).*


*RIDGID®, Greenlee® and Klauke® are trademarks of Emerson or its subsidiaries. All other trademarks belong to their respective holders.*

**THOMPSON SAFETY™**, a leading provider of fire protection, first aid, and safety services, announced the acquisition of **LIBERTY FIRE PROTECTION**, a respected Houston-based fire protection company. This acquisition strengthens Thompson's hometown capabilities and expands its advanced fire protection offerings across the region.

"Partnering with Thompson was an easy decision for Liberty," said John McDowell, Owner of Liberty Fire Protection. "Their strong, supportive culture and genuine care for employees aligned perfectly with our values. Knowing our team would be valued as they continue their careers was a critical factor in choosing Thompson."

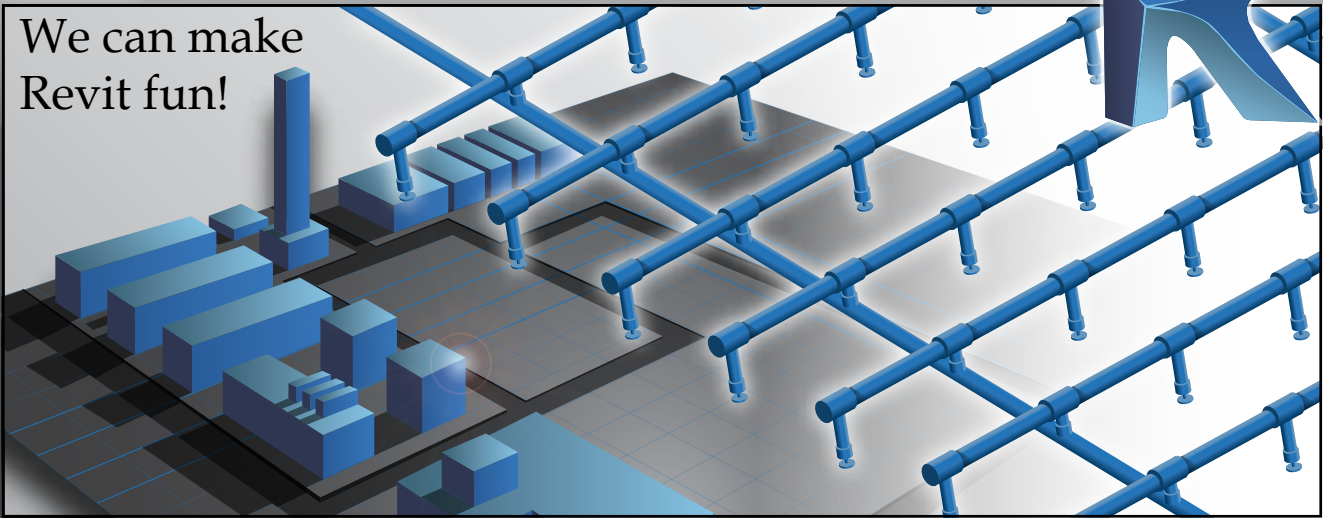
Tommy Thompson, Founder & CEO of Thompson Safety, added, "We are proud to welcome Liberty Fire Protection to the Thompson family. As a

*COMPANY NEWS continued on page 36*



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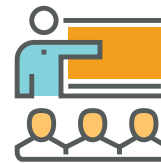


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## Water-Based Fire Protection System Freeze Protection

October 1, 2025 – Live Virtual Classroom Training

This course covers the NFPA Standards requiring water-based fire protection systems to be protected against freezing. It exams the conditions that trigger mandatory freeze protection along with the approved options for meeting the requirement.

The design limitations and economic impact (including maintenance) of using dry pipe systems, preaction systems, insulation, heat tracing, antifreeze solutions, and other potential protection methods will be examined. Participants learn to identify and apply the items needed to be considered when making a choice on how best to provide adequate protection. Attendees will also examine the consequences of inadequate freeze protection versus the building owners need for dependable and cost-effective fire protection.

For more information visit: <https://training.firesmarts.com>.

## Seismic Protection for Fire Sprinkler Systems

October 8, 2025 – Live Virtual Classroom Training

Seismic protection for fire sprinkler systems is a fact of life for many locations. This course is designed for those who have an understanding of seismic terms with a focus on the proper application of the requirements for seismic protection including flexibility, clearance, and bracing. Further, participants of the course will learn to apply the concepts of lateral and horizontal loads, determine the zone of influence, and the calculation and layout of seismic bracing.

