

BAFSA presses for UK water supply policies

BAFSA has launched a campaign to encourage the UK's water companies to formulate and publish policies outlining their position on connections for sprinkler systems.

The move comes as some BAFSA members continue to have difficulties when seeking to make connections to the mains water supply, resulting in the need for lengthy consultation which often results in additional delays and costs.

While the number of sprinkler systems installed in each water company area has traditionally been quite low, BAFSA anticipates that the number of systems being installed will increase – particularly with the introduction of a legislative requirement in Wales – and that the lack of published policies needs to be addressed urgently.

BAFSA are key members of the Water Liaison Group (WLG) which brings together representatives of the water and sprinkler industries and which believes that it is important to have effective working practices and communications between all parties. To support this, WLG are redrafting the 2004 Protocol document reinforcing and highlighting best practice and underlining the benefits of changes to appropriate legislation.

Ian Gough, BAFSA's representative on the WLG, said: "Sprinkler contractors are experiencing difficulties in understanding the arrangements for sprinkler connection, which vary significantly between water undertakers. While there are many successful connections, there have been a number of instances where problems have been experienced in reaching agreement on how or if a connection can be made.



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These problems tend to occur where the water company does not have an explicit policy and guidance for the sprinkler contractor or local water company employee to refer to.

"Equally, sprinkler contractors need to be aware that local companies have different policies and they should seek to establish what those local requirements are before commencing the design stage of a system.

"Installers also need to be aware that there may be a number of reasons related to available pressure and flow which prevent the use of the direct supply from the mains which is their preferred solution."

He added: "Some water companies have expressed a preference or requirement for the water supply for sprinklers to be metered. The reasons given for this are to minimise loss through leakage and the potential theft of water. The pressure loss through a meter has been the subject of research within the industry."

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BAFSA pushes for UK water supply policies

Steve Seaber, the independent chairman of WLG, said the Group will continue to lobby for changes to Section 57 of the Water Industry Act 1991, to give water for fire sprinklers the same legal status as water taken from hydrants. The need for this change is stated in the Water UK Policy Position Statement <http://www.water.org.uk/home/policy/positions/fire-sprinklers> and would provide a strategic way forward for both the water and sprinkler industries.

“In the meantime WLG will seek to encourage individual water companies to develop explicit policies and guidance on the use of sprinklers within their company areas,” he said. “Where such documents exist, they are beneficial and effective for both the water company and sprinkler contractors working in their area. Sprinkler contractors will, however, need to be aware that even if the changes outlined in this document are achieved, individual water companies’ policies may differ and any variations and limitations must be recognised where they occur.”

Steve Seaber added that once these policies are in place, it is essential that they are communicated and understood by those local staff responsible for receiving requests from sprinkler or building contractors. Ultimately, WLG would like to see a nominated ‘sprinkler contact’ within each water company who could liaise where differences of opinion occur.

There are a number of water companies who already have published explicit policies, including Anglian, Sutton and East Surrey, Dee Valley, Sembcorp Bournemouth and Welsh Water. ❖

Compulsory sprinklers for all new homes in Wales

Sprinkler systems are to be made compulsory in all new and converted residential properties in Wales, in order to reduce the number of deaths and injuries from fire.

The new regulations made by the Welsh Government originally in 2011 will begin to take effect for high risk properties - such as care homes and student accommodation - from 30 April 2014, followed by all new and converted houses and flats from 1 January 2016. A ‘commencement order’ was made on 21 October.

Changes to the Building Regulations for Wales will enable the implementation of the Domestic Fire Safety (Wales) Measure 2011, in order for the Welsh Government to meet its policy objective of May 2012.

Data from the last 10 years showed that on average 17 deaths and 503 injuries per year were caused by fires in residential properties in Wales. Recognising that while there had been a reduction in the number of deaths from fires in the home during this period, the number of deaths was still seen as too high.

Explaining the new regulations, the Minister for Housing and Regeneration, Carl Sargeant, said: “As a former industrial firefighter I am personally committed to implement the Domestic Fire Safety (Wales) Measure which was passed by the National Assembly in February 2011. I am grateful to the construction industry and the fire-related safety sector for their continued interest in this issue.

“Fire sprinklers in new residential properties will prevent death and injury to householders and firefighters. However, at a time when resources are tight, I have decided to focus effort initially at high risk properties where this measure will have the greatest impact.

“From April 2014, the regulations will apply to high risk properties such as care homes, new and converted student halls of residence, boarding houses and certain hostels and from January 2016 to all new and converted houses and flats.”

Mr Sargeant said this phased approach would allow the housebuilding industry to gain experience and skills and would

give the sector the opportunity to innovate and reduce the costs of installing sprinklers. It would also continue to set Wales apart as a leader in promoting fire safety.

