

U.S. Fire Administration / National Fire Academy

# Coffee Break Training

## Topic: Fire Sprinkler Recalls

**Learning objective:** The student shall be able to identify information sources for product recalls of automatic fire sprinklers.

Fire and building officials often have a hard time convincing property owners and tenants to install automatic sprinkler systems due to their installation costs, maintenance demands, and the many popular misconceptions about sprinkler performance.

In recent years, the mandatory and voluntary recalls of several automatic sprinklers have made it more challenging for fire protection personnel to promote sprinkler protection. There is a legitimate concern among fire professionals that, if all of the recalled sprinklers are not replaced, the effectiveness of sprinkler protection—and the public's perception of sprinklers—may diminish.



Work with the Federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and several sprinkler manufacturers has led to the recall of several famous sprinklers that failed to operate in the event of a fire: the Central Sprinkler Corporation Omega<sup>®</sup> in 1998, the Central Model GB, and the Star ME-1 both in 2001, among others.

It is important that fire inspectors have the ability to identify these recalled sprinklers that still may be in service, and advise the property owner or tenant on the need to have them replaced. The Omega<sup>®</sup> recall program is due to expire August 31, 2007, so there is a timely need to address these sprinklers.

The following sites on the World Wide Web can provide additional information, illustrations, and the latest replacement protocols on recalled sprinklers:

<http://www.firesprinkler.org/techservices/recall.html>

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml01/01201.html>

<http://www.omegarecall.com/>

<http://www.star-recall.com/fireprot.htm>

<http://www.ul.com/regulators/sprinklers/cpsc.html>