For more information visit: <https://training.firesmarts.com>.

## Fire Alarm Interconnectivity to the Fire Sprinkler System

October 22, 2025 – Live Virtual Classroom Training

This course covers the NFPA Standards requiring water-based fire protection systems to be tested and inspected as per both the NFPA 25 and NFPA 72. This course will discuss the monitoring requirements for sprinkler systems as well as supervisory signals that need to be captured. It will also cover dedicated function fire alarm systems that are used exclusively for sprinkler monitoring and the requirements for those systems.

For more information visit: <https://training.firesmarts.com>.

## Water-Based Fire Protection System Design

November 2025 – Newark, DE

Delaware Technical Community College has created a laser-focused and fast-paced 12-week *Water-Based Fire Protection Layout Certificate Program* at the Stanton Campus in Newark, Delaware.

Coming in November, this course is an intensive 12-week certification program and is designed to equip professionals with the technical knowledge and practical skills required to design, evaluate, and implement water-based fire protection systems in accordance with industry *Standards* and *Codes*.

Whether you're entering the fire protection field or seeking to enhance your expertise, this program provides a comprehensive foundation in system design, hydraulic calculations, and regulatory compliance.

For more information contact: Dr. Kristen Doughty, (302) 453-3096, or Nick Vavala at (302) 292-3889.

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## Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Automatic Sprinkler Systems (IT&M)

November 3-4, 2025 – Stillwater, OK

Oklahoma State University, Professional Development, has several courses of interest to the fire sprinkler industry.

*Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Automatic Sprinkler Systems (IT&M)* will be held November 3-4, 2025, in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Key topics include but are not limited to: NFPA 25 Standards; Hands-On Laboratory Training with Automatic Sprinkler Systems; Acceptance Rates; Visual In-

Delaware Technical Community College

# Water-Based Fire Protection System Design



This intensive 12-week certification program is designed to equip professionals with the technical knowledge and practical skills required to design, evaluate, and implement water-based fire protection systems in accordance with industry standards and codes. Whether you're entering the fire protection field or seeking to enhance your expertise, this program provides a comprehensive foundation in system design, hydraulic calculations, and regulatory compliance.

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spection Component; and Assembly Maintenance.

This course is 20 Hours and costs \$1,050 per person.

For more information contact: OSU Professional Development, 5202 N. Richmond Hill Drive, Stillwater, OK 74075; (405) 744-5714, ceatprodev@okstate.edu.

## Fire Pump Applications, Inspection, & Testing

November 5-7, 2025 – Stillwater, OK

Oklahoma State University, Professional Development, is offering *Fire Pump Applications, Inspection, & Testing* on November 5-7, 2025.

Key topics include: NFPA 20 Standards, Installations; Applications and Standard IT&M; Common Pump Types; Hands-On Demos; and Pump Sizing.

This course is 20 Hours and costs \$1,100 per person.

For more information contact: OSU Professional Development, 5202 N. Richmond Hill Drive, Stillwater, OK 74075; (405) 744-5714, ceatprodev@okstate.edu.

## SFPE Engineering Solutions Symposium:

*Addressing European Lithium-Ion*

*Battery Fire Safety Challenges*

November 11-13, 2025 – Lisbon, Portugal

The Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) is holding their *Engineering Solutions Symposium Addressing European Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Safety Challenges* on November 11-13, 2025, in Lisbon, Portugal.

This engineering symposium is dedicated to the fire safety challenges of battery systems, from consumer electronics and e-bikes to EV (electric vehicles) and building BESS (battery energy storage systems). These are among the most challenging and most recent new hazards from an overall fire safety

### Why Fire Protection Contractor magazine?

For almost five decades, *FPC* has been committed to open-ended education within the automatic fire sprinkler industry.

Webster says "open-ended" is:

1. Not restrained by definite limits, restrictions, or structure,
2. Open or liable to change,
3. Indefinite or inconclusive,
4. Allowing for expansion or unstructured response <an open-ended question.>

perspective. Many aspects must be considered when designing for fire protection and life safety of such systems.

This three-day, in-person event will discuss fire protection challenges. An outstanding panel of international experts are coming together to share their knowledge and best practices with fire protection engineers, designers, insurers, manufacturers, facility owners and managers, and first responders.

