

FIRE-RETARDANT COATINGS & PAINTS FOR INTERIOR FINISH MATERIALS

Table of Contents

	Page
1.0 SCOPE .....	2
1.1 Changes .....	2
2.0 LOSS PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS .....	2
2.1 General .....	2
APPENDIX A GLOSSARY OF TERMS .....	2
APPENDIX B DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY .....	2



## 1.0 SCOPE

This data sheet provides **recommendations** for the application of fire-retardant coatings and paints as a means of delaying ignition as well as reducing the surface-burning rate of interior combustible finish material.

## 1.1 Changes

June 2009. Editorial changes were made for this revision.

## 2.0 LOSS PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1 General

A fire-retardant coating or paint is intended to delay ignition and reduce the surface-burning rate of a cellulosic fiber, cellular plastic, or wood building material for a short period of time. It may be applied as a thick protective covering by trowel, or as a fire-retardant paint by brush, spray, or roller. The reduction of burning rate usually depends on the applied thickness.

Fire-retardant paints have intumescent properties causing the paint to form an insulating blanket when exposed to fire. This retards surface ignition and reduces the burning rate of the coated side of the combustible material.

Fire-retardant coatings will maintain a noncombustible surface and effectively reduce the burning rate of the combustible below for a period of approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The use of either is particularly applicable in very low-hazard occupancies not needing sprinkler protection, where the occupancy is not likely to change, and the only hazard is that of exposed, combustible, interior finish materials. *These coatings are not intended as a substitute for automatic sprinklers.*

Some of the FM Approved coatings will successfully preserve the dimensional stability of low-melting, combustible, cellular plastics in addition to delaying their ignition for 10 to 15 minutes and reducing the surface-burning rate. The coatings that qualify for this end use have been evaluated by means of either the FM Global Construction Materials Calorimeter or the large-scale 15-minute FM Global Building Fire Corner test procedure.

**2.1.1** Use FM Approved coatings or paints only over those combustible surfaces on which they have been successfully tested.

**2.1.2** Do not use noncementitious-based coatings for high-humidity occupancies or for certain occupancies where combustible dust and other organic residues, such as oil, solvents, etc., may accumulate.

**2.1.3** Apply fire-retardant paints as recommended by the manufacturer. Have coatings applied by licensed applicators recommended by the manufacturer.

**2.1.4** Ensure the coated surfaces are adequately maintained.

## APPENDIX A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**FM Approved:** The phrase "FM Approved" is used to describe a product or service that has satisfied the criteria for Approval by FM Approvals. Refer to the *Approval Guide* for a complete list of products and services that are FM Approved.

## APPENDIX B DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY

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May 1998, revised.

December 1981, first issuance.