AFSA45
HISTORY OF THE FIRE SPRINKLER INDUSTRY
George DiMatteo, Jack Medovich, Mike Meehan & Terry Victor
SAN ANTONIO, TX
AFSA
American Fire Sprinkler Association

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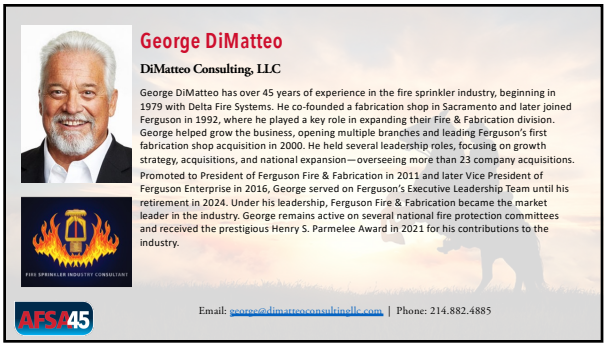
George DiMatteo
DiMatteo Consulting, LLC
George DiMatteo has over 45 years of experience in the fire sprinkler industry, beginning in 1979 with Delta Fire Systems. He co-founded a fabrication shop in Sacramento and later joined Ferguson in 1992, where he played a key role in expanding their Fire & Fabrication division. George helped grow the business, opening multiple branches and leading Ferguson's first fabrication shop acquisition in 2000. He held several leadership roles, focusing on growth strategy, acquisitions, and national expansion—overseeing more than 23 company acquisitions.
Promoted to President of Ferguson Fire & Fabrication in 2011 and later Vice President of Ferguson Enterprise in 2016, George served on Ferguson's Executive Leadership Team until his retirement in 2024. Under his leadership, Ferguson Fire & Fabrication became the market leader in the industry. George remains active on several national fire protection committees and received the prestigious Henry S. Parmelee Award in 2021 for his contributions to the industry.
Email: georgec@dimatteoconsultingllc.com | Phone: 214.882.4885

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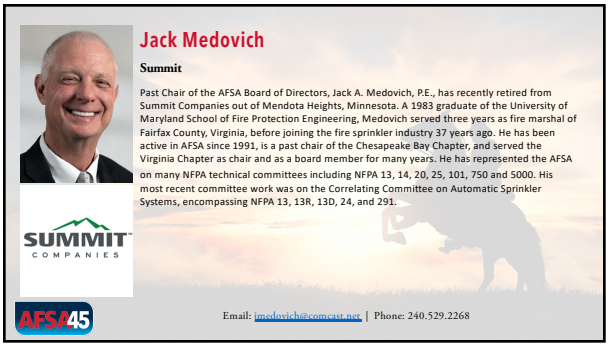
Jack Medovich
Summit
Past Chair of the AFSA Board of Directors, Jack A. Medovich, P.E., has recently retired from Summit Companies out of Mendota Heights, Minnesota. A 1983 graduate of the University of Maryland School of Fire Protection Engineering, Medovich served three years as fire marshal of Fairfax County, Virginia, before joining the fire sprinkler industry 37 years ago. He has been active in AFSA since 1991, is a past chair of the Chesapeake Bay Chapter, and served the Virginia Chapter as chair and as a board member for many years. He has represented the AFSA on many NFPA technical committees including NFPA 13, 14, 20, 25, 101, 750 and 5000. His most recent committee work was on the Correlating Committee on Automatic Sprinkler Systems, encompassing NFPA 13, 13R, 13D, 24, and 291.
SUMMIT COMPANIES
Email: jmedovich@comcast.net | Phone: 240.529.2268

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Mike Meehan
VSC Fire & Security
A lifelong Virginian, Michael Meehan started his career with VSC as a pipe fitter apprentice while earning a degree in public administration from George Mason University. Immediately upon graduation in 1981, he entered the VSC Springfield, Va., office as a design trainee. Such foundational bedrock created strong technical skills that eventually led to estimating, project management, divisional, corporate, and ownership roles. Having gone from pulling pipe wrenches to C-suite leadership has led to Meehan's deep understanding of construction, fire protection contracting, and a foundational life perspective on value. Meehan has served on numerous community and fire protection industry boards. His accomplishments include being the past chair of the American Fire Sprinkler Association and a 20-year veteran of the NFPA 13 committee.
VSC
FIRE-SECURITY
Email: mmeehan@vscfire.com | Phone: 757.435.5887

