



SPRINKLERS AND CLEANUP AFTER SPRINKLER HEAD DISCHARGE

Only on TV or in the Movies does smoke set off the automatic fire protection sprinklers. Smoke sets off smoke alarms not sprinkler heads.

Four facts about sprinklers include:

- Only intense heat (upwards to 174 °F) cause sprinklers to discharge. Sprinkler heads contain a temperature sensitive mechanism (a glass bulb or metal fusible link) that can only be activated when the temperature at the sprinkler head exceeds the allowable range.
- Sprinkler heads operate independently. Only the sprinkler heads directly exposed to a fire will be activated. Most fires are extinguished or controlled by 3 or less sprinklers.
- Damage from 1 sprinkler head discharge can be significant. A sprinkler head discharge can release water flow from 15-40 gallons per minute and can fill a bathtub in about 1-2 minutes. Further, the sprinkler head will continue to discharge until manually shut off by a valve or other mechanism.
- Sprinkler head discharge can also result from pipe freezing in the winter time or by vandalism such as using the sprinklers as hangers for clothing or other items.

Prompt professional decision-making following a sprinkler discharge is essential. Your actions in the first 24-48 hours can save you significant time and money and all but eliminate subsequent mold growth. Professional followup is also required to respond to complaints of odors, evaluate water damage/mold in hidden areas, and ensure affected building materials are dry prior to work area rebuilding. AET recommends our clients hire an independent water damage/mold consultant to represent them during planning, response and closeout and work together with their insurance carrier.

Water within the sprinkler system is stagnate and non-potable. The water picks-up and absorbs oils and other contaminants within the piping resulting in discoloration and odors from its' sedimentary state. Cleanup actions typically not only involve moisture remediation, but surface cleaning from stains along with additional measures for odors. Prompt action for cleaning is essential where fabric/textile items are affected to minimize permanent staining and reserve these articles.

At AET, decision-making is performed by trained, experienced Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIHs) to facilitate prompt and efficient response actions. Decision-making will include choosing the right water damage remediation option such as:

- Discarding and replacement of non-valuable books and papers, ceiling tiles and cellulose and fiberglass insulation.
- Removing water with wet vacuums on carpeting/backing, hard surface flooring, furniture and wood surfaces.
- Laundering of cloth items such as window drapes.
- Utilizing dehumidifiers, gentle heat and fans in the work area to facilitate comprehensive drying.
- Cleaning of the affected hard non-porous surfaces (linoleum, ceramic tile, vinyl, plastics and metals) with a mild detergent followed by letting these surfaces dry.

Let AET be your first call for water damage remediation. Our decision-making starts immediately upon receiving your phone call. Our response action implementation commences when we arrive at your site within 1-2 hours of your call. Our professional staff will arrive equipped with specialized instrumentation such as moisture meters and infrared cameras to facilitate comprehensive project investigation, design and implementation.

AET's professional staff will not leave your site until the strict criteria for project completion is achieved. Where final visual inspections and/or air quality sampling for mold spores fail to meet this criteria, additional remediation efforts will be implemented until the site is safe for occupancy.

When you need Professional Help or Advice, email Roy Mosaicant at r.mosaicant@aetinc.biz or call 800-9696-AET