He added: “On both Part L [of the Building Regulations] and domestic fire safety, these decisions reflect where we are today

rather than where we were three or more years ago. They will mean savings for the house building industry as compared to our original consultation proposals.”

During the development of those proposals, Ministers took advice from the Domestic Fire Safety Measure Working Group, which contains representatives of key stakeholders who have an interest in domestic fire safety and the regulatory framework governing building control in Wales.

Members of the Group include the Welsh Government, water companies, house building companies, local authority building control services, BAFSA, the Fire Protection Association, fire and rescue services, Fire Industry Association and the Fire Brigades Union.

Commenting on the new regulations, BAFSA’s Senior Technical Advisor, Ian Gough, said: “We welcome the implementation of the regulations and applaud the Welsh Assembly for their achievement in securing that, by 2016, Welsh residents will benefit from the highest domestic fire safety standards in the world.

“While some may express disappointment in the two-stage implementation this should not overshadow the hugely significant landmark which will make Wales a world-leader in protecting its people from fire in the home.” ❖



Minister for Housing and Regeneration, Carl Sargeant

Scottish F&RS praise sprinklers for student accommodation

The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service has praised safety features – including sprinklers – installed in new student accommodation at the University of Stirling.

Students moved into new blocks at Willow Court and Alexander Court on the University's Stirling campus in September and the buildings – part of a 3-year, £28 million project to replace 40% of the total residential accommodation – feature a number of security and safety features, including:

- ❖ fire sprinklers
- ❖ door entry systems
- ❖ hob cut-off switches in kitchens
- ❖ kitchen door alarms
- ❖ a four-head fire detection system
- ❖ disabled alarm systems
- ❖ evacuation lifts

Danny Lake, station manager at Stirling Fire Station, said: "We have worked closely with the University estates department, University fire officer, Building Standards and the architect for the project from the beginning. This partnership approach, from the early design stage, allowed all the partners' views to be taken into account."

He said he was particularly pleased to see sprinklers installed in the new blocks. "There is clear evidence that sprinklers can be effective in the rapid suppression of fires. We want to raise



awareness and to encourage the inclusion of sprinklers in all buildings where there is a risk-based case for doing so."

John Galworthy, Fire Officer and Assistant Safety Adviser at the University, said: "Student safety is of paramount importance to us. In designing these buildings, we wanted to provide high-quality and comfortable

accommodation, incorporating a range of features to protect student residents.

"Students started moving into the blocks in September and the response to the new residences has been incredibly positive. We're glad the Fire Service is equally enthusiastic about what we've delivered here at Stirling." ❖

Warehouse sprinkler cost-benefit study due soon

A major cost-benefit analysis of sprinklers in warehouses, being prepared for the Business Sprinkler Alliance (BSA) by BRE Global is due to be launched early in 2014.

Its objective is to determine whether the cost of installation and ongoing maintenance of fire sprinklers in storage occupancies buildings is more than, equal to, or less than the cost of the overall impact of fires in terms of the environment, social impacts, business interruption etc.

While statistical analysis is still under way, early findings suggest:

- ❖ The full cost of fire indicates that the UK's commercial financial losses to fire is severely undervalued: the figure for 2010 was reported as £885 million, but the true cost could be as much as double.
- ❖ Current statistical analyses suggest that it is cost-beneficial for fire sprinklers to be installed in UK warehouses greater than 2,000m².
- ❖ The mean cost per large fire (>£100K) is in excess of £1 million.
As warehouses get bigger, financial losses from fire substantially increase. ❖

Sprinklers for the most vulnerable

Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (F&RS) is working with Yarlington Housing Group on a project to install domestic sprinkler systems in the homes of some of its most vulnerable residents.

The initiative began in November 2012, when the F&RS gave a presentation to Yarlington explaining the features and benefits of installing such systems

Yarlington manages some 9,000 social properties throughout Devon, Dorset and Somerset, ranging from blocks of flats to bungalows and houses, and at the end of the presentation the F&RS offered a partnership matched funding project which involved the service matching sprinkler installation costs for up to four properties.

Devon & Somerset F&RS Call Reduction Officer, Ian Haim, said: "Yarlington Housing Group take the fire safety of all its tenants very seriously and were very keen to work with us. They were very open to explore all aspects of what would be a new concept in domestic fire safety for them, their tenants and their properties."

Four properties were chosen in which it was thought the most vulnerable tenants would benefit from a domestic sprinkler system. The first of which was a stone-clad bungalow situated in a village community on a small estate which is



outside the local fire service 10 minute response time.

Ian Haim said: "The tenant was reliant on an electric wheelchair to move around his property and also a heavy smoker with a tendency to leave lit cigarettes in ashtrays. If a fire were to break out he would be unable to vacate his premises in a suitable time."

The sprinkler system took less than two days to install,

demonstrating that sprinklers can be a cost-effective solution to not only protecting lives, but also property. ❖



New London strategy on sprinklers

The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority has published a policy paper outlining its future strategy on the wider use of sprinklers.

