

METAL THEIVES TARGET FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT: ADVICE FOR BUILDING OWNERS

Fire departments seek owner awareness

If a building or business is protected by an automatic fire sprinkler system, it should have a Fire Department Connection (FDC) outside as a part of the system.

These connections allow the fire department to connect hoses to the sprinkler system and supplement water supply in the event of a fire. The FDC is typically made of brass and has become a target for metal theft. There are no approved FDCs manufactured in other materials such as plastic, so owners should be alert and keep an eye on this equipment.

The FDC is a vital part of a fire sprinkler system and is necessary to provide protection to buildings and occupants. The 2006 International Fire Code requires that this, as well as all other portions of the sprinkler system, be kept in a useable and operative condition at all times.

The following steps describe what actions should be taken if it is discovered that an FDC or the protective caps has been removed or is damaged.

Steps to Restore a System to Service

1. If a business discovers a missing FDC, report the theft to the police/sheriff and contact the local fire department.
2. Before replacing an FDC, the piping must be back flushed to ensure any debris inside is removed. This must be done by a certified sprinkler company.
3. Upon replacing the FDC, an additional step must be taken to make it more theft-resistant. This can be accomplished by installing set screws through the FDC and into the piping, or use epoxy or thread compound material.
4. Where FDCs are being replaced, or at locations where caps are continuously broken off, locking FDC plugs may be installed. Contact the local fire department or fire marshal's office for information.

For more information, contact:

Vancouver Fire Department
Fire Marshal's Office
900 W. Evergreen Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98660
360-696-8166 Office
360-696-8163 Fax
<http://www.vanfire.org>

Clark County Fire Marshal's Office
505 NW 179th Street, Suite 110
Ridgefield, WA 98642
360-397-2186 Office
360-397-2076 Fax
<http://www.co.clark.wa.us/commdev/firemarshal/indexN.html>

