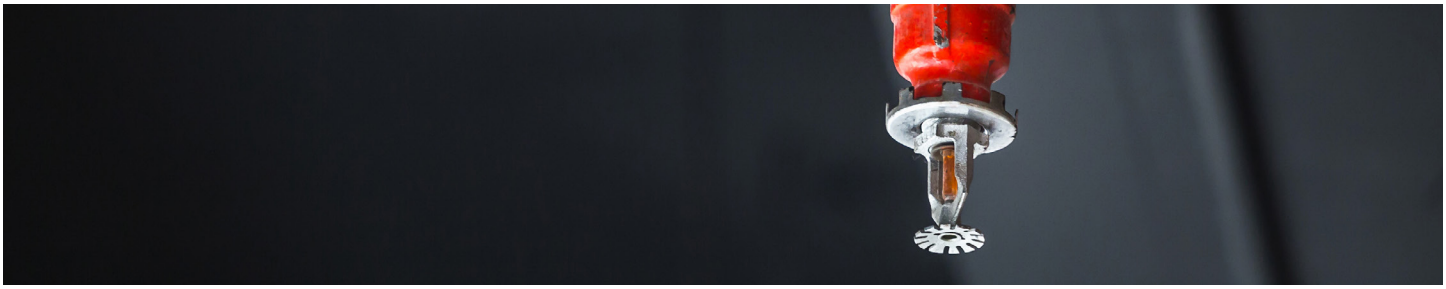
CNA

Waste and Linen Chute Protection

Vertical chutes streamline the collection and disposal of trash and linens in multi-story structures. If not properly designed, protected and maintained, they could allow for a fire's rapid, vertical spread within your building. The following tips can help keep your chute safe and reduce risk.



Fire Protection

- Sprinklers must be installed at the top of the chute, within a chute in the discharge room below and in interior compactors.
- Sprinklers installed within the chute should have the vertical spacing of two floors. To prevent impact damage, sprinklers must be recessed out of the area where materials travel.
- To check for sprinklers, use a mirror or cellphone to take a picture inside your chute at the top level. Never stick your head directly inside.
- Be careful not to confuse the chute's automatic wash systems and sanitizer nozzles with these important fire-protection devices. If you are unsure or cannot find them, contact your local sprinkler contractor or a CNA Risk Control professional for further assistance.

Fire Barriers and Doors

- The chute enclosure or shaft should be fire-rated based on the height of your building. Buildings over four stories require a chute enclosure with a two-hour rating, and buildings under four stories require a chute enclosure with a one-hour rating.
- The chute's intake doors should be self-closing and self-latching, and have a listed fire-rating (hour) commensurate with the rating of the chute enclosure. Look for the sticker on the inside of the door to confirm.
- The bottom of your chute must have an approved automatic closing or self-closing fire door/damper. This door is usually held open by a fusible link and spring mechanism. In the event of a fire in the discharge room, the link will melt, allowing the damper to close to prevent fire and smoke spread.
- Chutes should discharge into a room with a fire resistance rating (1 or 2 hours) that is the same or greater than the chute itself.

Inspection, Testing and Maintenance

- Inspect the chute's intake doors weekly to ensure that they operate as designed. In addition, any discharge doors equipped with a fusible link mechanism should be tested and re-evaluated every four years.
- Check for unapproved items (cardboard, shims, etc.) holding the chute intake or discharge doors open and that the door closes and latches freely.
- Check to ensure fusible links (holding the chute discharge door open) are not damaged, painted or otherwise compromised.
- Check the roof to ensure chute ventilation is not obstructed or damaged.

Tenant, Resident and Employee Safety

- Tenants should never discard any hazardous items through the chute (oil, fuels, aerosols, batteries, cigarettes, ashes).
- Make sure trash or linen pickup frequencies are sufficient to prevent chute backups, which can present a fire hazard. If collection carts are used, they should be non-combustible metal, not plastic.
- Since chutes present entrapment hazards, ensure policies and procedures for safe use are communicated to all occupants. If a valuable object falls into the chute, residents should be directed to contact building management for further assistance – they should never attempt to retrieve the item.
- Make sure employees have received training on the safe use and operation of the chute in accordance with OSHA or other local regulatory requirements.

To learn more about how to manage your risks and increase efficiencies, visit cna.com/riskcontrol.