CHALLENGES TO AIR FLOW CONTAINMENT IN MISSION CRITICAL FACILITIES

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INTRODUCTION AND TOPICS TO ADDRESS

Firestopping is critical to building design, construction, and operation...

However, beyond Firestopping, what impact does airflow have on...

- data center cooling costs and energy efficiency?
- data hall pressurization for proper operation of suppression systems?
- control of dust & whiskers that could damage server equipment?

Can the firestopping method affect a building's performance?

What do owners, designers & contractors need to understand when addressing cable pathways in critical facilities?





Agenda

- 1. What is firestop and why is it necessary
- 2. Elements of compartmentation
- 3. Designing for real life applications
- 4. Critical needs in data centers
- 5. Best practices to help improve a building's performance





LET'S START WITH THE BASICS

What is firestop?

- **Firestop systems** (if installed correctly), help restore the rating of a floor or wall as it is penetrated by an object such as a cable bundle and resist the spread of smoke and fire.
- Firestop is part of the life safety plan in building structures.
- **Life safety** also includes air ducts with dampers, smoke and fire alarms, wired glass, fire rated doors, sprinkler systems etc.

Why is it necessary?

- How do people react during a fire?
- To give people more time to safely exit a structure, even if they don't react right away.
- Mandated by the Codes: NBCC, NFPA, IBC





WHAT IS THE LEADING KILLER IN FIRES?

Smoke and Toxic Gases







NFPA FIRE STATISTICS



2015 facts:

- 1,3 million fires
- **501,500** structure (building) fires
- \$10.3B in property damage



A fire department responds to a fire every **23 seconds**



More than **8 out of 10** civilian deaths caused by fire were due to structure (building) fires





WHY CONTAIN SMOKE, TOXIC GASES, & FIRE?



3/4 of all fire deaths are caused by smoke inhalation.

Source: Hall, Jr. John R. NFPA Fire Analysis & Research, Quincy, MA. "Burns, Toxic Gases, and other Hazards".

Visibility: 47% of survivors caught in a fire could not see more than 12 feet.

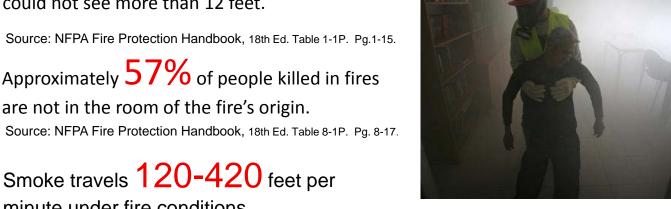
Source: NFPA Fire Protection Handbook, 18th Ed. Table 1-1P. Pg.1-15.

Approximately 57% of people killed in fires are not in the room of the fire's origin.

Source: NFPA Fire Protection Handbook, 18th Ed. Table 8-1P. Pg. 8-17.

minute under fire conditions

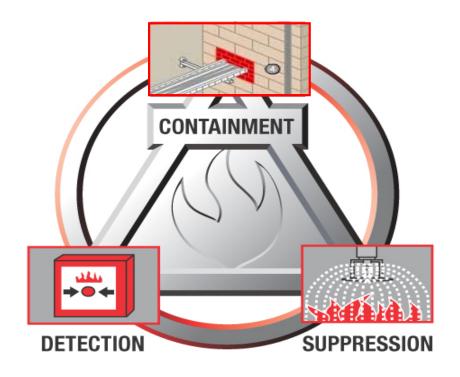
Source: Estimate based upon ceiling jet velocity calculations for typical ceiling heights and heat release rates.







WE CAN'T RELY ON ANY SINGLE SAFEGUARD TO PROTECT PEOPLE & PROPERTY



The Balanced Approach to Fire Protection





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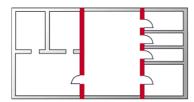


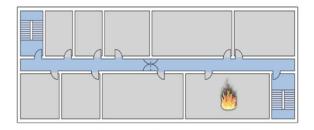
THE ELEMENTS OF COMPARTMENTATION

The spread of fire can be restricted by dividing a building into separate compartments with fire-resistive walls and floors increasing the availability of escape routes for occupants.