Topics covered during the event will focus on li-ion battery hazard fundamentals, fire safety *Codes* and *Standards*, and safety challenges and mitigation approaches specific to e-mobility, electric vehicles, and energy storage systems. Following the completion of two and a half days of educational content, day three will conclude with a planned tour of a newly constructed, state-of-the-art data center with a li-ion battery backup.

Hotel Information: Sheraton Lisboa Hotel & Spa, Rua Latino Coelho, 1, 1069-025 Lisboa, Portugal. The SFPE Group Rate is EUR 260.00/night with buffet breakfast and room Wi-Fi included. The rate does not include city tax of EUR 4.00/night.

For more information contact: SFPE, 9711 Washingtonian Blvd., Suite 380, Gaithersburg, MD 20878; (301) 718-2910, education@sfpe.org.

## NICET Prep: Inspection & Testing of Water-Based Systems

December 11-12, 2025 – Tampa, FL

Fire Tech Productions, Inc., a Fire Protection Training Company, is offering *NICET Prep - Inspection & Testing of Water-Based Systems Level I & II* as an in-person training bundle in Tampa, Florida, on December 11-12, 2025.

This bundle includes two days of in-person training, plus 90-day access to two online courses: "Inspection and Testing of Water-Based Systems Level I - NFPA 25 2023" and "Inspection and Testing of Water-Based Systems Level II - NFPA 25 2023 and 1 NFPA 25 2023 Tabbed *Standard*."

In this in-person training event, you will learn the information, tips, and techniques needed to pass your NICET Level I Inspection and Testing of Water-Based Systems exam with an in-person instructor. There will also be a detailed review of key areas of NFPA 25 2023 and OSHA 29 CFR 1910.

Fire Tech Productions offers many courses on a variety of topics, including: NICET Certification, Hands-On Workshops, Inspection & Testing of Fire Sprinkler Systems, NFPA *Code* books & *Standards*, Water-Based Systems Layout, Fire Pump Maintenance, Special Hazards Systems, Inspection & Testing of Fire Pumps, and more.

For more information contact: Fire Tech Productions, Inc., 7976 Clyo Road, Centerville, OH 45459; (937) 434-3473, www.learning.firetech.com. □

*Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise.*

— Proverbs 1:2 (NLT)

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Orlando, FL .....\$11 Million

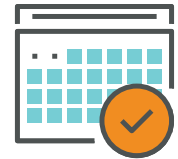
#### **MOST RECENT CLOSINGS:**

AMS Security - Palm Desert, CA  
Hartline Alarm Company - Lake Wales, FL  
Fire Alarm Services - San Francisco, CA  
Acadian Monitoring Services - Lafayette, LA  
All American Monitoring - Sarasota, FL  
Yarnell Security Systems - Lancaster, PA  
Malfy Alarm - Falmouth, MA  
Ameritronics Systems - Brownstown, MI  
4 Alarm Services - Albuquerque, NM



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# Calendar

**October 5-11, 2025**

## **FIRE PREVENTION WEEK**

**October 9, 2025**

**FIRE SPRINKLER CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION CHARITY GOLF For Burn Centers**

Strawberry Farms G.C., Irvine, CA  
Larry Seligman  
(626) 673-5345, larry@apfs.com

**October 10, 2025**

**GBA BOWLING TOURNAMENT For Association Programs**

Dublin, CA, AFSA - Greater Bay Area Chapter, www.afsa-gba.org

**October 13, 2025**

**KFSCAF ANNUAL GOLF OUTING**  
Frankfort Country Club, Frankfort, KY  
Michelle Jacobi, KY Fire Sprinkler Contractor Assoc. Foundation  
michelle@ksae.com, (502) 223-5322

**October 13, 2025**

**35<sup>TH</sup> SCOTTISH RITE CHARITY CLASSIC For Scottish Rite Hosp. for Children**  
Trophy Club C.C., Trophy Club, TX  
Sarah Kiefer, (512) 844-6632  
sarah@fscatx.org, www.fscatx.org

**October 14-19, 2025\***

**AFSA44 CONVENTION, EXHIBITION, & APPRENTICE COMPETITION**  
Wash. D.C., www.firesprinkler.org

**October 21-23, 2025**

**SFPE ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO**  
Vancouver, BC, SFPE, www.sfpe.org

**October 24, 2025**

**25<sup>TH</sup> BOB McCULLOUGH MEMORIAL For Fire Safety Educational Projects**  
Chateau Elan, Braselton, GA  
Mindy McCullough Buckley  
mindy@allsouthsprinkler.com  
www.georgiafiresprinkler.org

