



California State Fire Marshal Information Bulletin

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California Code of Regulations Title 19/NFPA 25, 2006 California Edition

Chapter 13 SUMMARY:

As indicated in [Commentary Table 1.1](#), obstruction to water distribution accounts for 8.2 percent of system failures. This chapter provides obstruction investigation procedures and guidance on preventing the occurrence of obstructions in fire protection systems. Each system should be evaluated to determine if the potential sources of obstruction in [13.2.2](#) exist. If any of those obstruction sources do exist, preventive measures should be taken. Such measures may include treatment for MIC, the installation of strainers to prevent the introduction of obstructing material, or more frequent inspection and testing.

1. How often must an obstruction investigation be conducted?

Answer: An obstruction investigation must be conducted every 5 years in accordance with NFPA 25 section 13.2.1

13.2.1 *An investigation of piping and branch line conditions shall be conducted every 5 years by opening a flushing connection at the end of one main and by removing a sprinkler toward the end of one branch line for the purpose of investigating for the presence of foreign organic and inorganic material.*

2. What four points of a system must be examined during an obstruction investigation?

Answer: Inspections must examine the interior of the system valve, riser, cross main, and branch line.

3. What methods can be used to perform an obstruction investigation?

Answer: A visual examination may be conducted or alternative nondestructive examination methods such as ultrasound or the use of remote video cameras may be used.

4. What should be done if tubercles or slime are found during an obstruction investigation?

Answer: A sample of the tubercle or slime shall be tested for indications of microbiologically influenced corrosion MIC.

Reference 2002 Water-Based Fire Protection Systems Handbook

If you have further questions, please contact Supervising Deputy State Fire Marshal James Parsegian at james.parsegian@fire.ca.gov or (916) 445-8415.

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