The report sets out the Authority's response to the 'Sprinklers Local Campaign Toolkit' issued by the Local Government Association (LGA) in January 2013. It describes the progress achieved in promoting its sprinkler strategy since it considered a report entitled 'Domestic Sprinklers Strategy' in November 2012.

Among the recommendations in the Authority's report are that the Strategy Committee:

- ❖ Agrees the production of an Authority 'Sprinklers Toolkit' to provide guidance and best practice advice to officers on the installation of sprinklers in premises such as schools, residential homes and high rise accommodation;
- ❖ Authorises the allocation of £100,000 from the Fire Prevention Grant to support a competition designed to incentivise local authorities to install sprinklers and to generate publicity for the Authority's Sprinkler Strategy;
- ❖ Endorses the policy objectives with regard to influencing local authorities, housing providers and other agencies to install sprinklers, by consultation and engagement, within premises such as:
 - (a) all new residential developments over 18m in height;

- (b) existing residential blocks over 18m in height, subject to a risk based approach that should include consideration of the vulnerability of occupancy;
- (c) all new schools;
- (d) all new residential care homes and sheltered accommodation;
- (e) existing residential care homes and sheltered accommodation subject to a risk based approach that should include consideration of the vulnerability of occupancy;
- (f) all new fire stations;
- (g) all homes occupied by the most vulnerable in our communities.
- (h) all residential 'other' (hotels, hostels and student accommodation) over 18m in height.

BAFSA has agreed to assist the LFB in bringing together sprinkler installers and the London boroughs who will be commissioning sprinkler protection. A number of joint events will be announced shortly allowing participants to explore actual contact issues and difficulties and understand the need for compliance with standards and utilisation of third party certificated contractors.

BAFSA has also agreed to undertake the provision of CPD training courses in the wider and more effective use for sprinklers for up to 20 LFB officers. ❖

Care home fire prompts plea for sprinklers

A recent fire at a six storey care home in East Sussex has led to a renewed call for the government to introduce requirements for sprinklers in residential care premises.

The fire, at Marlborough House, resulted in the local authority having to find temporary accommodation for 34 elderly residents and councillor Phil Scott, Labour Group Leader on East Sussex Fire & Rescue Combined Authority, says it is time for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to take action.

“The fire at Marlborough House once again places before us a number of unavoidable facts,” he said. “We obviously need to have adequate resources of highly trained firefighters and equipment to deal with major incidents such as Marlborough House. Sheltered accommodation such as Marlborough House, which is a fairly new building only some several years old, should have had residential sprinkler systems fitted.

“It is time that this country had the political will to compel developers to install domestic sprinkler systems in all new build properties and all converted properties. The Welsh Assembly had the courage to do it, why cannot we?”

Announcing the launch of an e-petition to the government, councillor Scott added: “Our move to get this onto the political agenda with central government is supported by all fire and rescue personnel across the country and of course the British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association. If fitted they would certainly reduce fire damage to properties and they would save lives, of that there is no doubt.” The e-petition is at:

epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/52787. ❖

Fire casualties decrease

The latest statistics produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) show a marked drop in fire fatalities and casualties in England during the year to March 2013.

DCLG's Fire Statistics Monitor is based on records of all incidents attended by local authority fire and rescue services and shows that:

- ❖ The provisional total number of fire fatalities in England in 2012/13 was 271 – 43 (14%) fewer than in 2011/12. This is 35% fewer than the 417 fire fatalities 10 years earlier (in 2002-03).
- ❖ There were 168 fire fatalities in accidental dwelling fires, three fifths of all fire fatalities, in 2012/13 – 11% fewer compared with 2011/12. This is 36% fewer than the 262 fatalities in accidental dwelling fires ten years earlier in 2002/03.
- ❖ There were 3,830 non-fatal casualties (excluding precautionary checks and first aid cases) in fires in England in 2012/13. This is 11% (460) fewer than 2011/12 and 54% (4,460) fewer than in 2002/03.

The Fire Statistics Monitor says the decreasing trend in fire casualties and incidents is the result of successful fire safety and prevention activity, such as smoke alarms and other building fire safety systems and features, audits and enforcement activity, fire safety campaigns, education and other advice.

BAFSA noted that while sprinklers were not specifically mentioned in the reasons for the decreasing trend in casualties and incidents, it is clear that they continue to play an important role in protecting life and property. ❖

CPD Training for Architects and Architectural Technicians

The Business Sprinkler Alliance has now achieved the status of an accredited CPD training provider for the Royal Institution of British Architects. It is hoped that five different training courses will be offered from December. Training will normally be delivered at RIBA members' offices by BAFSA on behalf of the BSA and can be booked through the RIBA CPD Providers Network. ❖

New FSC flexible sprinkler assemblies from Viking

Viking Corporation has announced the availability of its new FSC Flexible Sprinkler Assemblies which are offered with a wide variety of its commercial sprinklers, factory-installed onto the outlet fitting of the FSC flexible sprinkler connection.

