



Challenges and Advances in Suppression

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FIRE & RISK

SFFPE



Foundation®

Mission & Vision*

- Established by the Society of Fire Protection Engineers as the SFPE Educational and Scientific Foundation in 1979



Mission:

- *Enhance the scientific understanding of fire and its interaction with the natural and built environments.*

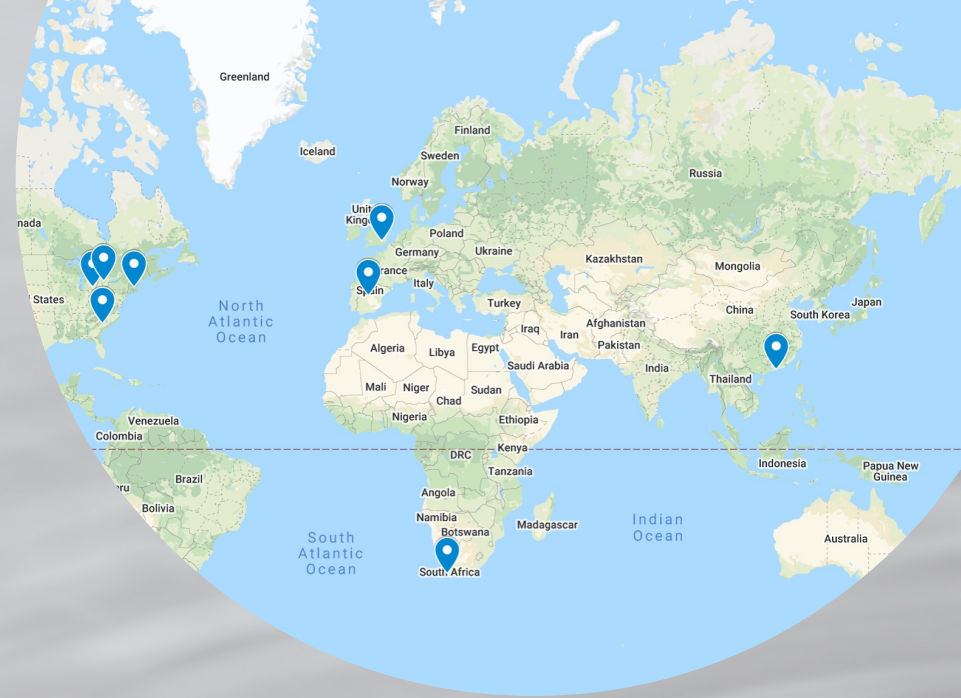
Vision:

- Facilitate scientific and engineering **research** focused on fire risk, safety, mitigation, control, and human response.
- Facilitate the development of **engineering methods** to mitigate the adverse consequences of unwanted fires.
- Provide **education** and research opportunities for the next generation of fire protection engineers.

**Currently developing 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.*



Student Research Grants



Any student researching fire protection or fire safety engineering topics may apply



