

TECHNICAL INFORMATION PAPER SERIES: SPRINKLER SYSTEM IMPAIRMENTS



HELPFUL TIPS FOR LOGGING AND TRACKING A FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM IMPAIRMENT AND RESTORATION.

A fire protection system impairment occurs when a sprinkler system, fire pump, tank, hydrant, underground main, city main, alarm or special fire extinguishing system is not in service. This may be due to construction, planned maintenance and repair, or an emergency condition, such as a pipe leak or a water main rupture.



It's important to take action when fire protection systems are not operational because your facility is at a higher risk than normal. When any system is going to be down for longer than eight hours or more than one shift, a formal impairment should be established, logged and tracked to restoration.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR SPRINKLER SYSTEM IS IMPAIRED

- Determine the duration of impairment.
- Set up a fire watch.
- Stop open flames or hazardous operations.
- Check to see if fire extinguishers are available.
- Notify management.
- Notify the fire department.
- Notify the alarm company, as applicable.
- Work continuously to repair condition.
- Set up an emergency connection, if possible.
- Contact your local risk engineering consultant.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR SPRINKLER SYSTEM IS RESTORED

- Air test new piping.
- Conduct 2" drain or alarm test to confirm operational condition.
- Notify management.
- Notify the fire department.
- Notify the alarm company, as applicable.
- Cancel the fire watch.
- Contact The Hartford to close out.

continued

Systems may be isolated for work in only one area or work on one system to limit areas without protection. Emergency connections may be possible from a hydrant or by cross connections between risers to limit risk during valve closures. Work with your maintenance department or The Hartford Risk Engineering consultant to discuss valve closure issues for sprinkler systems. Well-planned impairments and handling can reduce risk and assure timely restoration of your fire systems.

Closed sprinkler control valves account for about forty percent of uncontrolled fires in buildings protected by automatic sprinkler systems. Other causes of uncontrolled fires can be attributed to inadequately designed sprinkler systems and poor water supplies.

The closing of fire protection control valves without proper authorization or preparation can seriously jeopardize operations. If sprinkler systems, water storage tanks, fire pumps, etc., are impaired, the consequences may result in loss of life and damage to property. It is essential that adequate measures are taken during a fire protection impairment to ensure that the increased risks are minimized.

Impairments should be temporary and should be dealt with promptly. Use of the following guidelines combined with a self-inspection program will significantly reduce the potential of an uncontrolled fire.

[Download and print The Hartford's Fire System Impairment Tag here.](#)

LEARN MORE.

Contact your Risk Engineering consultant from The Hartford today or visit [TheHartford.com/riskengineering](https://www.thehartford.com/riskengineering)

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