



Coffee Break Training - Fire Protection Series

Automatic Sprinklers: General Information Signs

No. FP-2012-13 March 27, 2012

Learning Objective: The student shall be able to describe the requirement for general information signs on new automatic sprinkler systems.

One of the leading causes of sprinkler system ineffectiveness occurs when storage contents or configurations change and the sprinkler system is not altered to match the new hazard. A sprinkler system that is designed and installed to protect one level of hazard may not adequately protect another.

For example, a sprinkler system designed to protect an office supply retail sales building may be installed to protect predominantly an ordinary hazard occupancy. If that tenant were to leave or change products to something highly flammable or combustible, the original fire protection system might not have the sprinkler spacing, pipe size, or water delivery capacity to control a fire in the new materials.

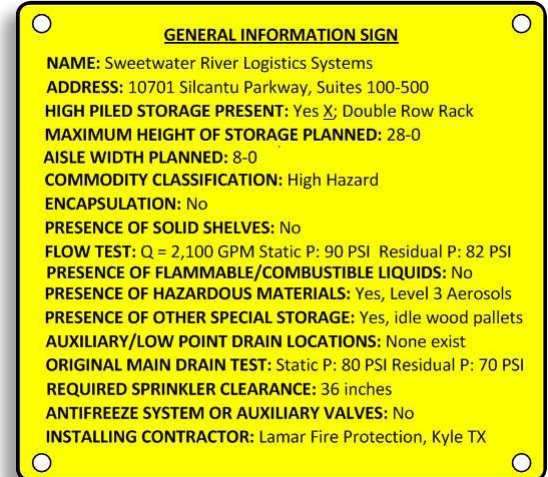
To help inspectors identify the original design criteria and be on the lookout for changes that could affect sprinkler performance, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13, *Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems* now requires the installation of a permanently marked and securely mounted general information sign on each riser, antifreeze loop, or auxiliary system control valve.

The sign must include the following information:

- name and location of the facility protected;
- occupancy classification;
- commodity classification;
- presence of high-piled and/or rack storage;
- maximum height of storage planned;
- aisle width planned;
- encapsulation of pallet loads;
- presence of solid shelving;
- flow test data;
- presence of flammable/combustible liquids;
- presence of hazardous materials;
- presence of other special storage;
- location of auxiliary drains and low-point drains on preaction and dry-pipe systems;
- original results of main drain flow test;
- name of installing contractor or designer; and
- indication of presence and location of antifreeze or other auxiliary systems.

While the information on this sign is useful during an inspection, it should not be considered a complete hazard assessment of the facility or fire protection systems.

For additional information, refer to NFPA 13, Chapter 24.



This sample general information sign is required by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13, *Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems* on new sprinkler systems. *Illustration courtesy of Scott Stookey, Austin, TX.*



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