The company says the result is an integrated assembly that combines the labour-saving benefits of the FSC flexible connections with the confidence and convenience of a sprinkler that is pre-assembled onto the flexible connection's outlet fitting.

The FSC Flexible Sprinkler Assemblies are available with either the FM Approved braided flexible connection (model FSC-28B), or the UL Listed non-braided version (model FSC-25U). ❖

NFPA Sprinkler Reliability Statistics

Latest figures from the NFPA show that in 2009, 4.6% of occupied homes had sprinklers, an increase from 3.9% in 2007, and 18.5% of occupied homes built in the previous four years had sprinklers.

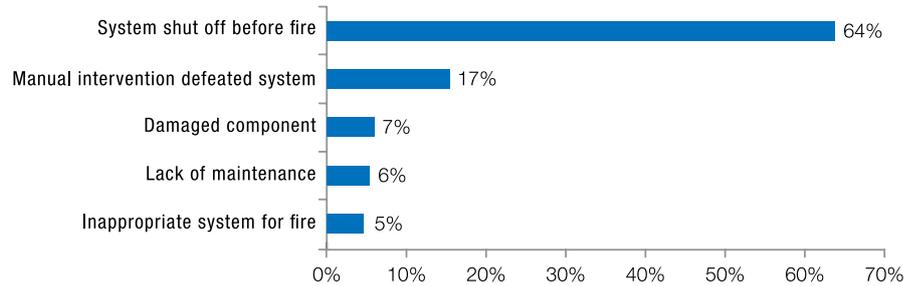
In 2007-2011, fires in all types of structures - where sprinklers were present in the area of a fire large enough to activate sprinklers in a building not under construction - sprinklers operated 91% of the time. When they operated, they were effective 96% of the time, resulting in a combined performance of operating effectively in 87% of reported fires where sprinklers were present in the fire area and fire was large enough to activate sprinklers.

In homes - including apartments - wet-pipe sprinklers operated

effectively 92% of the time. When wet-pipe sprinklers were present in the fire area in homes that were not under construction, the fire death rate per 1,000 reported structure fires was lower by 82% and the rate of property damage per reported

home structure fire was lower by 68%. In all structures - not just homes - when sprinklers of any type failed to operate, the reason most often given (64% of failures) was that the system was shut off before the fire began. ❖

REASONS WHEN SPRINKLERS FAIL TO OPERATE, 2007-2011



New sprinkler protection for council flats

Two low-rise blocks of council flats in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, are to be fitted with sprinklers.

The 72 flats at Ashmore Walk and Matthews Walk were built in the 1960s. The £150,000 initiative is a result of co-operation between the city council and Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service.

The project is being seen as a test bed for the council, which is looking at upgrading fire safety in all of its blocks of apartments.

Council cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety, Janine Bridges, said all the council's homes met the latest safety regulations, but this system went above and beyond.

"We are absolutely committed to providing quality homes for our communities and safety is central to this," she said. "Sprinkler systems are used widely in hotels and business and have massive benefits over traditional passive features like fire doors. The sprinklers don't just limit the fire, they put it out." ❖



Photo: Smith Davis Press

Stoke City Council's Fire Safety Surveyor Will Gascoigne, left, with Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service's Fire Engineer Andy Brown pictured outside the flats in Ashmore Walk with examples of the sprinklers being fitted.

New Draft Standard for Smoke Control Systems

BSi have published as a Draft for Public Comment: BS 7346-8 Components for smoke control systems: Part 8: Code of practice for planning, design, installation, commissioning and maintenance. More information is available in the Members' Area of the BAFSA website. ❖

BAFSA member protects vacant arson-hit building

BAFSA member Argus Fire has intervened to ensure that the sprinkler system in an arson-hit vacant building in Wolverhampton has been reinstated to protect it and an adjoining business from further attack.

Argus installed 29 new heads free of charge in the former packaging plant to replace those activated when five separate fires were lit in the building.

The fire broke out at the disused BRM Packaging Ltd in Horseley Fields late at night on Sunday 4 August 2013 and was fully extinguished by more than 50 firefighters within three hours.

West Midlands Fire & Rescue Service said the fire could have raged for hours longer, had the building not been fitted with a working sprinkler system. It would have needed even more resources and the premises could have been razed to the ground.

Senior fire officers and the owner of a neighbouring business have expressed their appreciation to Argus for their help in resetting the sprinkler system so it can continue to protect the building and neighbouring companies. ❖

High-rise sprinkler protection

A 10-storey block of 160 flats in Gateshead town centre is being fitted with sprinklers.

