

Fire Sprinkler Tips For Fall and Winter Cold Weather

Frost on the ground, colder temperatures, frozen rainstorms- that means winter is coming! What can you do to get ready? Here are some tips to help you prepare for the upcoming season.

Tip #1, Proper Heating

One of the biggest causes of fire sprinkler system failures is improper heating. Fire sprinkler systems are more at risk of failure in the winter. During these months, we frequently receive service call requests for frozen sprinkler pipes. If your sprinkler pipes have any water in them and they are exposed to freezing conditions, your pipes *will* burst. To prevent the sprinkler pipes from freezing, it is crucial to maintain a temperature of at least 40°F. If you're a landlord and you have a vacant unit, trust us, you're not saving any money in the end by turning off the heat. These repairs are costly. Basements, stairwells, lobby areas- keep the heat on!

Tip #2, Antifreeze Loop for Wet Sprinkler Systems

If you have a wet fire sprinkler system and you live in an area where the temperatures can drop to below 50° there's a good chance that you have an antifreeze loop system installed as well. The addition of antifreeze to the water in the fire sprinkler pipes keeps the freezing point much lower and reduces the risk of the pipes freezing and bursting. We test your antifreeze loop as part of your annual inspection. If you have not had your loop system checked before winter, call Burke Fire to come out and test your antifreeze to ensure that not only the proper amount of fluid is in the system, but that it also tests at the proper temperature. If the existing antifreeze cannot protect to the required temperatures, it must be drained and refilled with a new listed antifreeze meeting the requirements of NFPA 25, section 5.3.4.

Tip #3, Dry System Maintenance

Failure to keep your dry fire sprinkler system free of water can result in damage to both the system and the building, causing costly repairs. We recommend cold weather preparation for your dry systems. Similar to irrigation sprinkler maintenance, our Technicians will drain the low points of your system and use pressurized air to remove any accumulated water in the pipes. This service will help prevent the pipes from expanding and bursting if exposed to freezing temperatures. If we have a particularly wet season, you might want to have the system drained more than once. Reach out to Burke Fire for a consultation and recommendation.

Tip #4, Insulation

It is advised that you insulate your fire sprinkler pipes to keep them from freezing if you reside in a place where lows of 40°F are common. By slowing down heat transmission & preventing the water from freezing, insulation in the pipes helps keep the water above freezing even as the surrounding temperature drops.

Tip #5, After A Storm- Do a visual inspection

Take a look around- if you see any leaks or puddles that shouldn't be there, [call Burke Fire right away](#).

If a storm has knocked out your power and you're receiving an alarm, your system may have tripped and needs to be reset. Do not wait, call us and call your alarm company to let them know what's happened. You don't want the Fire Department coming out for no reason! Don't forget, the change in temperature can take a toll on metal and plastic pipes, so it's important to check for any leaks or drips. Left unchecked, a small leak can turn into something much worse and more expensive to repair.

Tip #6, Schedule a Fire Sprinkler Inspection

Call the pros! Our trained Technicians will inspect your whole system, checking over everything for any signs of damage. We'll provide you with an inspection report and if there are any deficiencies, we'll let you know what they are and what needs to be done to fix them. Our customers have the confidence that if their sprinkler system is ever activated, it will perform as designed.