Compartmentation protects escape routes such as corridors or stairs

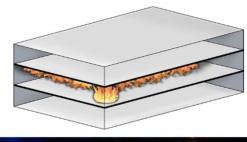
Fire walls





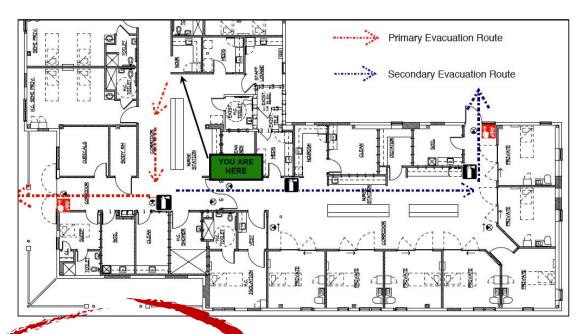
Fire floors







TYPES OF FIRE / SMOKE ASSEMBIES



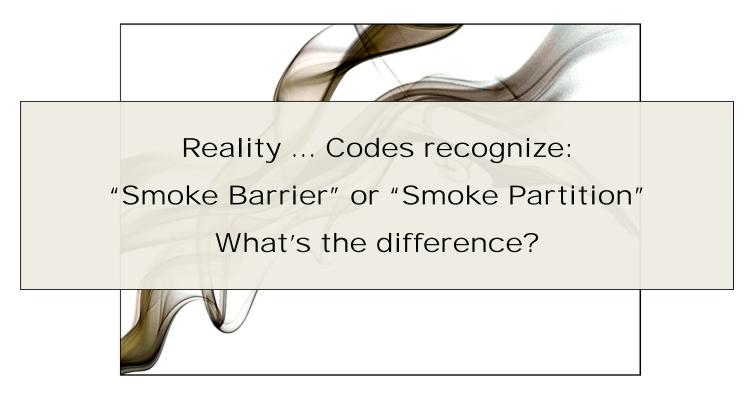
- Fire Walls
- Fire Barrier Walls
- Shaft Wall
 - Fire Partitions

- Smoke Barriers
- Smoke Partitions ?





COMMON TERM ON PROJECT PLANS: "SMOKE WALL"







WHAT IS A SMOKE BARRIER

Definition: Vertical or horizontal continuous membrane that will <u>restrict</u> <u>movement of smoke</u>

- L-rating (air leakage) must be less than 5 CFM/SQ.FT. for penetrations or 50 cfm leakage per 100 sq. ft. of wall area
- F-rating: 1-hour (U.S. code)



Lower L-ratings means less air leakage





EXAMPLE OF SMOKE PROPAGATION

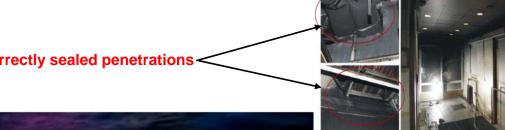
Real case: fire in a hospital and smoke propagation:

in less than 2 minutes the hallways in this hospital were full of toxic smoke ...





Incorrectly sealed penetrations <





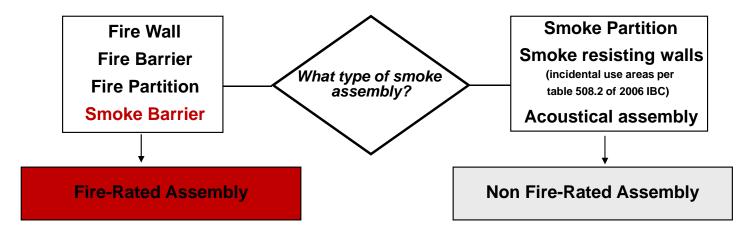
WHAT IS A SMOKE PARTITION?