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Terry Victor
Risk Suppression Partners
Terry Victor, Director of Risk Control Services at Risk Suppression Partners, has over 50 years of technical experience in the fire sprinkler industry. He is NICET certified Level IV in Water Based Systems Layout and Special Hazards Systems Layout. He has served on various industry boards and committees, including as a member of the NFSA Board of Directors, the CFSI National Advisory Committee, and the NFFF Advisory Committee to the Board. He currently serves on the AFSA ITM and Convention Committees. He is an active speaker at various fire protection industry conferences and seminars including those for the AFAA, AFSA, ASCET, FFLA, NFPA, and NFSA. He is a current member of the NFPA technical committees for NFPA 13, 14, 20, 25, and 915 and is a past member of the technical committees for NFPA 3, 4, 11, 13D, 13R, 15, 16, 72, 101, 214, 303, and 5000. He received the NFPA Committee Service Award in 2015 and the NFPA Life Member status in 2024.
RISK SUPPRESSION PARTNERS
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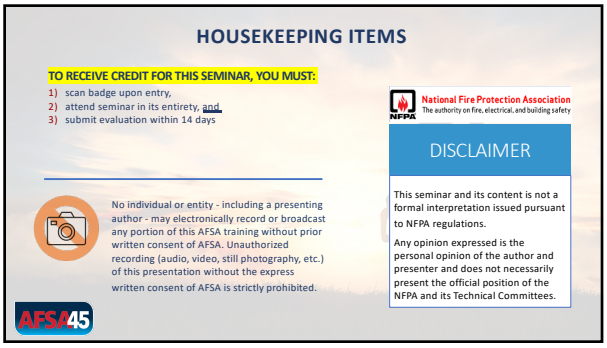
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The authority on fire, electrical, and building safety
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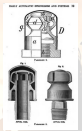
History of the Fire Sprinkler Industry

- **1871**
  - Great Chicago Fire - NFPA, code compliance and legislation
- **1874**
  - Parmelee - Why and how sprinkler heads came to be
- **Early 1900s**
  - Insurance Requirements -Textile Mills in the Northeast and Union Growth
  - UL Listing begins testing and approving sprinklers
  - Iroquois Theater Fire (1903), Chicago kills 602



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History of the Fire Sprinkler Industry

- **1911**
  - Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, New York kills 145
- **1930**
  - Ohio State Penitentiary Fire kills 320 inmates
- **1940s**
  - Coconut Grove Nightclub Fire, Boston (1942) kills 492
  - Barnum & Bailey Circus Tent Fire, Hartford (1944) kills 160
  - Winecoff Hotel Fire, Atlanta (1946) kills 119

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History of the Fire Sprinkler Industry

- **1950s**
  - Adoption and evolution
  - Our Lady of Angels School Fire, Chicago (1958) kills 95
- **1966**
  - Construction of the World Trade Center - No sprinkler system
    - Building codes based on region but consolidated into IIC
    - Contractors and manufacturers

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Recent History

- **1970s**
  - NFPA 13D (1975, 13R followed in 1989)
  - Beverly Hills Supper Club Fire, Kentucky (1977) kills 165
  - Legislation requires public-assembly buildings holding +300 people to have automatic fire sprinklers (1977)
- **1980**
  - MGM Grand Fire, Las Vegas - NFPA, code compliance and legislation
  - Retrofits
  - Protection of life and property
  - Marriott and hospitality requirements

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Recent History

- **1981**
  - AFSA Established - Need for training
  - Open Merit Shops Expansion
- **1989**
  - 13R and the CPVC movement
- **1990**
  - Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act
- **2003**
  - Station Club Fire, Rhode Island

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Impact of Unions and Non-Unions

- Union Contractors
- Insurance Governance
- Key Metropolitan Areas
- Non-Union Expansion
  - 1950's
- Codes

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Evolution of Installation
Setbacks and Advancement
CPVC Introduction and Perception
Incompatibility – Fire Sealants and ABF2
Early Installation Techniques
O-Rings, Gabriel House Fire (2025) and On-Off Sprinklers
Poz-Lok
Polybutylene
Pre-Ops
AFSA45

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Modern Times
Supply and Manufacturing
Distribution
Fabrication
Design Evolution
Technology
Where the Industry is Headed
Research and Development
Automated Testing and Distance Monitoring
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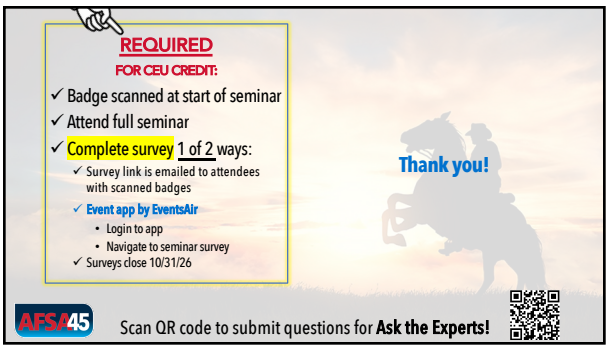
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• Login to app
• Navigate to seminar survey
✓ Surveys close 10/31/26
Thank you!
AFSA45
Scan QR code to submit questions for Ask the Experts!

