

## FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 78: 1913 (SPRINKLER SYSTEM RELIABILITY)

By Richard Schulte

The first American National Fire Prevention Convention was held in Philadelphia on October 13 through the 18, 1913. Among the many papers presented at the Convention was a paper titled "*Fire Protection (Private)*" authored by F. J. T. Stewart, Superintendent of Surveys of the New York Board of Fire Underwriters. The following excerpt from Mr. Stewart's paper addresses the reliability of sprinkler protection:

### *"Automatic Sprinkler Equipments*

*The most efficient fire extinguisher is an approved automatic sprinkler equipment installed throughout the premises. Comprehensive statistics extending over a period of about fifteen years show that the efficiency of automatic sprinklers has been approximately 95 per cent. After segregating failures due to lack of proper maintenance, the efficiency of the apparatus itself will be about 98 per cent. These statistics are based chiefly on equipments voluntarily installed under standards of the National Fire Protection Association and, as a rule, carefully maintained. Independently of other water supplies, every equipment should provide for the utilization of the public water system when it is available, either by direct connections or by connections made by the fire department immediately on arrival.*

*It is estimated that the majority of failures of automatic sprinkler equipments are due to lack of maintenance. For this reason special devices are in use to automatically supervise sprinkler equipments, with particular reference to condition of gate valves, temperature and amount of water in tanks, etc."*

**Source:** "Official Record of the First American National Fire Prevention Convention", Powell Evans, Editor, page 120, 1914.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=bwIOAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=inauthor:%22American+National+Fire+Prevention+Convention.+1st,+Philadelphia,+1913%22&hl=en&sa=X&ei=-RnLUJqkFefdyAGkxoHwBw&ved=0CD4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false>

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