- No fire resistance
- Span floor to floor or Floor to ceiling, if ceiling will limit the transfer of smoke
- Sealed windows
- No louvers in doors
- Doors not required to be self-closing
- Joints and penetrations "shall be filled with an approved material to limit the free passage of smoke"
- Most common use: Corridor walls in sprinklered hospitals





CRITICAL: CLARIFY THE ASSEMBLY TYPE!



Key Points:

- The term "Smoke Wall" is not referenced by codes. Clarify the assembly type!
- "Smoke Barriers" are 1 hour <u>fire-rated</u> assemblies! They require firestop systems and products
- "Smoke Partitions" are non fire-rated and must only resist the passage of smoke.





SUCCESSFUL COMPARTMENTATION



People with complete trust in a building's compartmentation





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HOW TO ADDRESS THIS APPLICATION?



Cable trays through 2 hour fire-rated concrete wall assembly





MULTIPLE CODES REQUIRING FIRESTOPPING











GLOBAL CODES & TEST STANDARDS

 Codes in most countries require firestopping to be designed and installed per a testing standard.

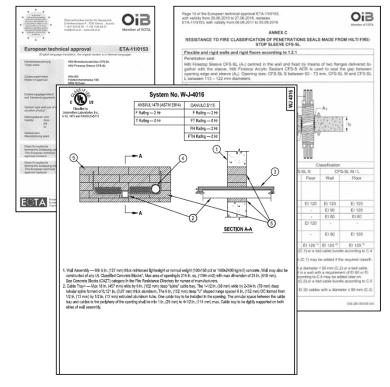
 Firestop systems are tested according to international standards such as:

USA: ASTM E 814 / UL 1479

Canada: CAN/ULC S-115

Europe: BS 476, EN 1363, DIN 4102

 A successful test yields an approval or firestop listing.







TESTING LABORATORIES



Intertek (Omega Point) Listings



Underwriters Laboratories Inc.



Warnock Hersey



Factory Mutual
Standards
Laboratories

All "nationally recognized test agencies" are of equal status (code acceptance)

Each agency publishes its own listing directory





COMMON TESTING PARAMETERS

Rating	Reference Standards	Definition
F rating	ASTM E814, UL 1479, CAN/ULC S115	Time period (expressed in hours) that assembly resists the passage of flames
T rating	ASTM E814, UL 1479	Time by which unexposed (non-fireside) of assembly reaches 325°F (163°C) over ambient temperature
L rating	UL 1479	Air leakage test run at ambient and 400°F (204°C)
W rating	UL 1479	Water leakage testing

> To achieve successful testing in the U.S. the firestop system must also pass the hose stream test





FIRE TEST PROCEDURE



1. Assembly is placed on furnace.





3. Assembly is subjected to hose stream test (if required)



4. Assembly results after hose stream.



HOSE STREAM VERIFIES MECHANICAL INTEGRITY OF SYSTEM AFTER FIRE

Stream delivered through 2½ inch hose with a straight-bore nozzle at:

- 30 psi 1, 2 & 3-hour tests
- 45 psi 4-hour test

Time duration calculated based on the area of test assembly and the fire resistance rating.



Hose stream test not required in Canada.

A firestop system can be listed if no gaps are detected after hose stream test





AIR LEAKAGE TESTING

L-rating (UL)

- Measures the amount of air leakage through the firestop system in CFM
- Tested at ambient (cold smoke) and at 400°F (hot smoke) temperature.
- Leakage testing is desired in datacenters to protect equipment against smoke damage (fire), zinc whiskers, and for improved energy efficiency



L-rating test chamber

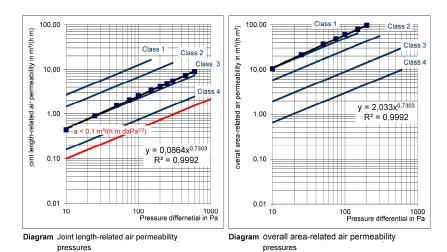




AIR LEAKAGE TESTING

Air Permeability (EN)

- Measures the amount of air leakage through the firestop system in CFM
- Measures air leakage at multiple pressures levels and cable % fill



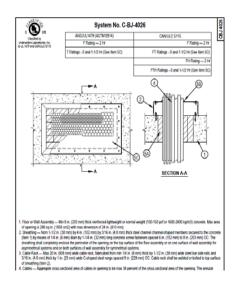




WHAT IS THE HOURLY RATING OF A TYPICAL FIRESTOP PRODUCT?