5-8 awards per year, \$5,000 per awardee



Evaluated on technical merit, usefulness, qualifications, achievability

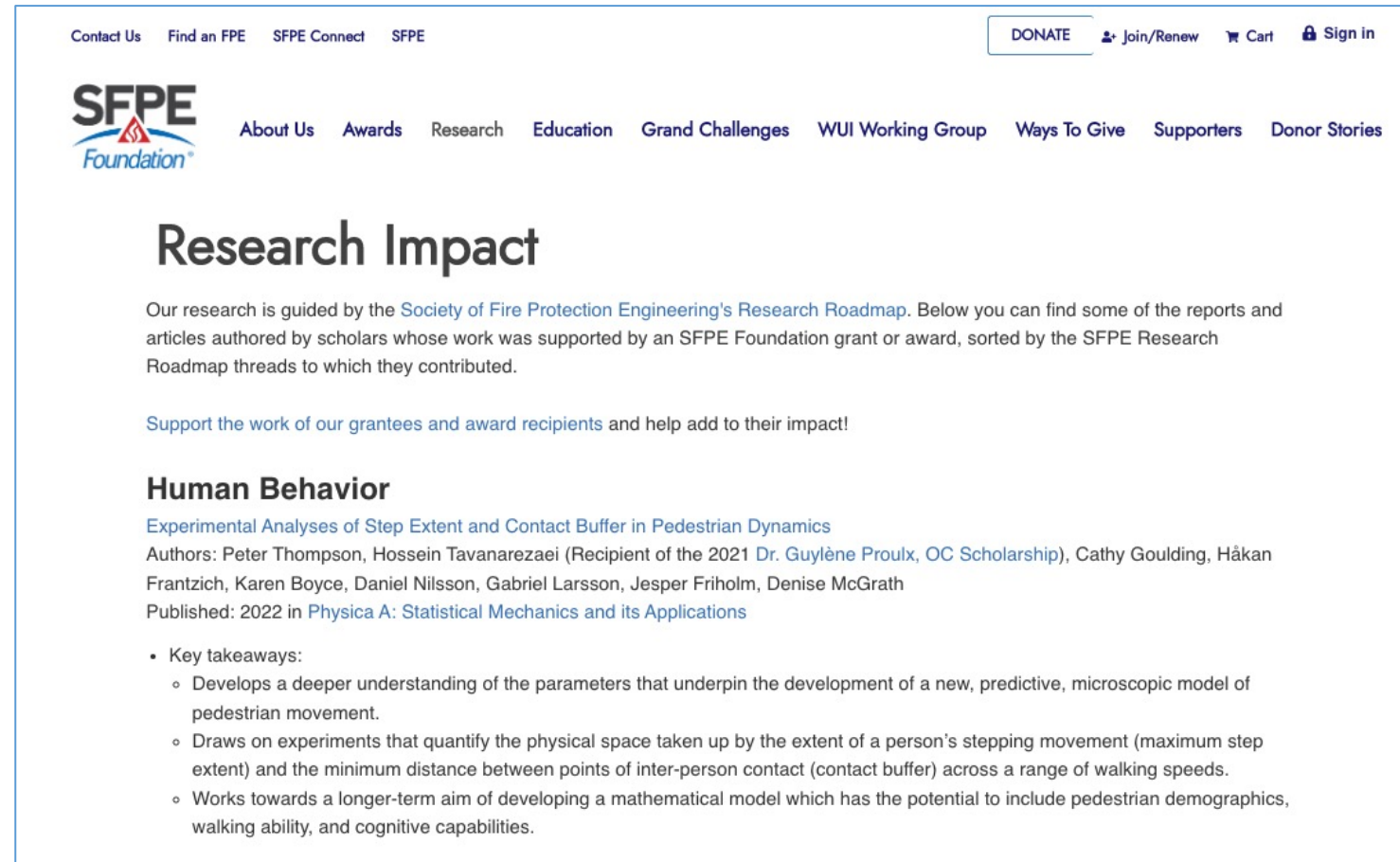


Applications due in May and November annually



New “Research Impact” Page on Website

- Visit: <https://www.sfpe.org/foundation/foundationresearch/impact>
- All Foundation-funded research projects since 2020 mapped to SFPE Research Roadmap topics; includes links to published journal articles, reports, webinars, and more
- Continuing updates to add visualizations and enhance user interface
- Example of Impact:
 - One 2020 Student Research Grant (\$5k) winner’s project turned into 4 peer-reviewed journal article publications and contributed to gaps in 4 Research Roadmap areas!



Get involved

- Sign up for the Foundation's **monthly e-news brief**; send us content suggestions
- Follow us on **LinkedIn** and **Twitter**
- **Share** our award, scholarship, and grant opportunities with your networks
- Watch one of our **free recorded webinars** through the *Research in Fire Engineering Webinar Series* (up to 6 PDH for FREE)
- Join the Foundation's **Academic Leadership Council**, **Grand Challenges Initiative**, or **WUI Working Group Initiative**

- **Donate** to support our work:
 - Annual Campaign
 - Fitzgerald Matching Fund Challenge
 - Student Travel Fund
 - Leave a gift to the Foundation in your will; join the Legacy Society

- Let us know: How can we work together?