The refurbishment at Regent Court is part of a multi-million pound investment scheme by The Gateshead Housing Company and Gateshead Council to upgrade fire safety measures in more than 20 residential high-rise accommodation blocks across the borough.



Each flat and all communal areas at Regent Court will be protected with sprinklers, and resident Pat Finlay is pleased to be one of the first to benefit from the system. He said: "The work only took a few days to complete. I've now got smoke alarms to give me the early warning of fire, and sprinklers in every room which will contain a fire, if one occurs, until the Fire and Rescue Service arrives."

Councillor Peter Mole, who represents Gateshead on the Tyne and Wear Fire Authority said: "This important investment will ensure that our residents, especially the most vulnerable, will benefit from the best possible protection from fire."

Assistant Chief Fire Officer, John Baines, of Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue Service said: "Whilst smoke alarm activation can give people the early warning of fire, clear evidence suggests that the installation of sprinklers is the single most effective measure in protecting occupants from fire.

"A fire death in a building with sprinklers fitted is extremely rare, where the sprinkler is appropriately designed, fully operational and maintained.

"This is why Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service is fully committed to campaigning for the installation of sprinklers in new build or existing homes, together with non-domestic premises." ❖

Southwark sprinkler retrofit study under way

A major study into the feasibility of retrofitting sprinklers to housing blocks is under way in Southwark, London.

The study was launched following Coroner's inquests in early 2013 into the six deaths resulting from the Lakanel fire that occurred on 3 July 2009 on the Sceaux Gardens Estate in Camberwell.

The inquest concluded on 28 March 2013. Her Honour Francis Kirkham issued a letter to Southwark Council, pursuant to Rule 43 of the Coroners Rules (as amended), requesting that the council consider retrofitting sprinkler systems in its Housing Blocks.

As a result, the council invited proposals from consultants to conduct the feasibility study which would provide factual information and costings to the council, so it could take an informed decision on installing retrofit sprinkler systems.

Requirements of the study include site inspections of 145 proposed housing blocks; inspection of communal areas where installations would be routed, such as entrances, corridors, plant rooms and restricted communal areas; and inspection of existing construction and services to assess the impact of a retrofit sprinkler system.

The feasibility study, which is due to be presented in November 2013, will also provide approximate costings for individual installations and possible alternative solutions to retrofit sprinklers. ❖

SPRINKLER STOPS

Retailer, Aberdeen

Sprinklers extinguished a fire in a storage area of the Primark fashion chain in Union Street, Aberdeen, at 0940hrs on Thursday 12 September 2013, shortly after the store had opened. The fire was reported as having been extinguished when two fire crews from the Scottish F&RS arrived.

School, Tyne and Wear

A sprinkler system at a school in Gateshead successfully extinguished a fire which broke out in an IT server cupboard on the third floor of the building at 1725hrs on 22 August 2013.

The school, which is fully protected by a BS 12845 sprinkler system, was unoccupied at the time of the fire, which could have caused substantial damage to the building if the sprinkler system had not automatically operated.

A child spotted smoke coming from the building's ventilation system and called the F&RS.

Two fire appliances attended the incident and, after firefighters forced an entry, the fire was found to have been extinguished by one sprinkler head.

The fire caused significant damage to equipment in the cupboard, but no other damage to the building.

Factory, Renfrewshire

At about 2042hrs on Wednesday 14 August 2013 a fire was reported at the premises of a specialist fitting-out contractor on the Inchannan industrial estate, Renfrewshire.

The seat of the fire was in racking within the 600m² factory and 20 firefighters attended the incident. Two breathing apparatus wearers with a

main jet were committed to tackle the fire, which was being contained to the immediate area of burning by one sprinkler head.

The incident lasted for 75 minutes and damage was reported to be less than 1% of the building's contents.

Former Packaging Plant, West Midlands

At 2245hrs on Sunday 4 August 2013, arsonists struck at a recently vacated packaging plant in Wolverhampton.

When West Midlands F&RS attended, they found five separate seats of fire within the factory. The sprinkler system had been maintained in an operational state and 10 heads had activated, containing any potential spread of fire. As such, the building was saved for potential further use, in contrast to some incidents reported where sprinkler systems had been decommissioned, resulting in the total loss to fire of buildings that had once been protected.

Paper Recycling Facility, Deeside

Fire broke out at 1125hrs on 13 July 2013 in a 11,250m² single storey building of steel frame construction, with metal clad roof, the walls of which are 2m high brick base with steel cladding.

It is estimated that about 10 tonnes of waste material was involved in the incident, which was initially controlled by one sprinkler head from the tank and pump supply.

The F&RS continued to fight the spread of the fire with two ground monitors and main jets, and

a mechanical digger was used to separate the material so it could be damped down before removal.

The extent of fire damage was reported as being 10% of the building's contents, and the impact on the business was said to be minimal.

Paper Mill, North Wales

Ten sprinkler heads operated after fire broke out at 1311hrs on 21 July 2013 in a 20m x 10m tissue making machine at a 3,000m² paper mill factory in Flint.

