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MEMORANDUM

Subject: Intermediate Disconnecting Means for Air Compressors in Dry Sprinkler Systems	Memo #: 2023-03
	Effective: December 1, 2023
Authority: Deputy Chief Josh Bunting, Fire Marshal 	External

This memo shall serve to clarify requirements of NFPA 13, 2016 edition, 7.2.6.3.1, regarding air supply requirements for dry sprinkler systems.

NFPA 13, 7.2.6.3.1, states that the air supply for dry sprinkler systems shall be from a source available at all times. Contractors may consider installing an intermediate shut off (light switch) between the compressor and the breaker. In practice, this has demonstrated frequent instances of the switch being turned off (accidentally or intentionally), and the air supply for the dry system not being available at all times, as required by the code. This carries with it the demonstrated impact of inadvertent dry system trips and/or pipes freezing.

Recognizing this issue, the 2019 edition of NFPA 13, 8.2.6.6.5.1, specifically added verbiage prohibiting the use of a light switch as a disconnecting means for an automatic air compressor. This requirement will be formally in effect upon adoption of 2019 editions.

Consistent with past practice, it remains the formal interpretation of this office that the installation of intermediate light switches are not permitted as a disconnecting means between a dry system air compressor system and a breaker. This memorandum shall be rescinded upon adoption of the 2019 edition of NFPA 13, or any future edition that contains language consistent with this prohibition.