Abstract

Environments are becoming more challenging to provide protection for as storage heights and densities increase, new construction materials are introduced, and unique and out of the box architectural designs are envisioned. Developing protection schemes for these can be complex right from the start, with something as “simple” as choosing the right sprinkler all the way through to requiring testing and modeling. This presentation will highlight some of today’s most challenging problems, identify what makes them so difficult, and cover some advances in equipment, analysis, and tools that can help solve these challenges.



Suppression Challenges

- Challenging Applications
 - Storage Challenges (Tall rack storage, ASRS)
 - Lithium-ion batteries (BESS, EV's)
 - New Materials
 - Architectural Advances & Unique Structures
- “Universal” Challenges
 - Sloped/Domed Ceilings
 - Obstructions
 - Water Availability (increasingly water is scarce)
 - Contamination
- Advances & Solutions
 - FPRF studies and guidance
 - Technology
 - Software (Sprinklerdatabase, spray data inclusion in Pyrosim, Revit Plugin)



Sloped Ceiling Design



sloped, obstructed



Sloped Ceiling Concerns

Ceiling slope will cause biased activation patterns

Activation of sprinklers affected by presence of obstructed construction (purlins and girders)

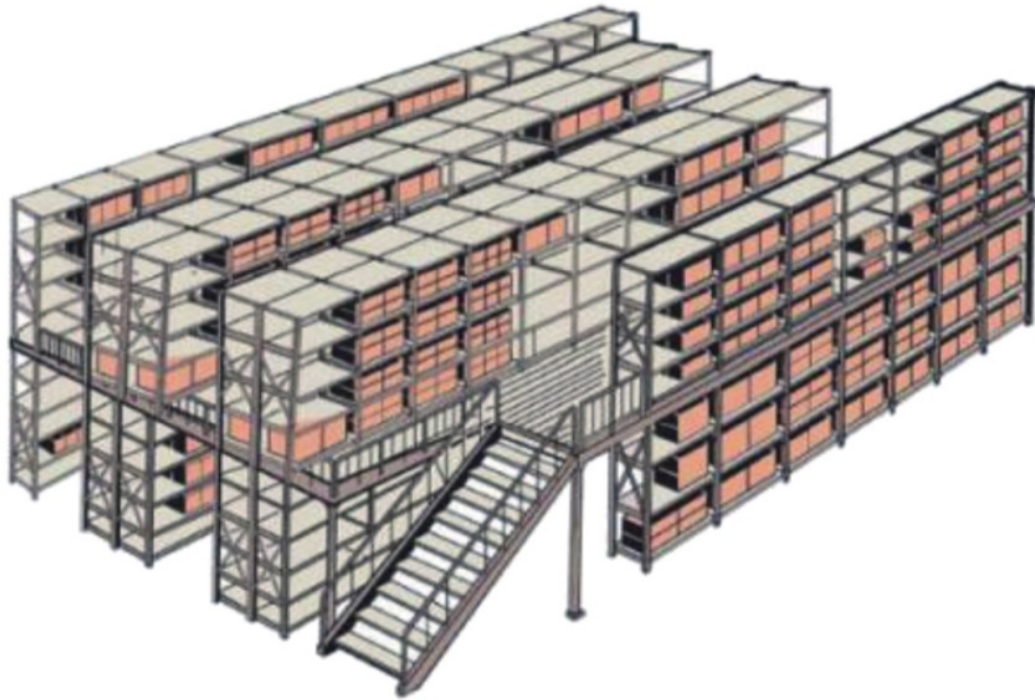
Orientation of sprinklers and resulting ceiling impingement of spray (parallel to floor or ceiling)

