

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0155

INTERPRETATION

Page 1 of 1

Interpretation Date: March 10, 2026

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 2024

Subject: Supervision of Sprinkler Control Valves

Keywords: Sprinkler, Supervision, Valve

Building Code Reference(s): 3.2.4.9.(3)

Question:

Are both shut-off valves for a backflow preventer in a sprinkler system permitted to be grouped together with a common supervisory signal?

Interpretation:

Yes.

Sentence 3.2.4.9.(3) requires electrical supervision to indicate a supervisory signal on the building fire alarm annunciator for movement of a valve handle that controls the supply of water to sprinklers. A backflow preventer typically has two shut-off valves, one upstream and one downstream, to allow the device to be isolated for maintenance or replacement. These valves control the supply of water to sprinklers, and they are required to be electrically supervised.

The code does not clearly address whether each of the valves requires a separate supervisory signal on the fire alarm annunciator, and this is also not addressed in the applicable NFPA sprinkler standards. The purpose of the supervisory signal is to alert applicable personnel, including the local fire department as stated in Sentence 3.2.4.9.(6), that sprinkler water control valves may be closed. These two valves are in close proximity to each other and any person investigating the backflow preventer valves would also be in close proximity to both valves. It has generally been acceptable practice for these valves to be grouped together with a single common supervisory signal, and this arrangement is considered to comply with the code.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.