**October 28, 2025**

**17<sup>TH</sup> LFSA GOLF TOURNAMENT For Camp I'm Still Me**

Santa Maria G.C., Baton Rouge, LA  
Ellen Ballard, (318) 841-1494  
Louisiana Fire Sprinkler Association  
eballard@firetechsystems.com  
www.lafiresprinkler.org

**October 30, 2025**

**WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Renaissance Capital View, Arlington, VA  
www.womeninconstructionconference.com

**November 2025**

**WATER-BASED FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM DESIGN**

Stanton Campus in Newark, DE  
Delaware Technical Community College  
Dr. Kristen Doughty, (302) 453-3096, or  
Nick Vavala at (302) 292-3889

**November 3-4, 2025**

**INSPECTION, TESTING, & MAINTENANCE OF AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEMS**

Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, OK  
https://ceat.okstate.edu/fcem/fpset

**November 5-7, 2025**

**FIRE PUMP APPLICATIONS, INSPECTION, & TESTING (2.5 DAY)**  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, OK

https://ceat.okstate.edu/fcem/fpset/

**November 5-7, 2025**

**DESIGN-BUILD CONFERENCE & EXPO**  
MGM Grand, Las Vegas, NV  
www.dbia.org/design-build-conference-expo

**November 11-13, 2025**

**SFPE ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS SYMPOSIUM: EUROPEAN LITHIUM-ION BATTERY FIRE SAFETY CHALLENGES**  
Lisbon, Portugal  
www.sfpe.org



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"Don't be fooled by the calendar. There are only as many days in the year as you make use of."  
— Charles Richards

\*FPC plans to attend

**November 14, 2025**

**NORCAL-NV SFPE GOLF EVENT**

*For Scholarships*

Tilden Park G.C., Berkeley, CA  
(925) 997-3247, patrick.kogoma@ffic.com, www.ncnsfpe.org

**November 21, 2025**

**GARY WENNES MEMORIAL GOLF  
For Arizona Burn Foundation**

Biltmore Golf Club, Phoenix, AZ  
Matthew Virtue, Cell (602) 376-4818  
matthew.virtue@victaulic.com  
Danny Garcia, dgarcia1@winsupply.com  
www.AZfiresprinkler.org

**November 27, 2025  
HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

**December 9, 2025**

**GFSA CHRISTMAS GATHERING  
For Toys for Tots**

Punchbowl Social, Atlanta, GA  
mindy@allsouthsprinkler.com  
www.georgiafiresprinkler.org

**December 25, 2025  
MERRY CHRISTMAS**

**Also Visit:**

Check online for current Dates and Courses:

**Academy of Fire Sprinkler Technology**

[www.firesprinkleracademy.com](http://www.firesprinkleracademy.com)

**American Fire Sprinkler Association**

[www.firesprinkler.org](http://www.firesprinkler.org)

**American Subcontractors Association**

[www.asaonline.com](http://www.asaonline.com)

**BlazeMaster®**, [www.blazemastertraining.com](http://www.blazemastertraining.com)

**Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association**

[www.casa-firesprinkler.org](http://www.casa-firesprinkler.org)