Paper inside the machine had been ignited by friction and the fire was contained by the sprinklers on the tank and pump-fed system. It was reported that 3% of the machinery was damaged, with smoke affecting 30% of the building. None of the 10 occupants was reported as being hurt.

Due to the complexity of the machinery, firefighting lasted 4.5 hours. In addition to the site fire team, North Wales F&RS deployed six appliances along with two duty managers. It used 10 breathing apparatus, four hosereel jets and three covering jets.

Production at the building was back to normal after 10 hours. There was no adverse impact on the local community and minimal disruption to the plant.

Secondary School, Surrey

London Fire Brigade were called at 0955hrs on 24 June 2013 to reports of smoke coming from a small part of a room on the second floor of the Stanley Park High School, Carshalton. Four appliances attended the fire, which is understood to have begun with an electrical fault in a photocopier.

About 1,100 pupils were safely evacuated before the fire brigade arrived, by which time the fire had been mostly extinguished by the school's sprinkler system.

Part of the room was damaged but there were no injuries.

A second stop was reported at the school on 29 October. The fire, in a room containing a laser-cutting machine was out before the brigade arrived.

Recycling Centre, Greater Manchester

Crews from Hyde, Offerton, Stockport and Ashton fire stations were called to a recycling plant on Ashton Road, Bredbury, at 1525hrs on Wednesday 19 June 2013.

Firefighters arrived on the scene to find a fire involving a building of 30m x 100m.

Incident manager Chris Mycock said: "The sprinkler system saved the day. A number of sprinkler heads were operating, containing the fire in one area, and the building was heavily smoke-logged.

"Four firefighters in breathing apparatus went in, jets were used and the building was ventilated and the fire surrounded. We then worked with the on-site team and their machinery to dig out around 80 tonnes of waste.

"Had it not been for the sprinkler system limiting the fire, there would have been much more material involved in the fire and we would have been here for many more hours."

Factory, Tyne & Wear

At about 1230hrs on the 6 May 2013, fire crews were called to a fire in a factory in Sunderland where a sprinkler system had activated.

On arrival, the F&RS were informed that a printing press unit was on fire, but an integrated sprinkler suppression system had been manually activated to successfully suppress the fire, stopping it from developing and potentially spreading to other units, flammable material and racked storage in the factory.

Approximately 50 employees evacuated the premises and, due to the internal complexity of the equipment, trained staff used two CO₂ extinguishers to ensure the fire was fully suppressed before the arrival of the fire service.

Once the small amount of smoke was cleared, fire safety systems were checked and the printer press unit was isolated. Minimal water damage was soon cleaned up with very little disruption to the business.

Underground Car Park, London

Two appliances from London Fire Brigade attended a fire in an underground NCP car park of two floors and a basement in Portman Square, at 0712hrs on Monday 27 May 2013.

The car park is situated underneath an 8-storey hotel. Smoke from the fire activated a nearby hotel smoke detector. The concierge investigated and raised the alarm. Three sprinkler heads activated and contained the fire damage to the immediate area of origin.

The fire was caused by the accidental ignition of a bicycle (taxi) rickshaw's lithium ion battery on charge from a 240V supply. Approximately 200 rickshaws are stored in the car park.

Mill Building, Stockport

Greater Manchester F&RS praised a sprinkler system which protected a number of businesses when a fire involving three delivery vehicles spread to an adjacent old mill building in Hallam Street, Stockport, at 0200hrs on 1 June 2013.

The building is home to around 20 different businesses and contains significant quantities of stored fabrics, timber and foam.

The sprinkler system stopped the fire taking hold and limited the damage to the furniture businesses located on the ground floor.

Greater Manchester F&RS said: "The sprinkler system was really effective. It massively reduced the spread of the fire and prevented it from going to other areas of the building, so only one business has really been affected by fire damage."

Hotel, West Yorkshire

Shortly before 0200hrs on Thursday 23 May 2013 firefighters from West Yorkshire F&RS were called to the historic Hollins Hall Hotel in Baildon, near Shipley, when a fire occurred in the kitchen of the 4-star hotel's leisure complex.

Fire crews from Shipley fire station said a sprinkler had activated, helping to extinguish the flames. The cause of the fire was believed to be a frying range which had been left on.

SPRINKLER STOPS

Supermarket, Swansea

Mid & West Wales F&RS attended an automatic fire alarm at the 'home shopping pod' in the 5,500m² Asda Store at Morriston, Swansea, on 19 May 2013.

The alarm was raised by the monitoring centre following the operation of the fire and sprinkler alarm as a result of an arson attack on the store.

One sprinkler head operated and effectively controlled the fire until the first fire crew arrived. The incident was dealt with in less than 45 minutes from first call to completion.