Only Firestop <u>systems</u> have ratings!





MULTIPLE PARAMETERS OF A FIRESTOP SYSTEM

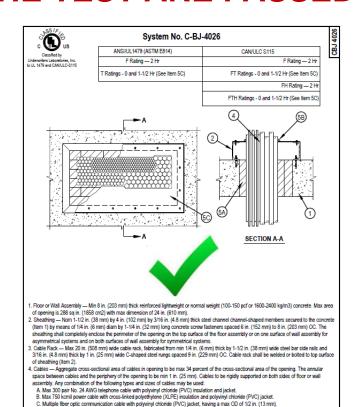


Firestop system performance can change completely if altering any parameter





A FIRESTOP SYSTEM IS ISSUED IF ALL ELEMENTS OF THE TEST ARE PASSED



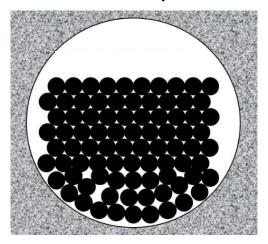




WHAT IS PERCENT FILL?

Definition: The cross-sectional area of an opening that is occupied by penetrating items, typically cables. Percent fill is specific to each firestop system.

What is the actual percent fill?



Visually, the opening appears to be 2/3 full 4" circular opening 85 cables, ¼" diameter



Let's calculate actual percent fill...

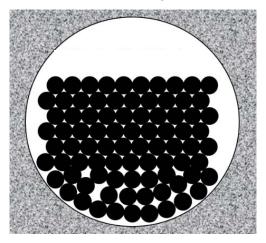




WHAT IS PERCENT FILL?

Definition: The cross-sectional area of an opening that is occupied by penetrating items, typically cables. Percent fill is specific to each firestop system.

What is the actual percent fill?



Answer:

$$(A_o)=3.14 \times (2^2)=12.56 \text{ in}^2$$

 $(A_c)=[3.14 \times (.125^2)] \times 85 = 4.17 \text{ in}^2$
 $(\%_f)=(4.17/12.56) \times 100 = 33.2\%$
Actual % fill

Warning: Actual % fill rates are typically half of what they visually appear





PERCENT FILL HAS AN IMPACT ON FUTURE CAPACITY

Consider

Many firestop solutions limits cable fill to ~ 25% of opening



Challenge

How do you ensure this is not exceeded during actual use?



Solution

When <u>designing</u> networks, consider a firestop system's percent fill and plan for future MAC work



Design tip: Specify sleeve solutions allowing up to 100% visual fill



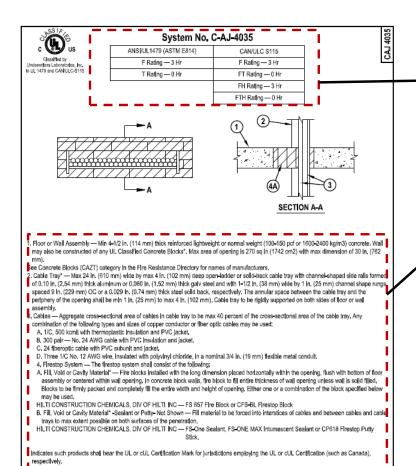
HOW TO ADDRESS THIS APPLICATION?



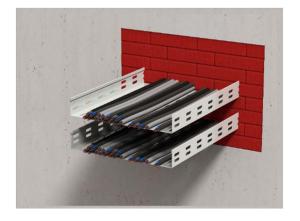
Cable trays through 2 hour fire-rated concrete wall assembly







- System Number, Test Standard
- F-Rating: up to 3 hours
- Concrete Floor or Wall
- Allowable cable type, size
- Allowable opening size
- Allowable percent fill
- Preformed, <u>reusable</u> Firestop product





We learned about firestop system selection. Let's put our knowledge to the test.

