

The Importance of Listings and Approvals for your Fire Suppression Systems

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there are over [35,000 fires](#) on industrial or manufacturing properties alone each year, averaging about \$1.2 billion in property damages annually—not to mention the potential for bodily injury and revenue losses from damaged equipment and missed deadlines. And while there's no surefire way to prevent fires one hundred percent of the time, a quality fire suppression system can go a long way in minimizing damages—better protecting your people, your property, and your equipment.

But how can you know that the fire suppression systems you put in place are actually quality products you can count on? The best way is by choosing a system that is backed by listings and approvals. These third-party certifications prove that a system or product has been rigorously tested—giving you the peace of mind you need that you'll be protected in the event of a fire.

We'll cover what listings and approvals are and why you should choose a system with these kinds of third-party certifications in place, whether you're an end user, a distributor, or an original equipment manufacturer. And, we'll talk about why [Firetrace](#) is proud to produce fire suppression products and systems that carry listings and approvals to help create a safer world.

What are Listings and Approvals?

Listings and approvals are essentially certifications that are granted by third-party companies that recognize that a product or system has undergone rigorous testing and meets the standards the third-party company deems necessary. The testing requirements of each listing and approval varies by product or system type, but are typically in line with any international, national and regional regulations.

Listings and approvals are an important part of many industries that people interface with on a daily basis, including automobiles, advanced manufacturing, construction, heating and cooling, and fire detection and suppression. In short, these important certifications are all around us, helping to ensure the products and systems we use are safe. Even the lithium-ion battery cells and packs that are used by people every day have listings. If these third-party testing and certifications weren't in place, we'd see a lot more poor products and safety issues in many different areas.

It is important to note that these listings and approvals indicate that a product or system meets the standards, but the manufacturer, installer, and end user are responsible for producing a sound product, installing it appropriately (as applicable), and keeping up with any routine maintenance standards that may be required.

In the fire suppression industry, the two most well-known and common third-party certifications come in the form of UL Listings and FM Approvals.

UL Listings

UL, formerly known as Underwriters Laboratories, is a worldwide safety science leader that helps businesses demonstrate safety, sustainability, security, quality, risk management, and regulatory compliance. They provide testing, inspection, certifications, trainings, and more to help companies deliver trust and confidence to their customers. Products that pass UL testing are called UL Listed. When it comes to fire detection and suppression systems, UL provides [listings for products](#) that fall into the following categories:

- Fire alarm control equipment testing
- Fire and emergency apparatus testing
- Fire and security service solutions
- Fire equipment testing service
- Fire extinguisher testing and certification
- Fire extinguishing system unit testing
- Fire main equipment testing
- Fire resistance products, systems, and designs
- Fire sprinkler pipe and fittings testing and certification
- Fire sprinkler testing and certification

FM Approvals

FM Approvals, a subsidiary of FM Global Group, provides third-party testing and certification services for a variety of products and services in commercial and industrial settings throughout the world. FM Approvals' process verifies that the products they approve meet standards of quality, technical integrity, and performance. Once a product passes their testing process, they are considered FM Approved. Under their [Extinguishing Systems](#) category, they provide approvals for the following types of products:

- Clean agents
- Carbon dioxide
- Deluge and preaction systems
- Dry chemical
- Explosion suppression systems
- Explosion vents
- Flame arresters
- Foam
- Heavy duty mobile equipment protection
- Portable extinguishers
- Water mist

Why do Listings and Approvals Matter for Me?

In general, listings and approvals granted by third parties can provide the security of knowing that the product or system you're purchasing has been rigorously tested for quality, durability, and longevity. Fire suppression systems are designed to protect your property, your people, and your equipment (plus your bottom line), so having a quality system in place is essential to keeping everything—and everyone—safe and protected.

That's just the first reason though. Beyond the basics, there are several reasons why you should purchase or distribute products with these third-party certifications. But the best way to answer this question is to consider who you are and why you're seeking a fire suppression system in the first place.

Let's explore why listings and approvals are important to end users, distributors, and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs).

If you're an end user...

It takes between 30 and 60 seconds for a fire to spread to the point of being out of control. A fire detection and suppression system can automatically respond to the first signs of fire ([the stage phase of a fire](#)), often eliminating it before it reaches a flashover point, where the potential for serious damage to people and property is high. But why does this matter when it comes to listings and approvals? Here are the top three reasons.

- **Insurance**

For a lot of insurance companies, listings and approvals matter. In fact, increasingly more and more insurance companies are requiring that fire suppression systems be approved by a third-party like FM Approvals or UL. FM Global, for example, requires that their insurers use fire suppression systems that are FM approved. Why is this? Because insurance companies want to know that the systems you're using will work if and when they need to. Afterall, a high-quality fire suppression system can minimize damages, cutting back on how much insurance companies may need to pay out in the event of a fire.

And even if your insurance company doesn't require third-party certifications, they may offer discounts for approved or listed systems. On the other side of the spectrum, if your fire suppression system doesn't work as expected during a fire, your insurance premiums may increase. Don't gamble. Invest in a fire suppression system with listings and approvals to protect what you need to.

