

Domestic & Residential Fire Sprinkler Booster Sets

Introductory Information & FAQs October 2020

Fire sprinkler systems have been popular in commercial buildings for many years, but are now becoming more widely used in Domestic (private dwellings) and Residential (e.g. care homes, student accommodation etc) settings.

Although this market is not (yet) as heavily regulated as the commercial fire sprinkler market, we strongly believe that it should be, and in time this will be the case as it is now for gas (Corgi, now Gas Safe) and electrical (NICEIC) work. Fire sprinkler systems need to be professionally designed, installed and maintained in order to be relied on to activate if and when the time comes.

Smaller system may be able to operate simply from the mains water supply, but initial and follow-up testing is necessary to ascertain this. In addition, local water authorities often have different regulations, so permission should always be sought.

To answer the most common questions we are regularly asked, we thought it would be useful to put together this brief information sheet and include some of these FAQs.

Do I need a fire sprinkler system?

In some countries (e.g. Wales, Scotland) the Domestic and Residential requirements are more stringent than others (e.g. England), but where sprinkler systems are installed they are generally done so to BS 9251:2014 or BS EN 16925:2018.

Your local building control should be able to confirm the rules where you are. Further information is also available from the British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association (bafsa.org.uk).

Do I want a fire sprinkler system?

If it is a legal requirement where you are, then you have no choice.

Where there is a choice, there may be misconceptions about the false activation, water damage, Legionella and other things – but all of these are proven misconceptions. Activation can only occur with extreme heat, water usage is significantly less than the fire service and even with water damage, there is some prospect of material recovery...which is not the case for fire damage.

Who can install a fire sprinkler system?

It is a legal requirement that anyone installing or maintaining any type of fire system required for the safety of life must be able to prove their competence. The simplest way to do this is to obtain third party certification from a UK accreditation services approved body.

Do I need a booster pump set?

If the flow **and** pressure available from an accessible and permissible water main has been tested to be sufficient, then you may not need either a booster pump set or a storage tank.

If there is definitely sufficient and reliable **flow**, but the pressure is low or variable, then you will probably need a booster pump set.

Do I need a water tank?

If the **flow** cannot be guaranteed, then it is very likely that you will need some form of water storage – a booster pump set cannot pull water out of the main, only boost its pressure.

The best method of water storage is an appropriately-sized and dedicated fire sprinkler break tank; however, it may be possible to utilise the household water storage, or even a pond or pool subject to various provisions in including filtration.

How can we help? See over the page.

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What can SEP help with?

Booster Pump Sets: we are a key approved distributor for Grundfos, a world-leading pump manufacturer who make the FireSAFE range of booster pump sets. The CM-range uses a smaller horizontal pump and is generally suitable for Domestic applications; the CRi-range used a larger vertical pump and is generally required for Residential applications.

We also maintain a local stock of the more common models in the CM-range, which we believe is unique.

Residential Risers/Valve Sets: we have our own range of stainless steel 'resi-risers' which can be configured in various ways, along with WRAS-approved isolation valves and non-return valves. For larger volumes, we can also supply a more generic resi-riser which could be more cost-effective.

Tanks: we have access to the main tank manufacturers and suppliers on the UK; however, in some cases this may not be the cheapest route for you.

We do **not** supply some of the other products you may require for installation such as CPVC pipework, sprinkler heads, alarm panels etc.

We do **not** provide design, installation or maintenance services – but because of our large customer base, we can suggest local trusted businesses who can assist in these areas.

What do SEP need to know if a quote is required?

There are a number of possible booster pump sets available, ranging in price from around £1,100 up to £4,000 – so it is important we understand your requirements.

- Power supply – always 230v for domestic, but may be 230v or 400v for residential
- Flow requirement – this will be determined by the number and type of heads which may be required to be activated concurrently
- Pressure requirement – this will be determined by the height and type of heads to be activated
- If a tank is also required, then the size and type of tank

I have a question that is not included here – who can I ask?

First of all, if you have been sent this information sheet, or found it on our website – just ask us!

If we do not know the answer straight away, we will find out for you or advise where else you can go.



Important Notes:

- SEP manufacture and supply specialist products for fire sprinkler systems; we are not designers or installers.
- Any advice or suggestion made by SEP is done so in good faith based on information that you have provided.
- Unless you are a competent fire sprinkler designer/installer, we strongly recommend that you take suitable advice, and we can assist with locating such providers upon request.
- Fire sprinkler systems are a valuable life- and property-saver...but only if they work as intended and when required. Please do not associate yourself, or us, with anything that has not been competently designed, installed and maintained.