

Fire Safety for Computer and Record Storage Facilities

Computer and record storage facilities should be located, arranged and protected to minimize losses.

The following guidelines highlight major considerations.

Location

- The location for computer facilities should minimize exposure to external forces that may cause losses. The potential for damage from windstorm, flood, external fire exposure, explosion, earthquake, etc., should be evaluated. Basement locations should be avoided.

Separation

- Computer and record storage facilities should be isolated from all unrelated occupancies by fire walls or barriers of sufficient fire resistance and stability to preclude the intrusion of fire. All openings should be protected with fire doors. Doors should normally remain in the closed position or be arranged to close automatically in the event of fire.

Construction and equipment

- The structural components within the computer and record storage rooms such as walls, ceilings, floors, insulation, piping, and air handling duct work, should be of noncombustible material. Office furniture should be of metal and the permanent storage of files, paper supplies and stationery should be prohibited. Floors and/or roofs above rooms should be water tight. Floors should be adequately drained to prevent accumulation of water from sprinklers or hose streams.

Air handling systems

- Separate air handling systems should be provided for computer/records storage rooms. All ducts to or from such rooms should be equipped with automatic fire dampers at the point of penetration through fire walls. Duct insulation should be noncombustible. Alarm systems should be provided to monitor temperature and humidity.

Paper storage/housekeeping

- Paper storage should be in a separate room from processing operations. Computer rooms including under-floor areas should be kept free of combustibles. Listed waste paper containers should be conveniently available.
- Containers should be emptied on a periodic basis and prior to any evening or weekend closing.

Emergency floor panel lifter

- An emergency floor panel lifter should be conveniently mounted for emergency use to gain access to under-floor fires.

Automatic and manual fire extinguishing systems and alarms

- Should be provided throughout the computer/record storage room. See Loss Control Data Guide F.13635 for details.

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The loss prevention information and advice presented in this brochure are intended only to advise our insureds and their managers of a variety of methods and strategies based on generally accepted safe practices, for controlling potentially loss producing situations commonly occurring in business premises and/or operations. They are not intended to warrant that all potential hazards or conditions have been evaluated or can be controlled. They are not intended as an offer to write insurance coverage for such conditions or exposures, or to imply that Great American Insurance Company will write such coverage. The liability of Great American Insurance Company is limited to the specific terms, limits and conditions of the insurance policies issued.

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