- **Protecting your Assets**

There's also the matter of protecting your assets... your people, your property, and your equipment. Listings and approvals help ensure the systems you put in place are quality enough to protect all three. Let's consider an analogy. Most expensive sports car owners fuel their cars with premium gas, even though it costs a bit more. Why? Because their motors run slightly better with premium—even though they'd function just fine on regular unleaded gas.

Your property is valuable. Your equipment is expensive. And your people are irreplaceable. And taking care of all three means installing a quality fire suppression system that can detect and suppress fires automatically—seriously cutting back on the potential for fire damage. While products without third-party certifications may be fine, listings and approvals are a sign that you can count on a product. It's the premium fuel, if you will, that will help keep assets running smoothly.

- **Peace of Mind**

Fires can have disastrous consequences. Not only will you face higher insurance premiums and the potential for machine repairs or replacements, but your contacts could be in jeopardy, too... meaning the potential for lost revenue and future contracts.

Imagine: if you have to cease operations for even a few days to repair a machine, you're likely to lose your contract due to the delays. That decreases your profit, and it may also cause you to lose contracts in the future to companies that have a more proven track record. Fires happen. But with fire suppression systems that are UL Listed and FM Approved, you can have the peace of mind of knowing your business is covered.

If you're a distributor...

Distributing products that your customers can count on should be a top priority. That's why we recommend distributors sell fire suppression products and systems with listings and approvals. These third-party certifications

can ensure the products you're selling are high quality, meet code, and help protect you from liability. Here are the top three reasons why distributors should seek out fire suppression systems with listings and approvals.

- **Products You Can Stand Behind**

You want to sell a product that you can stand behind. One that your customers can count on to do what it needs to do. And that's why UL Listed and FM Approved products are the right way to go. Third-party certified fire suppression systems are quality, durable, and made to stand the test of time. Give your customers products that will protect their property and their people when it counts. They'll be happy customers, which might keep them coming back to you or referring you to others, too.

- **Meet Codes and Regulations**

Why distribute products that don't meet international, national, or regional regulations? Most local and state fire officials and government inspectors put great stock in the quality of UL Listed and FM Approved products, meaning they're likely to meet building codes and regulations.

What's more, some insurance companies have requirements that are even more stringent than national or local regulations—sometimes requiring businesses to use fire suppression systems with listings or approvals. It's better for you, and your customers, if you provide them with a product that will meet the requirements they need to.

- **Minimize Liability**

And here's the reason that you're probably most concerned with. Fire suppression systems with listings or approvals can help minimize your liability in the event of a fire. Consider this scenario: a distributor sells a machining company a fire suppression system that doesn't have listings or approvals. The fire suppression system doesn't react as it should at the sign of a fire. The potential for liability for this distributor is high because they potentially sold a faulty product.

Fire suppression systems with listings and approvals have been rigorously tested to ensure they work as expected when they need to. Selling these products can make you less liable if and when a fire breaks out, because they're going to work... as long as they're installed to the manual.

If you're an original equipment manufacturer (OEM)...

Manufacturing products that are high-quality and long-lasting should be top of mind for OEMs.

- **Add Value to Your Offerings**

If you're selling a piece of equipment to a customer without a fire suppression system, it likely means they'll have to shop around to another vendor to buy the system separately. OEMs have a unique opportunity to be one-stop-shops for customers by selling equipment and the fire suppression systems to protect it as a package deal. But doing so means you need to sell the right fire suppression systems. Since regional codes and regulations or insurance companies may require systems that are third-party certified, choosing a system with listings and approvals means it's likely to meet your customer's needs.

- **Minimize Liability**

Often, OEMs are nervous about getting into offering fire suppression systems in addition to their equipment because they're worried that it'll bring the potential for liability. And while that's certainly an understandable concern, offering quality fire suppression systems can actually minimize your chance of liability.

How is this so? If you sell a piece of equipment that causes a fire, there's always a chance that the liability could come down on you. But, if you bundle it with a high-quality fire suppression system that's designed to automatically detect and suppress a fire, there's less of a chance of fire damage...and less of a chance of liability. So if you decide to integrate fire suppression systems into your offerings, make sure it's with products with listings and approvals—products you can count on.

- **Give your Customers Peace of Mind**

You're producing necessary and costly pieces of equipment. So what's one of the best ways to help convince your customers that you're the right company to choose? Illustrate that your offerings are high quality, long lasting, and ready to withstand almost anything.

Your equipment probably already does that. But by also offering fire suppression systems with listings and approvals, you can help ensure that your customers can have the peace of mind that comes with knowing that the pricey purchase they're making is going to be protected. And that's the kind of difference that can create happy, lifelong customers.

Firetrace: Fire Protection that Won't Let You Down

At the end of the day, products and systems with listings and approvals are a signal of quality, security, and peace of mind. If you're looking to protect your business, your people, and your equipment from fire damage, Firetrace is here for you. If you're looking to distribute or bundle fire suppression systems that work, Firetrace is the right company for the job. We're proud of the products we sell, and we stand behind the listings and approvals our products carry. To learn more about the third-party certifications of our products, visit our [resources page](#).

Our products automatically detect and suppress fires in high-risk equipment like CNC machines, wind turbines, container handling equipment, electrical panels, military ground vehicles, and military aircrafts. And, we have one of the strongest distributor networks in their market, meaning you're sure to get the assistance you need in a timely manner. If you're ready to get started protecting your people and assets, reach [out to us today](#).