**Fire Smarts**, [www.firesmarts.com](http://www.firesmarts.com)

**Oct. 1:** Water-Based FP Sys. Freeze Protection

**Oct. 8:** Seismic Protection for FS Systems

**Oct. 22:** Fire Alarm Interconnectivity to FSS

**Nov. 12:** Res. Fire Spklers: Homes to High-Rise

**Nov. 19:** Intro to Spec. Haz. Fire Suppression

**Dec. 10:** FP Auto. Storage and Retrieval Systems

**Dec. 10:** Equivalent Means and Methods with an Emphasis on Full-Scale Fire Tests

**Fire Tech Productions**, [www.firetech.com](http://www.firetech.com)

**Oct. 7:** Inspect/Test. FSS, San Antonio, TX

**Oct. 14:** Fire Pump Maint. Master, Atlanta, GA

**Nov. 11:** Fire Pump Maintenance, Atlanta, GA

**Dec. 1:** Inspect/Test. Fire Spk. Systems, Atlanta, GA

**Dec. 3:** Inspect/Test. of Fire Pumps, Atlanta, GA

**Fire Pump Academy**, [www.firepumpacademy.net](http://www.firepumpacademy.net)

**Florida Fire Sprinkler Assoc.**, [www.fsa.nfsa.org](http://www.fsa.nfsa.org)

**FMI**, [www.fminet.com](http://www.fminet.com)

**National Fire Protection Assoc.**, [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

**National Fire Sprinkler Assoc.**, [www.nfsa.org](http://www.nfsa.org)

**Oklahoma Fire Sprinkler Assoc.**, [www.ofsa.info](http://www.ofsa.info)

**Seneca Polytechnic**, [www.senecapolytechnic.ca](http://www.senecapolytechnic.ca)

*Other Future Meeting Dates:*

**AFSA**, [www.firesprinkler.org](http://www.firesprinkler.org)

**September 25-29, 2026**, San Antonio, TX

**NFPA**, [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

**June 22-26, 2026**, Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, NV

**NFSA**, [www.nfsa.org](http://www.nfsa.org)

Annual Seminars, Business,  
& Leadership Conference

**April 28-May 1, 2026**, The Westin, Seattle, WA

**SFPE**, [www.sfpe.org](http://www.sfpe.org)

Fire Safety Conference on Perform.-Based Des.

**April 15-17, 2026**, Singapore

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fellow Houston-based company with an outstanding reputation, Liberty enhances our ability to deliver advanced fire protection services to thousands of customers across our hometown.”

Liberty Fire Protection is a full-service provider offering fire alarm and sprinkler systems, backflow prevention, and kitchen hood suppression. Customers will now benefit from: Comprehensive fire protection and life safety services; A broader geographic footprint; Expanded access to manufacturers and suppliers; Enhanced technology, including reporting tools and customer portals.

The integration began immediately with minimal disruption. Liberty customers can expect the same trusted local support, now backed by Thompson’s national scale, technology platform, and transparent service programs.

*About Thompson Safety: Thompson Safety, headquartered in Houston, Texas, and located in 23 markets across the United States, provides a comprehensive suite of on-site first aid and fire protection services to support safety managers, facility managers, and EHS professionals. Known for its commitment to customer satisfaction and innovative solutions, Thompson Safety helps businesses streamline their fire and safety programs while maintaining compliance with industry standards and local regulations.*

For more information visit: [www.thompson-safety.com](http://www.thompson-safety.com).

VIKING SUPPLYNET is excited to announce its expansion into the Pacific Northwest with a brand-new facility in Vancouver, Washington. The 68,000+ sq. ft. building will significantly expand Viking’s fabrication and distribution capabilities, strategically positioning the company to better serve customers across the region.

“This is a game-changer for our operations in the Western U.S.,” said Justin Moss, Vice President – Operations at Viking Group, Inc. “The scale and location of the Vancouver facility allow us to streamline our fabrication and distribution processes while improving speed, responsiveness, and service levels for customers in a high-growth market.”

The new facility combines office, warehouse, and fabrication operations under one roof, enhancing operational efficiency and supporting faster delivery of Viking’s full line of fire protection products. Its location near major transportation routes makes it an ideal hub for serving the Pacific Northwest and surrounding areas.

“This expansion is a key part of our long-term growth plans for the Pacific Northwest,” said Jeremy Morton, CEO

of Viking Group, Inc. “Investing in a facility of this scale in Vancouver reflects our commitment to supporting our customers with the highest level of service, while laying the foundation for future growth in one of the most dynamic and strategically important regions in the Western U.S.”

The Vancouver facility will soon be fully operational, with Viking looking forward to continued investment in the region and building strong relationships with customers, contractors, and local partners. Due to an anticipated increase in fabrication orders, the Kent, Washington location is prepared to accept additional fabrication orders from the Portland area in the interim.

More information about hiring, local partnerships, and regional operations will be shared in the coming months.

View a list of all locations at: [www.supplynet.com](http://www.supplynet.com).

*About Viking: Viking is a global leader in the manufacture and distribution of innovative fire protection and life safety systems. For more than 100 years the company’s products and services have protected lives and property worldwide from the devastating effects of fire. For more information on Viking’s complete line of fire protection products and services visit: [www.vikinggroupinc.com](http://www.vikinggroupinc.com).*



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## HELP WANTED

**Designer/PM** – Blue Mountain Fire Protection (Kennewick, WA) is seeking an experienced fire sprinkler designer/PM. NICET Level III or higher required. AutoCAD and SprinkCAD experience preferred but not mandatory. Relocation assistance negotiable. Salary dependent on experience. Medical benefits, bonuses included. Qualified candidates contact: Zene 'Pepper' Stillar, (509) 987-1700, [pepper@bluemountainfire.com](mailto:pepper@bluemountainfire.com).

