

Choosing the Right Fire Suppression System for Your Machines

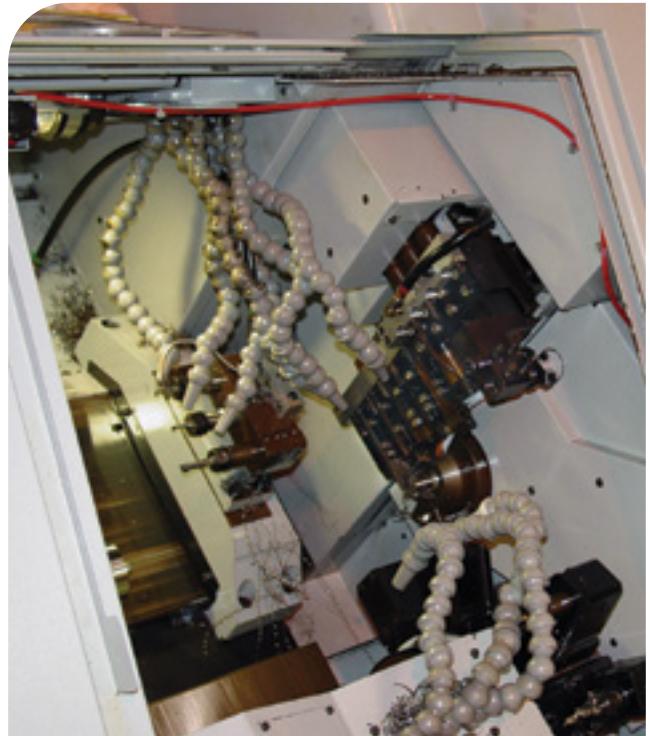
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Virtually all modern CNC machines are designed with safety in mind. However, some cutting, turning, grinding and milling operations demand the use of combustible, oil-based metalworking fluids, which present a fire risk. A spark from a hot metal chip, a tool crash or machine overheating can cause flammable oil vapors to erupt into a flash fire that can engulf a machine in seconds.

The potential for disaster from a machine fire increases further when a shop runs “lights out” or leaves their machines unattended. A machine fire that is immediately detected and suppressed may result in little or no damage and a few hours of unscheduled downtime. The same fire, left unchecked for even a short period of time, will probably destroy the machine and may spread to the building’s structure where it can threaten lives and property.

Fortunately, fire suppression systems specifically designed to protect machines are available. The majority of these suppression systems activate automatically, without any human intervention, when a fire is detected. Automatic systems differ in three main ways: the type of mechanism they use to detect a fire, the type of agent(s) they utilize to suppress a fire and the options they offer to configure a system to meet individual needs.

When shopping for supplementary fire suppression, look for a system that is compatible with commercially available “clean” fire suppressing agents, which have three overall advantages. First, clean agents are delivered in aerosol form and are nonconductive and noncorrosive, so they will not harm your machine. Second, clean agents do not leave any residue, so they do not require any cleanup and will



not contaminate the expensive oils used in CNC machines. Third, clean agents will not harm people and are safe to use in occupied spaces.

Every shop can benefit from machine fire suppression. Statistics show that more than half of all privately owned businesses that experience a major fire go out of business within one year. Fortunately, reliable and cost-effective fire suppression systems are readily available to safeguard your machines.

FIRETRACE
AUTOMATIC FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS

Firetrace manufactures reliable, cost-effective, automatic fire detection and suppression systems. Visit Firetrace online at firetrace.com or email David at dwilhite@firetrace.com.