



MYTH vs FACT | Fire Sprinklers

MYTH: Fire Sprinkler Systems are too costly for my project.

FACT: This depends on a number of factors, but a thermoplastic sprinkler system usually falls between \$1.00 to \$2.50 per square foot – or about 1% to 1.5% of the total construction cost of a home, depending on the local market.

MYTH: Plastic fire sprinkler pipes will melt in a fire!

FACT: Sprinklers are designed to rapidly activate when ceiling or sidewall temperatures indicate a fire is occurring. This happens long before excessive temperatures are reached where the piping is typically installed (i.e., behind the drywall of the ceiling or wall – an effective fire barrier). Based on extensive fire exposure tests, some plastic piping systems are listed for use exposed or without protection.

MYTH: In a fire, all of the sprinkler heads activate at once.

FACT: No, that only happens in the movies! Each individual sprinkler must reach a predetermined temperature to activate, and typically only one or two sprinklers are used to control or extinguish a fire in a residential building.

MYTH: Sprinklers are going to be ugly and distracting in my project.

FACT: Residential sprinklers are typically recessed in the ceiling or wall and are usually less obtrusive than lighting fixtures. The most commonly used sprinklers are concealed by a flat cover plate and can be custom matched to ceiling colors. Custom colored cover plates are required to be supplied by the sprinkler manufacturer. The cover is held in place by a heat activated metallic fuse, exposing the sprinkler when activated.

MYTH: I can install the fire sprinkler system myself.

FACT: This is not recommended. Life safety systems must be installed in compliance with codes and standards so that the design is correct and an adequate water supply to the sprinklers is available. Properly trained and qualified contractors should install fire sprinklers.

MYTH: Any plastic pipe can be used to install a fire sprinkler system

FACT: No. Only listed products that have been tested and certified to perform in the event of a fire are used for fire sprinkler systems.