**Wanted** – Fire Sprinkler Designers. 5 plus years of experience. Hydratec or similar experience required. Remote work available. Excellent pay, benefits, paid holidays, vacation, etc. Send inquiries to: [info@fpcmag.com](mailto:info@fpcmag.com), or *FPC*, PO Box 370, Auburn, CA 95604, and include **Attn: Box#Des02.22**.

**Plan Reviewer Needed** – Since 1980, Kelly P Reynolds & Associates has been providing plan review, code consulting, technical seminars for government, business, and industry. We are in need of part-time certified plan examiners. Pay is based on a percentage of the plan review fee. All reviews are to be completed within 10 working days. Plans are sent PDF format. Send qualifications and certification to: [codexperts@aol.com](mailto:codexperts@aol.com).

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**STEWART FIRE DESIGN** – Over 30 years of design experience and has been in operation since 1988. We offer design, survey, and stocklist of any type of sprinkler system. We design for sprinkler contractors all across the country, location is not an issue. Our design staff of five offers: AutoSPRINK design, 3D BIM Modeling, as well as MicroStation. We are NICET Level IV certified. For a design quote contact: Kent Stewart, [Kent@stewartfpc.com](mailto:Kent@stewartfpc.com), (501) 794-6950.

**FIRE SPRINKLER DESIGN SERVICES:** • 3D design • Submittals/working plans • Product data • Fabrication reports • Consulting/Coordination • Pre-planning design • Commercial • Residential • Assisted living facilities • Storage/Racking • Military • Underground • Tenant improvement • Wet systems • Dry systems • Pre-action • Nitrogen • Standpipes • Fire pumps. Contact: Adam Tuomala NICET-IV (W.B.S.L.), Phoenix Fire Protection, Lago Vista, TX, Owner and Licensed Contractor; [phoenixfirepros@gmail.com](mailto:phoenixfirepros@gmail.com).

## SALES

**DES ASSOCIATES** offers UL FM Fire Sprinkler Products - Flexible Drops; Fire Pumps; Jockey Pumps; Fire Sprinklers; Butterfly Valves; Commercial and Residential Riser Check Valves; Shotgun Riser Valves; Water & Hose Valves; Adapters & Fittings; Hydrant Accessories; Foam Tanks; Water Storage Tanks - Above Ground Bolted & Welded Steel; and Underground Fiberglass Tanks. DVBE Certificate #2026104 may help you get new business! Please call for pricing!!! Contact: Dennis Sekermestrovich, [oldseker@yahoo.com](mailto:oldseker@yahoo.com), (951) 541-4045.

**Distributors Wanted** – DUYAR Valve is looking for Distributors to sell Commercial and Residential Fire Sprinkler Products in the US and Canada. UL FM Riser Manifolds; Waterflow Detectors; OS&Y and PIV Supervisory Switches; Pressure Switches; etc. Contact: Dennis Sekermestrovich DES Associates, (951) 541-4045 [oldseker@yahoo.com](mailto:oldseker@yahoo.com) DVBE Certificate# 2026104

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*Members of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Fire and Life Safety Section, with Peg Paul, the recipient of the **2025 Excellence in Fire and Life Safety Award**. The Award honors individuals who have dedicated themselves to saving lives and property through strong leadership in fire prevention practices and support of model building and fire Codes. Since 1997, Peg Paul has worked with the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC) to increase awareness about the life-saving benefits of home fire sprinklers.*

**Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings.**  
— Proverbs 22:29a



## Workplace Documentation

The absence of solid documentation is the single most common mistake employers make when handling employee performance, behavior, and discipline issues. Not properly documenting, or not documenting at all, can hurt employers and employees in several ways. Documentation can make or break a manager's ability to discipline, terminate, fairly promote, reward, and recognize employees. Additionally, solid documentation will become an employer's best friend when an employee brings discrimination or other employment-related claims against the organization.

Possessing a solid understanding of the do's and don'ts of documenting employee performance, discipline, and behavior is an essential tool for managers and supervisors because they need to make a serious effort to effectively record all events in the employment history of their employees – both positive and negative.

— Diane L. Dee, [www.hrtrainup.com](http://www.hrtrainup.com)



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