Sprinkler sprays impinging on obstructed construction (not considered in this study though addressed in others)

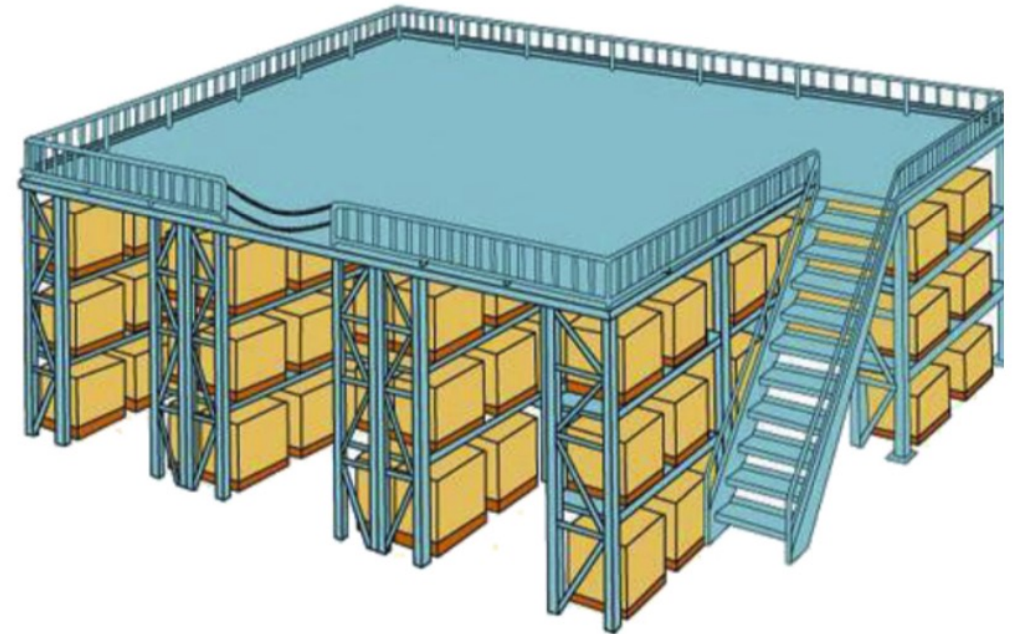
Variations in sprinkler characteristics and operating pressures (consistency of results)



Walkways, Mezzanines, & Obstructions

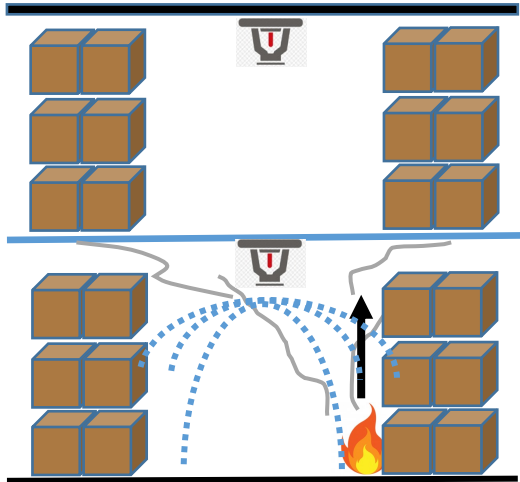


(a)

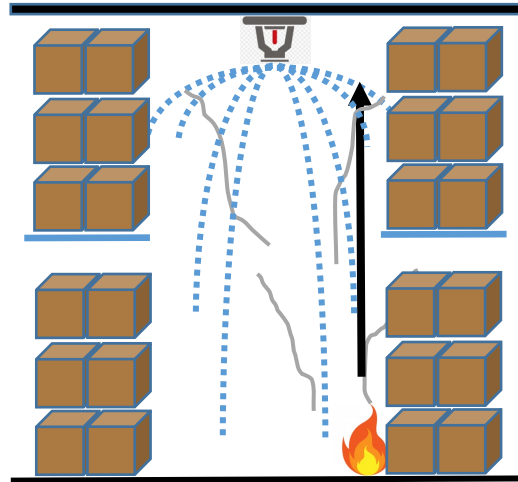


(b)

