

**FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 273: 1918
(REPORT PREFACE-FIRE RESISTIVE CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE)**

By Richard Schulte

The twenty-second Annual Meeting of the National Fire Protection Association was held in Chicago in May 1918. Among the reports presented at this meeting was the Report of Committee on Fire-Resistive Construction. The following excerpt of the Committee's Report addresses the purpose of the report developed by the Committee:

*"Chairman Miller: The next report is that of the Committee on Fire-Resistive Construction, **Ira H. Woolson, Chairman.**"*

*Mr. Woolson: The work of this committee this year is covered under three headings: first, **Specifications for a Standard Fire Test and Classification of Buildings** resulting from such test, which is a continuation or revision of the tentative specification presented last year; following that, some suggestions in regard to better fire protection in emergency housing and warehouse construction, and then **a larger publication, which is a Consolidated and Revised Report of previous reports of this committee from the year 1913 to date. With your permission I will take this first.***

[TEXT OMITTED]

Standard Building.—See Foreword of 1913 Report.

Report of 1913.

FOREWORD.

The Committee, in organizing the work to be accomplished, decided first to establish requirements of construction suited to buildings of the greatest fire-resistance; and to define a Standard Building applicable to any occupancy, leaving as much as possible the details of construction for special occupancy and special use or hazard, to be determined by future Committees as modifications of these standard requirements.

The Committee defines a Standard Building as one in which the lives of the occupants are properly safeguarded against fire and panic, so designed and equipped, that damage resulting from exposure to fire from within or without shall be reduced to a minimum, and capable of sustaining a complete burn-out of its contents without serious injury to its structural members. This Standard Building is intended to meet all such requirements when subjected to any condition of contents or occupancy, irrespective of location, or efficiency of municipal protection.

The Committee is of the opinion that a building of this class should be planned, built, and equipped to meet the following requirements:—

First—All material entering into its construction shall be incombustible, and all structural parts, such as walls, columns, floors and roofs, shall be able to resist fire for at least four hours at an average temperature of 2,000 degrees Fahr. without serious structural damage.

Second.—Ample and safe means of egress shall be provided for all occupants.

Third. — The building shall be so constructed that a fire will be confined to the space in which it originates, and the building be protected against exterior fire by approved doors and windows or other approved devices.

Fourth.—The building shall be equipped with such apparatus that a fire can be extinguished in its incipient stage.

In the opinion of the Committee, the establishment of a typical building that may be used as a model will prove of the greatest value, as it will serve as a framework for the application of the various standard forms of construction adopted by this Association, and so illustrate the use of these standards. It will tend to educate the public, as well as architects, engineers, and builders, and be a very potent factor in the campaign of the Association for the reduction of our enormous fire losses.

The Committee intends later to prepare other specifications adapted to buildings of special use.”

While it would be expected that the Committee on Fire-Resistive Construction would address the fire resistance of the various structural elements of a building, it is apparent that this Committee took an all encompassing view of fire resistive construction and also addressed the egress system and sprinkler protection provisions for buildings. Hence, this Committee was also addressing subjects being addressed by the Committee on the Safety to Life.

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