



Hotel's Fire Protection Requirements Reach Beyond Code

Whether it is Big Red football, a local business affair or other personal ventures that attract people to Lincoln, Nebraska, the area's new Staybridge Suites hotel has been running at full capacity since opening its doors in late summer 2012.

To achieve an on-time opening, the hotel's fire alarm system had to prove it was operable and code-compliant. However, expanded CO detection and a fire fighters telephone system were additions made to this hotel's system that were not mandated by code, but required by Staybridge parent company, InterContinental Hotels Group. These additions brought both better security and some unexpected cost-savings.

"We want our hotels to be as safe as possible for our staff and guests," explains Staybridge Suite's General Manager Roland Morgan. "We would rather our life safety systems be better than the minimum standard and be the best that's available."

System Components

At the heart of the hotel's fire alarm system sits a Farenhyt IFP-2000 addressable fire alarm control panel from Silent Knight. This highly scalable system can support as many as 636 addressable points per panel, expandable to over 10,000 points on a networked system. Points can be any addressable device, including smoke detectors, pull stations, relay modules and control modules.

"I really like the 2000. It's a really good panel and accepts more on a loop, which cuts down on the number of circuits that have to be dealt with," says Acey Jane of Ready Low Voltage Systems, the installer on the project. "This is the fifth InterContinental hotel I've installed IFP panels in and haven't had any complaints."

Staybridge fulfilled its notification needs by tying public area horns and strobes into the central panel with one Silent Knight 5495 power supply panel. Another 5495 panel powers the sounder bases in the suites. With 10 of the facility's 83 guest rooms designed for the hearing impaired, the strobes in those rooms are run by two RPS-1000 intelligent distributed power modules.

"This allows the strobes to activate individually when smoke in a room is detected or all together when a sprinkler system or public area device goes into alarm," Jane explains. "By using the RPS-1000s, the strobes are synchronized in the suites, and a lot of savings are accrued by not having to install ten separate control and sync modules."

A Lesson in CO Detection

As mentioned, CO detection is a big priority for the hotel, so Jane's team installed CO detectors from System Sensor in all areas sharing a wall, floor or ceiling with a room where a gas-burning appliance is located. For example, the double-sided fireplace in the Great Room required 4 detectors in surrounding spaces. The spaces adjacent to the mechanical room's water heaters and indoor pool's water heater also got CO detection.

Jane finds the System Sensor detectors easy to test, monitor and interface with the fire alarm. As such, he's installed them at several other hotels.

Programming the system to enable all rooms to annunciate at the front desk was yet another Staybridge Suites requirement



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for this project. As a back-up, a mini-horn will sound in the laundry room where hotel personnel usually work when not at the front desk.

The main panel was set up with switches to disable horns and strobes during testing to avoid disturbing guests. The technicians that inspect the sprinkler system really appreciate this feature.

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— Acey Jane
Ready Low Voltage Systems

First Responder Communications

Staybridge was prepared to dole out quite an investment for fire fighter telephones (FFT) to be installed within all stairwells at the request of the hotel’s parent company. Most products on the market only offer fire fighter phones as part of a voice evacuation system.

“Fortunately, the Farenhyt FFT, which is a stand-alone system, came out just as I was bidding the hotel,” relates Jane. “It’s just beautiful, and the hotel saved several thousand dollars by not having to go with a full-blown voice evacuation system.”

Not only is the FFT easy to install, says Jane, but it is a much better choice aesthetically. The alternative would be a voice evacuation system that requires large panels in the lobby where guests typically gather for free drinks and snacks.

The Farenhyt IFP-FFT can support a maximum of 72 telephone connections with up to 10 phones in use at one time, making it one of the largest-capacity fire fighter communications systems on the market. Not only is the system scalable to fit the needs of a four-story facility like the Staybridge Suites, but it operates on a single loop of standard wire to simplify installation and reduce expenses.

A Job Well Done

The Staybridge Suite’s fire alarm monitors both wet and dry sprinkler systems and 206 smoke detectors, in addition to controlling elevators in the event of a fire. The Farenhyt system covered all specifications mandated by local code and the InterContinental Hotels Group, while offering various measures for reducing costs. Ultimately, Staybridge acquired the advanced level of fire protection required for all of its properties.

Echoing these sentiments, Morgan declares, “we have had nothing but good experiences using this brand of equipment at our existing hotel and other properties owned by the same ownership group. Detection has always been good and response times have been very fast.”



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Silent Knight • 12 Clintonville Road • Northford, CT 06472
203-484-7161 • www.farenhyt.com