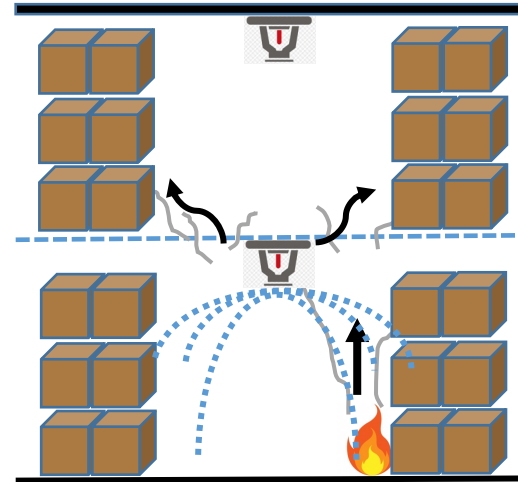
Walkways & Mezzanines



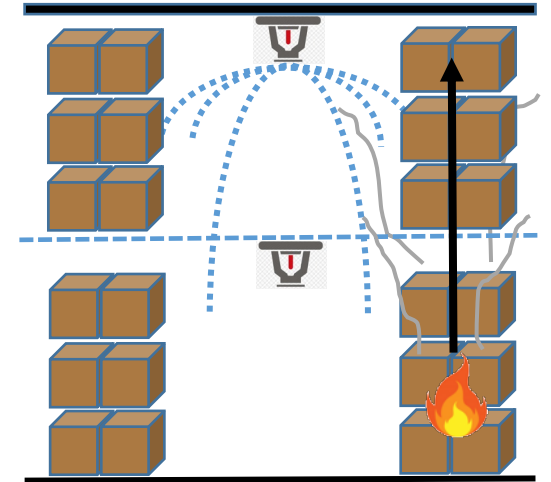
Solid Shelf/Walkway



Solid Shelving



Perforated Shelf/Walkway



Perforated Shelf/Walkway

Obstruction & Walkway Concerns

Sprinkler sprays impinging on walkways altering ADD and pre-wetting of surfaces

Activation of sprinklers affected by presence of obstructions

Variations in sprinkler characteristics and operating pressures (consistency of results)