How would you address the following application?





HOW WOULD YOU ADDRESS THIS APPLICATION?



Not all firestop applications are tested





ENGINEERING JUDGMENTS

For conditions where a tested system does not exist, an Engineering Judgment may be needed

Typical Engineering Judgment Conditions:

- Annular space larger/smaller than tested
- Irregular hole shape
- Hole shape different than tested
- More penetrating items or cable % fill in opening than system allows
- Access to one side only
- Structural member penetrations
- Intersections of rated assembly with non-rated assembly

Engineering Judgments should only be designed by qualified firestop manufacturer's personnel





LET'S REVIEW ...

- Test standards & requirements for fire barrier management
 - □F-rating, T-rating, etc.
- Elements of a firestop test
- Parameters included in a tested system
- Engineering Judgments



IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FIRESTOP AND BUILDING PERFORMANCE?

Airflow control in fire barrier management is becoming increasingly important in data centers as it can impact:

- Cooling costs
- Room pressurization
- Dust control
- Damage to expensive equipment
- Noise transmission
- Seismic issues

How does firestop system selection impact these design needs?





Agenda

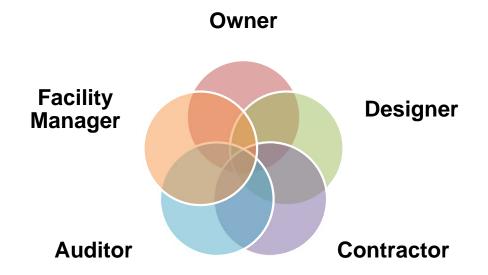
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DATA CENTER STAKEHOLDERS

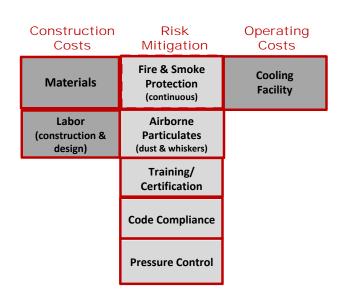
What keeps you up at night?

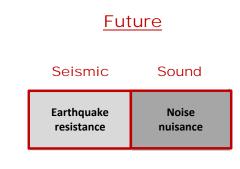






DATA CENTER PERFORMANCE CONCERNS



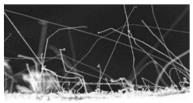


Design & installation considerations should factor firestop <u>airflow</u> <u>control</u> solutions





AIRBORNE PARTICULATES POSE RISK IN DATA CENTERS









Conductive particles:

 A main cause of conductive dust is zinc whiskers which «grow» on ferrous (steel) surfaces, especially those that have been coated with tin, zinc or cadmium to help protect them from corrosion

Risk:

 Whiskers may physically detach from their surfaces and enter a data center's airflow causing electronic system failures and short circuits

Non-conductive particulates

 Contamination from construction activities such as cement and drywall dust, or paper and cardboard fibers can cause problems such as optical interference or obstruct cooling airflow, resulting in:

Risk:

- lower thermal efficiency and increased cooling costs
- overheating and equipment failure
- shortened equipment life span
- server failures causing enterprise disruption

"Particulate contamination can increase a data center's power demand by 2% or more¹"





HEALTH, SAFETY, ENVIRONMENTAL (HSE) COMPLIANCE



Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED V4)



Cradle to Cradle



Living Building Challenge (LBC) Red List



Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 40CFR Part 59 National Volatile Organic Compound Emission Standards



South Coast Air Quality Mgmt District (SCAQMD)

HSE regulations are increasing and influencing firestop product selection





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SOLUTIONS: TRADITONAL FIRESTOP METHODS





Sprays, Caulks, Sealants

Advantages

- Economical
- Versatile, covers multiple applications
- Multiple listings available

