

(ii) The employer shall assure that hose on all standpipe systems installed after January 1, 1981, is hydrostatically tested with couplings in place, at a pressure of not less than 200 psi (1380 kPa), before it is placed in service. This pressure shall be maintained for at least 15 seconds and not more than one minute during which time the hose shall not leak nor shall any jacket thread break during the test.

(2) *Maintenance.* (i) The employer shall assure that water supply tanks are kept filled to the proper level except during repairs. When pressure tanks are used, the employer shall assure that proper pressure is maintained at all times except during repairs.

(ii) The employer shall assure that valves in the main piping connections to the automatic sources of water supply are kept fully open at all times except during repair.

(iii) The employer shall assure that hose systems are inspected at least annually and after each use to assure that all of the equipment and hose are in place, available for use, and in serviceable condition.

(iv) When the system or any portion thereof is found not to be serviceable, the employer shall remove it from service immediately and replace it with equivalent protection such as extinguishers and fire watches.

(v) The employer shall assure that hemp or linen hose on existing systems is unracked, physically inspected for deterioration, and reracked using a different fold pattern at least annually. The employer shall assure that defective hose is replaced in accordance with paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section.

(vi) The employer shall designate trained persons to conduct all inspections required under this section.

[45 FR 60710, Sept. 12, 1980, as amended at 61 FR 9239, Mar. 7, 1996]

#### FIXED FIRE SUPPRESSION EQUIPMENT

### § 1910.159 Automatic sprinkler systems.

(a) *Scope and application.* (1) The requirements of this section apply to all automatic sprinkler systems installed to meet a particular OSHA standard.

(2) For automatic sprinkler systems used to meet OSHA requirements and

installed prior to the effective date of this standard, compliance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) or the National Board of Fire Underwriters (NBFU) standard in effect at the time of the system's installation will be acceptable as compliance with this section.

(b) *Exemptions.* Automatic sprinkler systems installed in workplaces, but not required by OSHA, are exempt from the requirements of this section.

(c) *General requirements—(1) Design.* (i) All automatic sprinkler designs used to comply with this standard shall provide the necessary discharge patterns, densities, and water flow characteristics for complete coverage in a particular workplace or zoned subdivision of the workplace.

(ii) The employer shall assure that only approved equipment and devices are used in the design and installation of automatic sprinkler systems used to comply with this standard.

(2) *Maintenance.* The employer shall properly maintain an automatic sprinkler system installed to comply with this section. The employer shall assure that a main drain flow test is performed on each system annually. The inspector's test valve shall be opened at least every two years to assure that the sprinkler system operates properly.

(3) *Acceptance tests.* The employer shall conduct proper acceptance tests on sprinkler systems installed for employee protection after January 1, 1981, and record the dates of such tests. Proper acceptance tests include the following:

(i) Flushing of underground connections;

(ii) Hydrostatic tests of piping in system;

(iii) Air tests in dry-pipe systems;

(iv) Dry-pipe valve operation; and

(v) Test of drainage facilities.

(4) *Water supplies.* The employer shall assure that every automatic sprinkler system is provided with at least one automatic water supply capable of providing design water flow for at least 30 minutes. An auxiliary water supply or equivalent protection shall be provided when the automatic water supply is out of service, except for systems of 20 or fewer sprinklers.

(5) *Hose connections for fire fighting use.* The employer may attach hose connections for fire fighting use to wet pipe sprinkler systems provided that the water supply satisfies the combined design demand for sprinklers and standpipes.

(6) *Protection of piping.* The employer shall assure that automatic sprinkler system piping is protected against freezing and exterior surface corrosion.

(7) *Drainage.* The employer shall assure that all dry sprinkler pipes and fittings are installed so that the system may be totally drained.

(8) *Sprinklers.* (i) The employer shall assure that only approved sprinklers are used on systems.

(ii) The employer may not use older style sprinklers to replace standard sprinklers without a complete engineering review of the altered part of the system.

(iii) The employer shall assure that sprinklers are protected from mechanical damage.

(9) *Sprinkler alarms.* On all sprinkler systems having more than twenty (20) sprinklers, the employer shall assure that a local waterflow alarm is provided which sounds an audible signal on the premises upon water flow through the system equal to the flow from a single sprinkler.

(10) *Sprinkler spacing.* The employer shall assure that sprinklers are spaced to provide a maximum protection area per sprinkler, a minimum of interference to the discharge pattern by building or structural members or building contents and suitable sensitivity to possible fire hazards. The minimum vertical clearance between sprinklers and material below shall be 18 inches (45.7 cm).

(11) *Hydraulically designed systems.* The employer shall assure that hydraulically designed automatic sprinkler systems or portions thereof are identified and that the location, number of sprinklers in the hydraulically designed section, and the basis of the design is indicated. Central records may be used in lieu of signs at sprinkler valves provided the records are available for inspection and copying by the Assistant Secretary.

[45 FR 60710, Sept. 12, 1980; 46 FR 24557, May 1, 1981]

#### **§ 1910.160 Fixed extinguishing systems, general.**

(a) *Scope and application.* (1) This section applies to all fixed extinguishing systems installed to meet a particular OSHA standard except for automatic sprinkler systems which are covered by § 1910.159.

(2) This section also applies to fixed systems not installed to meet a particular OSHA standard, but which, by means of their operation, may expose employees to possible injury, death, or adverse health consequences caused by the extinguishing agent. Such systems are only subject to the requirements of paragraphs (b)(4) through (b)(7) and (c) of this section.

(3) Systems otherwise covered in paragraph (a)(2) of this section which are installed in areas with no employee exposure are exempted from the requirements of this section.

(b) *General requirements.* (1) Fixed extinguishing system components and agents shall be designed and approved for use on the specific fire hazards they are expected to control or extinguish.

(2) If for any reason a fixed extinguishing system becomes inoperable, the employer shall notify employees and take the necessary temporary precautions to assure their safety until the system is restored to operating order. Any defects or impairments shall be properly corrected by trained personnel.

(3) The employer shall provide a distinctive alarm or signaling system which complies with § 1910.165 and is capable of being perceived above ambient noise or light levels, on all extinguishing systems in those portions of the workplace covered by the extinguishing system to indicate when the extinguishing system is discharging. Discharge alarms are not required on systems where discharge is immediately recognizable.

(4) The employer shall provide effective safeguards to warn employees against entry into discharge areas where the atmosphere remains hazardous to employee safety or health.

(5) The employer shall post hazard warning or caution signs at the entrance to, and inside of, areas protected by fixed extinguishing systems which use agents in concentrations