

Home Fire Sprinklers

Myths and Facts

Myth: Home fire sprinklers can malfunction and cause severe water damage to my home. They're more of a liability than a help.

Fact: It is extremely rare for home fire sprinklers to accidentally operate. In a typical home, water damage will be considerably less from unwanted sprinkler discharges than from other plumbing mishaps. False activations due to a manufacturing defect is around one in 14 million.

Myth: Will burning my toast activate the sprinkler system?

Fact: No, burning food or things such as cigar or cigarette smoke cannot cause a sprinkler to operate. Only the high temperature from a fire will activate the sprinkler, normally between 68 and 74 degrees.

Myth: A small fire will activate all the sprinklers in the home, with the water causing more damage than the flames.

Fact: All the sprinklers do not activate at once. This scenario may be common in movies and TV shows, but it just isn't true for home fire sprinkler systems. Only the sprinkler closest to the fire activates. Ninety percent of the time one sprinkler contains the fire. An uncontrolled fire will cause far greater destruction and smoke/heat damage than water damage from an activated sprinkler and even deaths due to the fast spreading of the fire.

Myth: Home fire sprinklers waste a tremendous amount of water. It's better to have the fire service put out the fire.

Fact: The high heat, flames and smoke require a tremendous amount of water from fire service crew hoses - more than 10 times the water flow per minute of sprinklers. Sprinklers not only save people, property and valuables, they better serve the environment. On average, a fire hose for a standard house fire would produce around 750 litres per minute with a sprinkler head between 50-70 litres per minute.

Myth: Sprinklers are too expensive to install. They're just not worth the price.

Fact: Residential and domestic fire sprinklers are not expensive compared to other items in the home at new build or to replace. Sprinklers excluding any builders, such as boxing works cost less than a boiler change in most cases and in new build can be as little as 1% of the build cost to install.

Myth: Fire sprinklers in my home are just plain ugly.

Fact: There are several types of fire sprinklers made for homes. Some are for installation on walls and others in ceilings; some are concealed by a plate. All residential fire sprinklers are much smaller and lower profile than the types of sprinklers used in commercial and industrial properties.

Myth: Will using a high temperature appliance such as a wall paper stripper used near the sprinkler head activate the system?

Fact: Yes, high temperature appliances/items such as a wall paper stripper that generates high concentrated steam would be sufficient to set off the system and should not be used.