Disadvantages

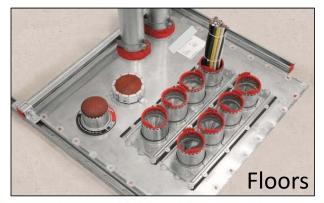
- Non re-penetrable
- Correct installation challenges
- Mineral wool use ... particulates
- Messy installation
- Wash-off, shrinkage issues
- Inspection concerns





SOLUTIONS: "PRE-FORMED" FIRESTOP METHODS





Pre-formed Devices

Advantages

- Re-penetrable
- Reliable, fast installation
- Superior air flow performance vs. traditional methods*
- Pre-cured, always the right amount of product
- Easier to design BIM
- Inspection advantages no destructive testing per IBC 2012 (U.S.)

Disadvantages

- Higher material cost (~neutral TIC)
 - * Always refer to listed system





INITIAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Performance Requirements

- Minimum Code compliance for firestop system rating
- √ Room pressurization
- ✓ Reduce cooling and heating costs
- ✓ Prevent airborne disease transmission
- ✓ Correct installation
- ✓ Better ensure life safety and property loss prevention
- ✓ Ease of inspection
- ✓ Re-penetrability (MAC work)
- ✓ Labor cost savings

Solution

Traditional Firestop
System

(no air leakage performance required)

Pre-formed firestop system

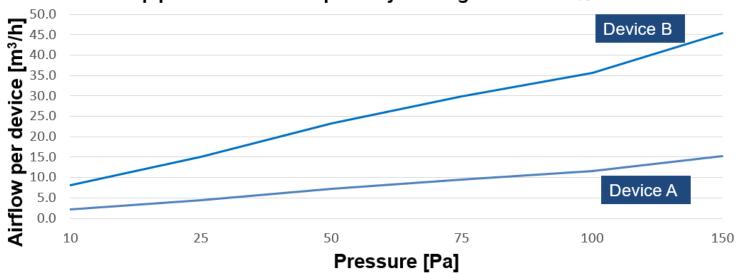
(with superior airflow control testing)





COMPARE AIRFLOW SOLUTIONS

Firestop pre-formed device pathways: air tightness at 40% cable fill



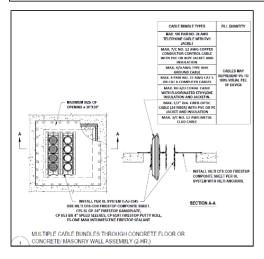
Testing compared 4" Firestop cable devices with 40% cable fill (57x CAT 6 cables); both devices installed acc. to manufacturer IFU Leakage measured @ 21 °C; 52 - 57% RH and tested according to EN 1026 Airflow in [m²/h] measured for over- and underpressure, chart displays average values

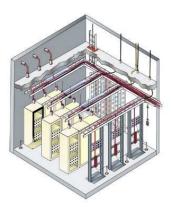




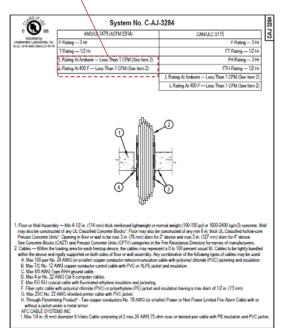
CLEARLY CONVEY YOUR DESIGN INTENT

- Detail firestop / airflow cable pathways on Datacom or Telecom plans
- Include in Division 26 or 27 specs
- BIM/Revit design





L Rating At Ambient — Less Than 1 CFM (See Item 2) L Rating At 400 F — Less Than 1 CFM (See Item 2)

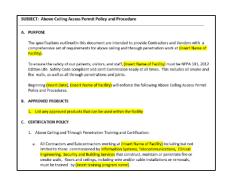






PROCEDURE / PERMIT PROGRAMS

Implementing a firestop cable pathway procedure or "permit program" for ongoing operation of each data center facility is critical



Installer training procedures



Electronic documentation







SUMMARY OF KEY LEARNINGS

- Elements of firestop and compartmentation
- Code and test standard requirements for fire barrier management
- Tested systems and engineering judgments
- Impact of firestop systems in building performance
- Key owner design considerations
- Best design practices





THANK YOU

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