

Most of the first responders within fire services in North America carry DSPA-5 units (dry sprinkler powder aerosol units) and in Europe services in Holland, Switzerland, Austria and now Germany have realised the benefits and savings that the DSPA-5 offers: it is now making an impact in the UK.

the advantages of the DSPA-5 in rural areas are clear, these three services see the unit as an effective attacking tool against fires in high rise structures such as apartment blocks," says Maxfield. A study carried out by test house Chiltern International backs this up, as it concluded that in both fully developed and residential fire tests a minimum of four and a half minutes stalling of fire growth was seen: "Immensely useful when dealing with incidents in high rise buildings," comments Maxfield: "In this current economic climate the advantages of DSPA all translate into genuine cost savings, because the incident is dealt with faster, safer and with less water damage. Also, there are no adverse environmental issues connected to the DSPA-5."

Certainly it has been a very hectic few weeks for DSPA.uk with the announcement of three new regional distributors joining their network, remarks Maxfield: "Last month, Oakpark Security took the South Central

Aerosol knockdown spreads

"Aerosol generators have been around for a few years," explains John Maxfield, director of DSPA.uk: "but where DSPA stands apart from the others are with the modular, stand alone systems that are a cost effective solution to both sensitive and problematic places such as plant rooms and roof voids. Also, we have the unique DSPA-5 series; hand held fire knock down tools that are used by professional firefighters around the world."

Within the British Isles, Staffordshire FRS has been field trialling the DSPA-5 and deployed the tool at an incident at a first floor apartment recently. Assistant Area Commander Rob Barber at Staffs FRS has been impressed by the DSPA-5: "The absolute priority at all times is the safety and well-being of the crew. The DSPA-5 rapidly reduced the temperature and attacked the fire without the need for the crew to remain inside the compartment." Firefighter Gordon picks up the story, "After about five minutes we re-committed to the compartment with a hose reel to find the fire itself was almost extinguished. It only took a small amount of water from the hose reel to completely extinguish the fire overall."

It is this last point that convinced Paul Coyle, Chief Fire Officer for County Sligo in Ireland, to buy DSPA-5s for his crews. Bryan McCormack, owner of Fire and Sound, the DSPA distributor for the Republic of Ireland, explains: "Paul pointed out that not only can it take a long time for the crew to reach the scene of a fire, but on arrival the nearest hydrant can be over 10 miles away. Having the DSPA-5 can allow his teams to utilise their available water much more efficiently and effectively."

Cheshire FRS is the latest service to consider the DSPA-5 and a demonstration has been arranged for next month. Hampshire and Nottinghamshire FRS are also looking to arrange a demonstration. "Although

England region and this month ADA Fire Suppression has taken North West England and we have agreed terms with Transitional Fire for South West England. We are delighted that Transitional Fire has joined our team as they have established a solid reputation for the delivery of all aspects of emergency services training." Graham Leney, director of Transitional Fire, adds: "We pride ourselves on working closely with individual FRS's requirements and see the DSPA-5 as a further improvement to our range of products."

Maxfield is keen to point out that the DSPA-5 is not suitable for all types of structure fires – which is why full training on the product is provided.

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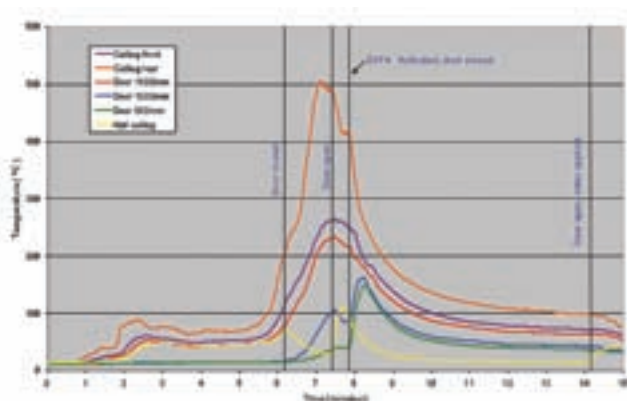
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Temperatures recorded in a residential fire test, carried out by Chiltern International Fire, May 2009.

