



Florida Fire Marshals And Inspectors Association

Informal Interpretation

Date: December 10, 2008

NFPA Document Number: NFPA-13

Edition: 2002

Paragraph Reference: Section 8.16.5

If this involves an actual situation, explain briefly:

Currently, there is an addition being commenced onto a -20° freezer facility. This facility is using rack storage throughout the freezer. Per Chapter 12, section 12.1.3 in the above referenced NFPA standard, an occupancy using storage requires 1½" hose connections and shall be installed in accordance with section 8.16.5.

In section 8.16.5.1.4, these hose connections shall be connected to wet sprinkler systems only. We cannot install a wet system in this area due to the -20° freezer.

The local fire department and I would like to get an informal interpretation on this matter. Currently, the existing freezer do not have hose stations in this area, nor do many existing and new freezers due to the same scenario. Not that this makes it ok however, these hose connections are typically used for mop-up purposes rather than a fire brigade and will be an ongoing maintenance issue for the local fire department, facility, and sprinkler contractor.

We have eliminated in-rack sprinklers to help minimize accidental maintenance issues in this -20° environment per code. There will be substantial downtime for the sprinkler system if an 1½" valve is opened or hit by a forklift driver. Typically, there are only (2) people occupying the freezer at a time and a storage fire is seen from a far distance. As we know, things change daily however, we have installed hundreds of sprinkler systems in many freezers across the country and have not currently installed 1½" hose connections due to these circumstances.

Both the local fire department and I want to install a correctly functioning system to achieve good fire protection however, also keeping the practicality in mind dealing with this -20° freezer.

Question (*should be worded so that it can be answered with either "Yes" or "No"*):

After reviewing the brief explanation, will the -20° freezer be required to have 1½" hose connections installed throughout?

Answer:

No.

The 2002 edition of 13 requires hose stations per section 12.1.3. However, the NFPA 13 technical committee revised this section in the 2007 edition of NFPA 13 in a new section 12.2 which allows the AHJ discretionary authority in where to require hose stations. Although the 2002 edition of NFPA 13 is the adopted standard in the State of Florida, this is a circumstance where section 1.5 of NFPA 13 Equivalency and section 1.4.3 of NFPA 1 Modifications should be utilized to allow compliance with the 2007 edition of NFPA 13 which grants the AHJ discretionary authority with respect to the placement of hose stations.

Committee Answer Submitted by,
Wes Hayes, FFMIA
Chair Informal Fire Code Interpretation Committee

3108 S.E. 21st Court | Okeechobee, FL 34974-6331 | Phone: (863) 467-8991 | Fax: (863) 467-8991

Website: www.FFMIA.org **Email:** info@ffmia.org