Every automatic fire sprinkler system has one or more control valves, which are used to temporarily stop the flow of water into the piping system. Occasionally, these valves may need to be closed for system maintenance or other reasons. In order for the fire sprinkler system to operate as designed, it is essential that these valves be re-opened as soon as possible. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), closed valves account for approximately 1/3 of all sprinkler system failures.

WARNING! Shutting off or otherwise disabling your fire sprinkler system without notifying EMC Insurance Companies may affect your insurance coverage.

Possible Reasons For Control Valve Closing
An automatic fire sprinkler system control valve may need to be completely closed for the following reasons:

- Inspection, testing and maintenance procedures may require the system to be isolated from the water supply, such as internal pipe or valve inspection
- System piping repair, sprinkler replacement, or system modifications
- Building heating failure may require control valve closure to prevent water damage if freezing water causes pipe failure

Avoid complete system shutdown whenever possible. Some buildings have several fire sprinkler systems or system sections that protect different parts of a building. By shutting down only the necessary systems or sections, you are able to maintain fire protection coverage in unaffected portions of your building(s).

Precautions For System Shutdown
Before performing a complete system shutdown, take all of the following actions as necessary:

- Contact EMC Insurance Companies by completing a “Valve Closing Notice” at www.emcins.com
- Contact local fire department
- Contact your insurance agent
- Discontinue hazardous operations (cutting, welding, or other Hot Work)
- Initiate Fire Watch in all deactivated areas
- Connect fire hose from a hydrant to siamese (fire department) connection (if feasible)
- Alert fire brigade (if applicable)
- Bring extra extinguisher(s) into deactivated areas
- Have plugs on hand for closing open pipes (if applicable)

Continued
During a partial or sectional shutdown, take all of the following actions as necessary:

- Perform a Fire Watch in all deactivated areas
- Have a person stationed at valve
- Lay a fire hose from hydrant to affected area

After re-opening valves, take all of the following actions:

- Perform Main Drain (2” Drain) and Inspector’s tests
- Contact EMC Insurance Companies by completing a “Valve Reopening Notice” at www.emcins.com

State and local statutes, codes and regulations may require licensing of persons who conduct inspections, maintenance, or tests on fire sprinkler systems. Contact your local fire code official or legal representative regarding possible restrictions before performing any tasks related to the fire sprinkler system.

For Additional Information

National Fire Protection Association: www.nfpa.org
- NFPA 25® – Chapter 14.5 Preplanned Impairment Programs

EMC Insurance Companies: www.emcins.com
- Loss Control Forms – Valve Closing Notice, Valve Reopening Notice