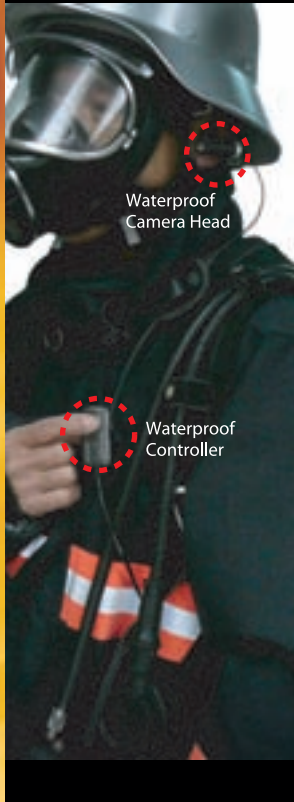
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Aerosol device solutions for energy companies

In urbanised areas of the US it is becoming increasingly common for utilities to keep electrical wiring networks in underground facilities – which is why New Jersey’s largest utility has adopted an aerosol fire suppression device, writes Ann Marie Knegt.

When an incident occurs in these rooms, fire departments will not enter until the whole vault has been de-energised – which leaves a fire more than enough time to grow from bad to worse.

Added complications include workers being trapped underground when the fire breaks out. It is easy to see how this poses a major problem for utility companies all over the US.

However, New Jersey’s largest utility company, PSE&G, came across a solution in the shape of an aerosol fire suppression device, called Stat-X First Responder, manufactured by Fireaway LLC in Minnetonka, Minnesota. “Stat-X First Responder is a handheld suppression device that is environmentally friendly and extremely effective. The ultra-fine, potassium-based aerosol provides extremely fast knockdown and rapid suppression of fires, with little if any residue,” explains Steve Janzen, Vice President of Sales for Fireaway LLC.

Each First Responder contains 500 grams of aerosol, which the company has calculated to be sufficient to suppress a fire in a 10x10ft room. Stat-X aerosol does not extinguish fires by reducing the oxygen level. Fire suppression is achieved through interference between the ultra-fine aerosol particulate and the flame’s free radicals – terminating propagation of the fire. After release the agent will hang in suspension providing further suppression capabilities.

As Stat-X First Responder uses the same EPA approved aerosol

agent that Fireaway uses in its line of UL listed Stat-X aerosol generators (engineered to protect specific fire hazards), it will extinguish a fire under the right circumstances. However, Janzen emphasises that this product is meant primarily as a first aid suppression agent for people arriving first at the scene.

PSE&G decided to acquire the product for its 250-strong fleet following a demonstration of the product at its training centre in Edison (NJ). Edison Fire Department and Fireaway ignited a fire in a training manhole, upon which the interior temperature reached levels of 575°F. A thermal imaging camera and equipment designed to measure the air quality were deployed into the manhole to provide a clear picture of the conditions created during a fire. A first responder was deployed and within seconds the temperature inside the manhole was dramatically reduced and the fire was extinguished without reducing the oxygen level.

Janzen adds that this isn’t the only application for the first responder: “The unit is also suitable for vehicle fire response and various types of structural fires. The Stat-X agent is very buoyant and it will hang in suspension for an extended period when released in an enclosed space. In situations such as a house fire it can suppress a fire and prevent it from growing larger, buying firefighters more time to deploy their firefighting equipment, allow people to evacuate the home and provide firefighters with a clearer view of the situation they are facing.” Fireaway also provides a range of UL Listed Stat-X fixed aerosol systems which can be activated either with industry standard electrical fire release panels and detection equipment or through thermal activation, and they are suitable for a wide range of industrial applications, including trains, buses, trucks and specialist vehicles.

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Scott takes on Protégé: a new multi-gas monitor

Scott Health & Safety has introduced a new handheld multi-gas monitor, the Protégé, which is said to be suitable for a wide range of industrial and fire applications.

The new monitor features visual, audible and vibrating alarms, extensive data-logging and a large, backlit LCD screen.

Protégé can detect oxygen, combustibles, hydrogen sulphide and/or carbon monoxide in industrial, petrochemical, oil and gas and emergency situations. It has been designed with simple, but powerful features that – according to its manufacturer – are not available on any other personal gas detection instruments.

With Windows-based proprietary software, a variety of operating options can be configured for a multitude of uses and personal user preferences including: password control; timer; calibration due date; alarm set points; calibration gas values; automatic zero calibration at start up.

“When configured with its optional pump, Protégé is transformed from a personal gas monitor into a confined space monitor,” added Marketing Manager for the company Nicola Whitehead.