

Press Release

For Immediate Release

The New Year has seen a rise in commercial fire sprinkler system maintenance issues due to the cold snap being felt across the Low Country. The primary precaution available to businesses is to keep all of the piping for the sprinkler systems above 40° F, according to North Charleston Fire Marshal Ray Hoshall. Hoshall continued by explaining there are two types of sprinkler systems generally used in Low Country businesses. The wet-pipe system and the dry-pipe system or a combination of the two. "A wet system is prone to freezing if not properly protected. The fire code covers the maintenance of sprinkler systems," said Hoshall. "It calls for a business to maintain a temperature of at least 40° F to protect the wet system from freezing. The damage actually occurs when the pipes freeze, but the effects aren't necessarily felt until the freeze is over and the piping thaws," he said.

The dry-system or components of a combined system are designed specifically for areas where pipes are normally exposed to freezing temperatures. The pipes in the protected area are filled with air, so there should be no risk of freezing. In this situation however; the sprinkler control room must be kept above 40 °F. "This system still requires some maintenance. The auxiliary drain(s) located at the low points in the system need to be kept drained to prevent freezing," said Hoshall. He encourages the use of a SC licensed fire sprinkler contractor that can assist each business prepare for the winter months.

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