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2027 Training Schedule

WEBINARS

1/6	Updates to NFPA 20
1/20	Calculating Pressure Reducing Hose Valves
2/3	Consumer Alert: Nitrogen in Sprinkler Systems
2/17	Reviewing Hydraulic Calculations
3/3	Updates to NFPA 13, 2028 Ed.
3/17	Updates to NFPA 13R & 13D, 2028 Eds.
4/7	Topic Coming Soon
4/21	NFPA 25: Roles & Responsibilities
5/5	Standpipe Flow Test Procedures
5/19	Storage 101
6/2	NFPA Technical Meeting - Voting Guide
6/16	Topic Coming Soon
6/30	Topic Coming Soon
7/7	Updates to NFPA 14, 2027 Edition
7/21	Adjacent Hazards & Design Methods
8/4	Acceptance Testing
8/18	Modifications to Existing Systems
9/22	Topic Coming Soon
10/6	Seismic 101
10/20	Proposed Updates to NFPA 25, 2029 Ed.
11/3	Evaluating Fire Pump Flow Tests
11/17	Top 10 Tech Reviews
12/1	Designing Water Storage Tanks
12/15	Pump Room Layout

PROGRAMS

Feb 9 - Mar 5 Apr 20 - May 14 Aug 3 - Aug 27** Oct 26 - Nov 19	Beginning Design School*
Apr 26 - May 7 Nov 1 - 12	Intermediate Design School*
Feb 8 - 10** Apr 12 - 14 Jul 12 - 14 Oct 11 - 13	Sprinkler Hydraulics Calculations Workshop
Apr 19 - 21 Oct 18 - 20	Advanced Hydraulics Calculations Workshop
Feb 11** Apr 30 Jul 23 Sep 24	Introduction to the Fire Sprinkler Industry
Mar 1 - 3 May 17 - 19 Aug 16 - 18 Oct 18 - 20**	NFPA 25 Essentials Workshop
Jun 7 - 10 Sep 20 - 23	Experienced Inspector Skills Lab
Mar 4 - 5 May 20 - 21 Aug 19 - 20 Oct 21 - 22**	NFPA 25 Fire Pump Workshop
Spring Summer Fall	ITM Inspector Development Program* *This program is 20 months.*

** Hybrid course **At General Air Products Lab, Exton, PA*

AFSA46

September 8-11	Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego, CA

For More Details Visit:
firesprinkler.org

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Dates subject to change. Programs subject to minimum registrations.

rev 9/14/2026

Virtual Instruction Path (VIP)

for Sprinkler Fitting Apprentices

Level 1 - Begins January 2027

Level 2 - Begins February 2027

Level 3 - Begins January 2027

Level 4 - Begins March 2027

www.firesprinkler.org/VIP

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HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS FOR 2027

FEATURING AFSA'S TRAINING LAB

NFPA 25 Essentials Workshop

Mar | May | Aug | Oct

Description: Understand roles, responsibilities, and NFPA 25 ITM procedures through hands-on testing of wet systems, dry systems, and fire pumps.

NFPA 25 Fire Pump Workshop

Mar | May | Aug | Oct

Description: Develop practical NFPA 25 fire pump ITM skills, including no-flow and full-flow testing, water supply graphing, and performance evaluation.

Introduction to the Fire Sprinkler Industry

Feb | Apr | Jul | Sep

Description: This course is designed for those new to the industry. An introductory, wide-ranging 8-hour course that provides a broad overview of core fire sprinkler industry concepts for those new to the field.

Experienced Inspector Skills Lab NEW

Mar | Sep

Description: Take your ITM expertise beyond the basics. Designed for experienced technicians, this course combines focused classroom instruction with hands-on system lab training to strengthen your application of current NFPA 25 inspection, testing, and maintenance requirements. Refine fire sprinkler testing practices, improve documentation, deliver more consistent service, and help reduce liability while reinforcing knowledge commonly covered on certification exams.

Learn more about AFSA's fire sprinkler lab featuring functional risers, a spray room, fire pumps, and an interactive classroom.

firesprinkler.org/lab