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Fire Protection Systems

Fire protection for buildings comes in three forms: detection, suppression, and compartmentalization. Detection includes smoke and heat alarms that provide warning of a fire quickly. Suppression includes sprinklers, extinguishers, and fire hoses. Compartmentalization includes specially tested building materials that serve as barriers, creating compartments that prevent fires from spreading.

Recent recalls for malfunctioning sprinklers, dead batteries in smoke detectors, and the fact that building occupants often ignore a loud fire alarm lead to an unsafe situation if a fire starts in your building.

- Consider using a fire-rated transparent glass ceramic that can withstand temperatures up to 1500 degrees. When installed it looks much like the standard float glass and comes in a variety of configurations that provide high-impact safety.
- Glass fire walls with fire-rated glazing are another option. These use the same standards as solid construction walls but offer the added feature of blocking the transfer of heat.
- Tempered glass is another alternative that is frequently shown as a fire-rated glass, but should not be used in openings requiring a fire rating greater than 20 minutes.
- New variations of wired glass can help address impact safety concerns. However because they require a film application, they are prone to scratching and marring.

Keeping building occupants safe is the number one priority for any building owner. Using compartmentalization as a part of your fire protection system can give building occupants the additional time needed to exit the building safely.



2351 Freedom Way
York, Pennsylvania 17402
(717) 741-0839 Phone
(717) 741-4535 Fax
www.hoggconstruct.com
Offices in Pennsylvania and Maryland