Fire damage was confined to a worktop, chair and a small amount of paperwork, with an estimated loss of about £500.

The manager said: "The localised nature of the sprinkler operation meant that none of the nearby hand-held computers were damaged, and the next day's business was not lost, only slightly delayed. If this part of the premises had not been fitted with a sprinkler system then business at the home shopping pod would no doubt have suffered from significant disruption".

Biscuit Factory, Merseyside

At 0318hrs on Thursday 9 May 2013 a fire occurred in machinery at the Jacob's biscuit factory in Aintree, Merseyside, where biscuits including the famous 'Cream Cracker' have been manufactured since 1910.

The sprinkler system in the single storey factory-controlled the fire, and staff assisted with portable extinguishers. The fire was reported as being 'Out on Arrival' when fire crews arrived.

Fire damage was reported as being limited to the machinery in question, 4m² of roofing and some adjacent cabling. There was also some smoke damage to stored raw materials in the vicinity.

The company suggested that the total cost of loss in this case could have been as much as £335 million had suppression not been fitted and the process machinery and premises lost.

Wood Plant, Bridgend

The sprinkler system at a wood pellet manufacturing plant in Brynmenyn, Bridgend, South Wales, successfully extinguished a fire in a wood chip dryer containing 12 tonnes of wood chip.

The incident occurred on 7 May 2013 and damage was limited to the machine. Fire crews were on site for 90 minutes. Without the sprinkler system, a fire involving 12 tonnes of wood pellets would have taken a significant time to fully extinguish.

Shopping Centre, Merseyside

A fire at the St Chad's Parade Shopping Centre, Liverpool, was successfully extinguished by the operation of a single sprinkler head on 6 May 2013.

The fire started as a result of the deliberate ignition of furniture that had been delivered to an external delivery/unloading area at the rear of the premises.

One head on the OH3 system operated in the internal shared access delivery storage area due to the heat of the external fire. There was no fire spread into the storage area or other parts of the centre.

The sprinkler system was off line until the following day but there was no disruption to trading.

PFI School, Merseyside

At 1509hrs on Friday 19 April 2013, Merseyside F&RS were called to a fire at Kirkby Sports College, a PFI-funded school, which was occupied by 1,500 people at the time of the fire.

The cause was determined to have been deliberately ignited paper in one of the toilet areas.

Two fire appliances with eight firefighters responded. The building was evacuated while staff made an initial attack using CO₂ fire extinguishers.

One sprinkler head activated and the fire was suppressed until the F&RS arrived.

The school has an OH1 sprinkler system with a tank supply for water and it is estimated that the fire was controlled in less than 5 minutes with less than 5% damage to the room of origin.

The school was back in full use the following day.

Large Dwelling, London

A BS 9251 sprinkler system installed and commissioned during the previous week activated on 26 April 2013 in a converted Mill Building in Islington, London. The fire was a result of building operations in which a tray of acetone with rags ignited. A single sprinkler head reacted to the heat and extinguished the fire.

Water from the operating head was caught in a bucket until the system stop valve was closed. There was no fire or water damage to the property and the fire brigade was not called. ❖

BAFSA MEMBER NEWS

2014: Lovely Jubilee!

2014 is BAFSA's Ruby Jubilee year and we intend to make it memorable!

A number of special events are being planned to celebrate our 40th anniversary, from the first major international conference and exhibition dedicated to sprinkler systems, to a Jubilee Gala Dinner and the BAFSA Ruby Jubilee Challenge Day for members and families.

The first event will be Fire Sprinkler International 2014 in May. November will see the glittering BAFSA Ruby Jubilee Gala Dinner at the Bristol Royal Marriott Hotel, Bristol – an evening of sparkling wine, fine food, music and magic performances to entertain.

Regardless of the gala status of this very special evening we are pleased to offer tickets at the same prices as previous

annual dinners £65 each or £585 for a table of 10 (+VAT).

The dinner follows the 2014 BAFSA AGM. To reserve your tickets and receive a priority booking form, email marketing@bafsa.org.uk

The celebrations continue into 2015 with the BAFSA Ruby Jubilee Challenge Day for members and families, which will take place at the Forest of Arden Marriott, Birmingham, in June. Full details of this event will be announced shortly....❖



Fire Sprinkler International 2014



One of the biggest dates in the fire calendar for next year will be Fire Sprinkler International 2014 – the only international conference dedicated to sprinklers and the biggest sprinkler event mounted outside the USA.

Jointly hosted by BAFSA and the European Fire Sprinkler Network (EFSN), the conference and exhibition will take place at the Grange Tower Bridge Hotel in London on 20-21 May. It will attract decision makers, legislators and fire safety professionals from across the globe.

Following the success of the EFSN's conference in Paris in 2012, and building on BAFSA's previous UK-based events as it celebrates its 40th anniversary, an audience of more than 300 delegates is expected to attend.

