



Property Risk Consulting Guidelines

XL Risk Consulting

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TESTING OF FIRE DOORS, DAMPERS AND WINDOWS

INTRODUCTION

Fire walls are the last line of defense in a fire. They can prevent a small fire from becoming a major loss. Ideally the best fire wall is one that does not have openings. However, openings are needed to allow materials, equipment and product to pass through. Unfortunately, the presence of any opening in a fire wall increases the likelihood of the spread of a fire into the adjacent area. The fire wall is only as good as the equipment used to protect the openings. If a door, damper or window fails to operate, the investment in the fire wall was for naught.

Loss experience has shown that fire doors fail to fully close at an alarming rate. The reasons for the failures include bent guide rails; stock or material blocking the opening; missing binders and stay rollers; bent shrouds; fusible links missing and the detection system not operating. To make sure these doors can operate properly during fire conditions test and maintain the doors. NFPA 80, Chapter 5 covers care and maintenance of fire doors. Failures of fire dampers range from improper installation to misalignment. Test and maintain fire dampers in accordance with NFPA 80. NFPA 80 states the fire doors shall be tested not less than annually, but leaves the frequency up to the property management, and that fire dampers shall be tested every 4 yr except those in hospitals which shall be tested every 6 yr.

It is better to find out if a fire door or damper would not close during a routine inspection and have the opportunity to repair it, then during a fire when the entire facility could be lost.

POSITION

Visually inspect all fire doors, dampers and windows on a weekly basis. This inspection covers:

- Making sure stock or material does not block the door.
- Combustible material is kept away from the door, damper and window.
- Door, damper and window are in good condition.
- Fusible link is in the proper location or the detector is properly located and functioning.
- For sliding doors including incline and horizontal sliding, check:
 - Roller and tightening wedge are in good condition.
 - Binder (retaining clip) is not bent.
 - Cable to the counterweight (should not use rope) is free to move.

- For swinging doors, check:
 - Closing mechanism (counterweights or closure) is in good condition.
 - Door latches operate.
 - Swing path is free of material.
- For roll-up doors, check:
 - Closing mechanism (counter weights or closure).
 - Door rails are not bent.
 - Condition of shroud above opening.

Completely shut all the fire doors, dampers and windows on a monthly basis. If the closure is detector activated, operate detector. Make sure the door, damper or window closes fully and tightly.

If the door is fusible-link activated, annually close the door by removing the link.

Inspect conveyor openings (door closing device included) in addition to the above, check how the conveyor is shut off and location of material on the conveyor when it stops.

Correct any deficiencies or problems as they are discovered. Keep all doors or shutters closed that do not fully close automatically.