Automated Storage & Retrieval Systems



ASRS Concerns

Sprinkler sprays not able to penetrate the storage array

Activation of sprinklers affected by presence of obstructions

First responders ability to access the hazard and remove the combustibles



EV's



EV Concerns

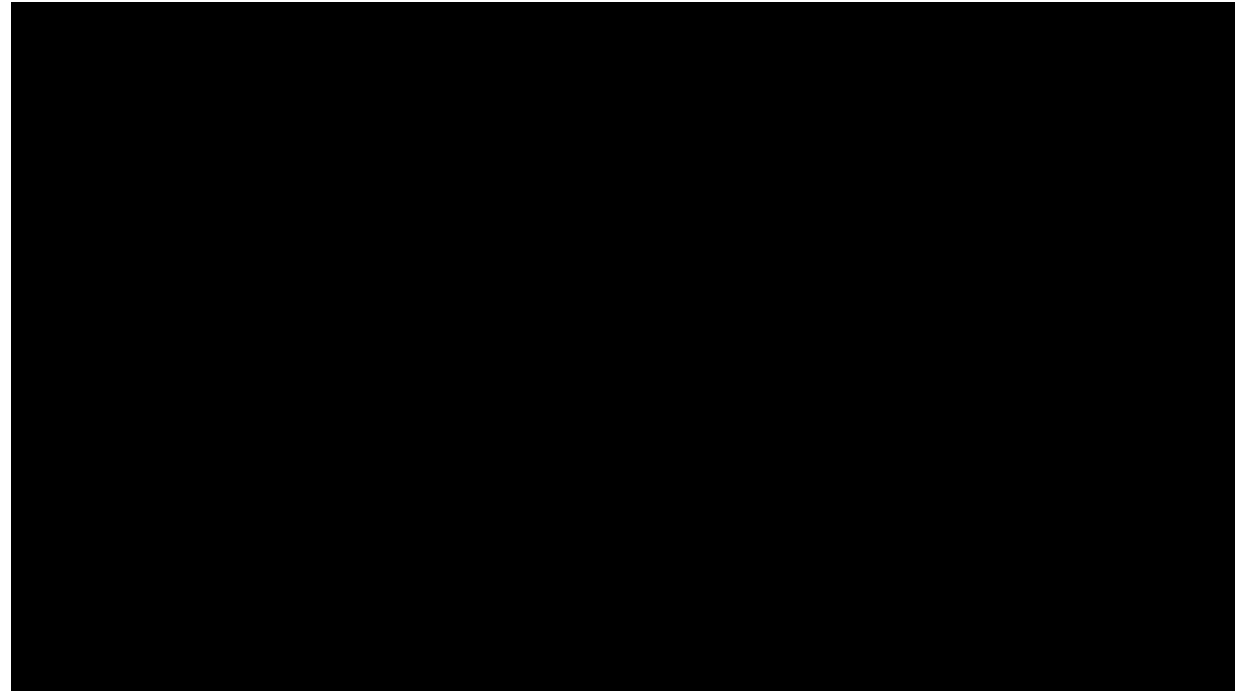
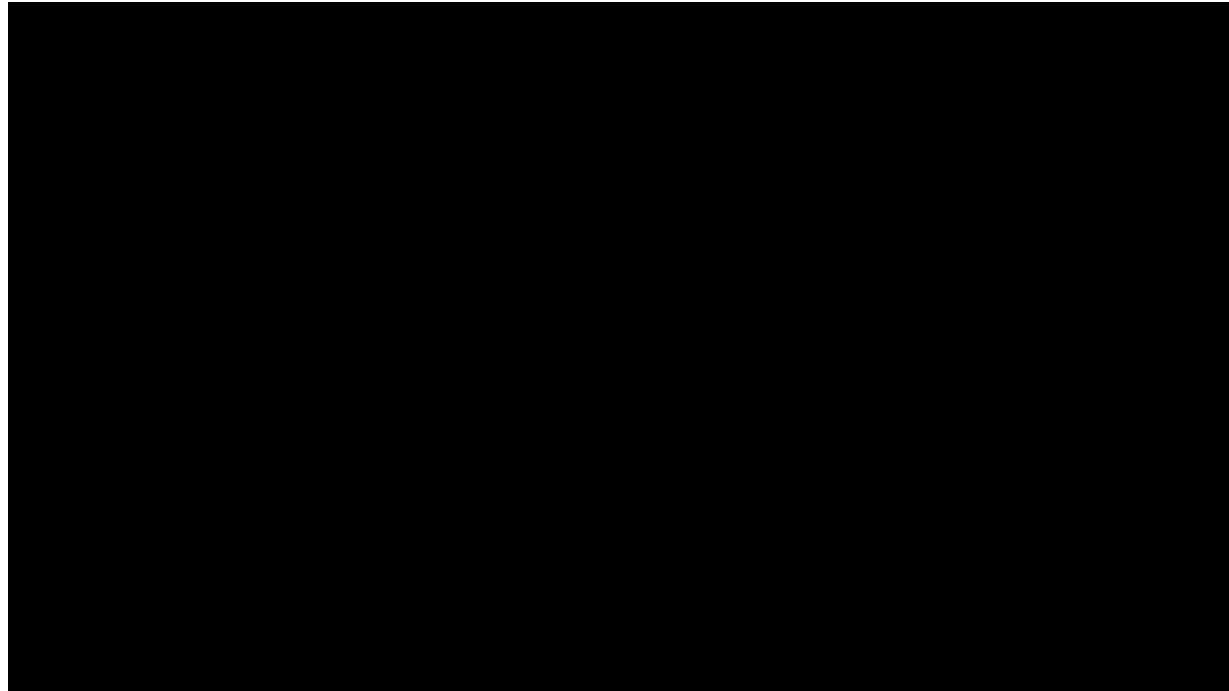
Sprinklers can't deliver water to the source (if available)