The conference will feature an outstanding collection of speakers and the programme will explore three main themes – business sustainability with sprinklers; new sprinkler technology; and developments in sprinkler standards.

CALL FOR PAPERS

To register your interest in presenting a paper at Fire Sprinkler International 2014 please email an abstract to Brinson@eurosprinkler.org by 1 December 2013.

CONFERENCE RATES

The 2-day delegate rate will be inclusive of refreshments, relevant literature, access to all presentations and workshops during the Conference day and the Welcome Reception on the evening of 20 May. There are special rates for BAFSA members. Full information is available at <http://firesprinklerinternational.com/>.❖

BAFSA Autumn Members Meeting and Seminar

The BAFSA Autumn Members Meeting took place at the Fire Industry Association (FIA) in Hampton, London, on 12 September 2013.

Some 30 representatives of affiliated organisations were welcomed by BAFSA Chairman, Peter Armstrong, who summarised BAFSA's achievements and successes over the past year, which has seen a continued call upon resources and personnel and an increase in enquiries and interest in sprinklers.

Louise Jackman of BRE, who jointly chairs the FSH 18/2 committee, presented an update on how work within the BSI/CEN work-streams is progressing with regards to BS9251, BSEN12845 and other work on European Standards. Alan Brinson continued the European theme with some very interesting data on sales of sprinkler heads across Europe and an update on legislation in a number of EU member states.

Focus then turned on how BAFSA uses the social media to highlight the role of sprinklers, with Wendy Otway illustrating the use of the BAFSA Linked-in forum, as well as how Twitter can be used to reach a wider audience than by just using more conventional methods such as e-mail.

The afternoon session, intended for local authorities included a number of presentations including a briefing on the recently announced LFB Sprinkler Policy and related activity by DACO Mark Andrews (see lead story in this issue), a look at the contrasts between sprinklers and watermist by Neil Costello, FM Global, and an update on the Welsh Sprinkler Measure by Ian Gough.

The meeting concluded with Steve Mills' overview of the latest 'Sprinkler Stops' and Stewart Kidd discussing how wind turbines can be better protected from fire.

All the presentations can be downloaded from the Conference Presentation area of the website at www.bafsa.org.uk/about-us/conference-and-seminar-presentations.php.❖

BAFSA Insurance Advisory Group

The first meeting of the BAFSA Insurance Advisory Group took place on 30 July 2013 at the HD-Girling Industrial Insurance Company in Fenchurch Street, London.

The Group was established as a link between the sprinkler industry and insurers. The first meeting, chaired by Allan MacPherson, FM Global, was attended by representatives from FM Global, Liberty Mutual, Zurich, Risk Consulting and Marsh.

Explaining the purpose of the Group, Stewart Kidd said that if there was general support for the idea, the committee would sit alongside BAFSA's other committees and groups.

The general view of the meeting was that the Group would be a useful forum and that all insurer members of BAFSA should be encouraged to join.

While the Group would not have scheduled meetings, it would meet whenever there were matters of mutual interest or concern.

The next meeting is expected to take place in early 2014. ❖

BAFSA is happy to receive suggestions for topics to be covered in future issues. Please make contact via info@bafsa.org.uk.

BAFSA Events 2013/2014

2013

Date	Event	Venues
6 November	R&D	Tyco, West Bromwich
14 November	Council	Marriott Worsley Park
14 November	1400 hrs 2013 AGM	Marriott Worsley Park
14 November	1930 hrs Annual Dinner	Marriott Worsley Park
15 November	Marketing	Marriott Worsley Park
27 November	Service & Maintenance	Hall Fire, Swinton, Greater Manchester
4 December	Technical	Rapidrop, Peterborough

2014

Date	Provisional Meeting Dates	Venues
8 January	Marketing	Grundfos, Leighton Buzzard
15 January	Council	Armstrong Priestley, Leeds
5 March	Marketing	Victaulic, Stevenage
12 March	Council	Sheffield F&RS Training Centre
30 April	Marketing	Balmoral Tanks, Cardiff (TBA)
7 May	Council	Tyco Park, Manchester
20-21 May	Fire Sprinkler International 2014	Grange Tower Bridge Hotel, London
July	Golf Day	Mottram Hall, Cheshire
9 July	Marketing	BAFSA Office, Ely
16 July	Council	Rapidrop, Peterborough
17 September	Marketing	North Yorkshire (TBA)
17 September	Council	North Yorkshire (TBA)
18 September	Members' Meeting/LA Seminar	North Yorkshire (TBA)
5 November	Marketing	TATA, Corby
13 November	Council	Bristol Royal Marriott
13 November	1400 hrs 2014 AGM	Bristol Royal Marriott
13 November	1930 hrs 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner	Bristol Royal Marriott

To receive Sprinkler Focus by email please contact BAFSA at info@bafsa.org.uk and ask to be added to the subscriber list.

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