Fire may be more “dynamic” with batteries involved

Sprinkler's ability to prevent spread to adjacent vehicles



BESS: 83kWh



BESS Concerns

Sprinklers can't deliver water to the BESS

Fire may be more “dynamic” with batteries involved, water make things worse?

Sprinkler's ability to prevent spread to adjacent units/racks

Access for FD



Now Some Details



Sloped Ceiling Project Overview

1

Phase I

- Storage protection survey
- Sprinkler activation simulations
- Sprinkler spray simulations

2

Phase II

- Sprinkler activation simulations
- Sprinkler spray simulations
- Test matrix development

3

Phase III

- Cold flow spray testing
- Additional simulations
- Full-scale testing and guidance document

Project Strategy

Sprinkler activations

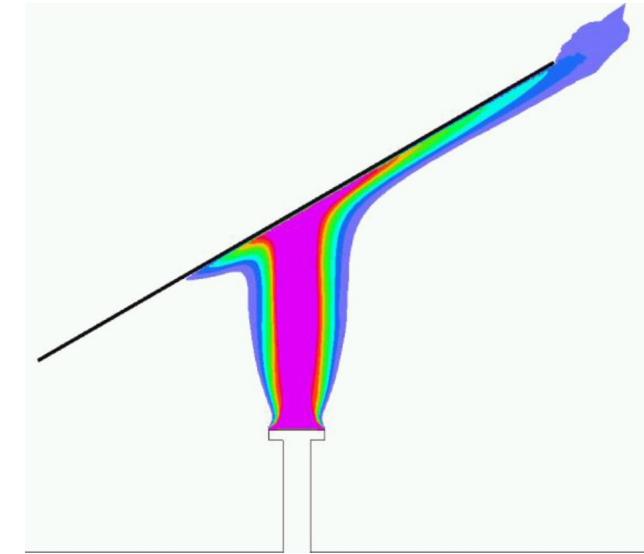
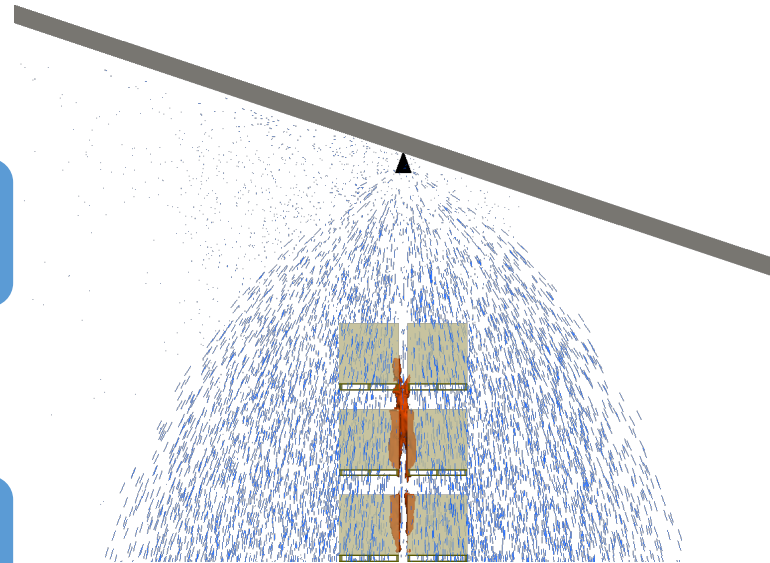
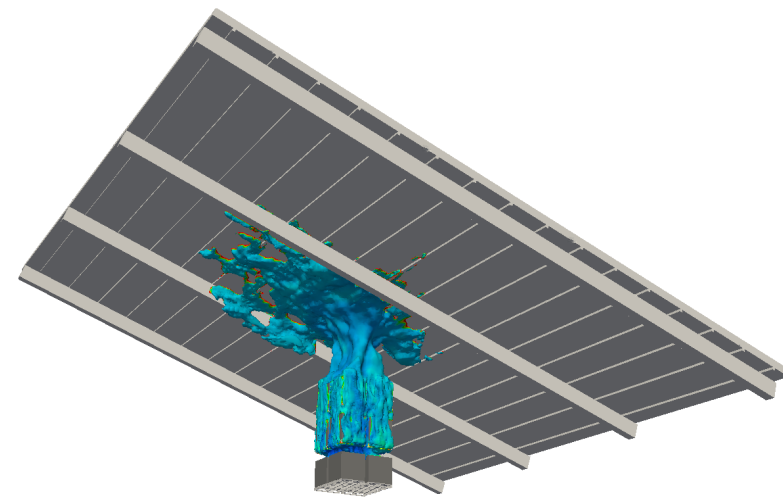
- effect of slope
- effect of obstructed construction
- effect of ridge

Spray dynamics

- water distribution
- deflector orientation

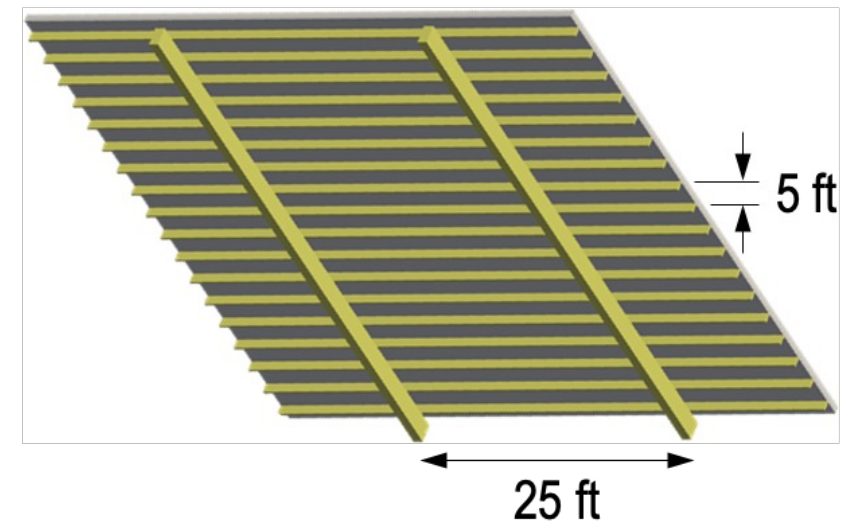
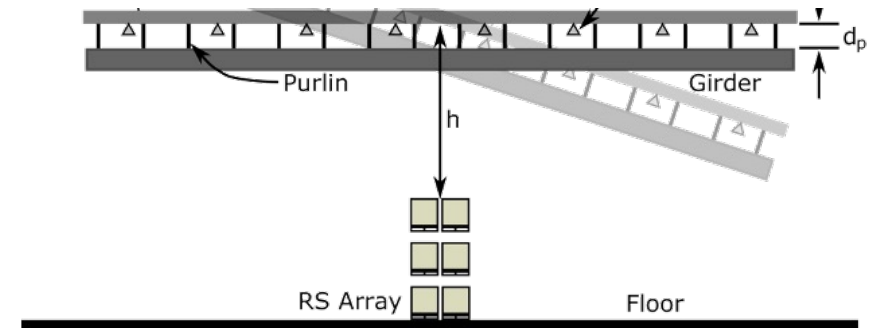
FireFOAM solver

- validated for sloped ceiling flows



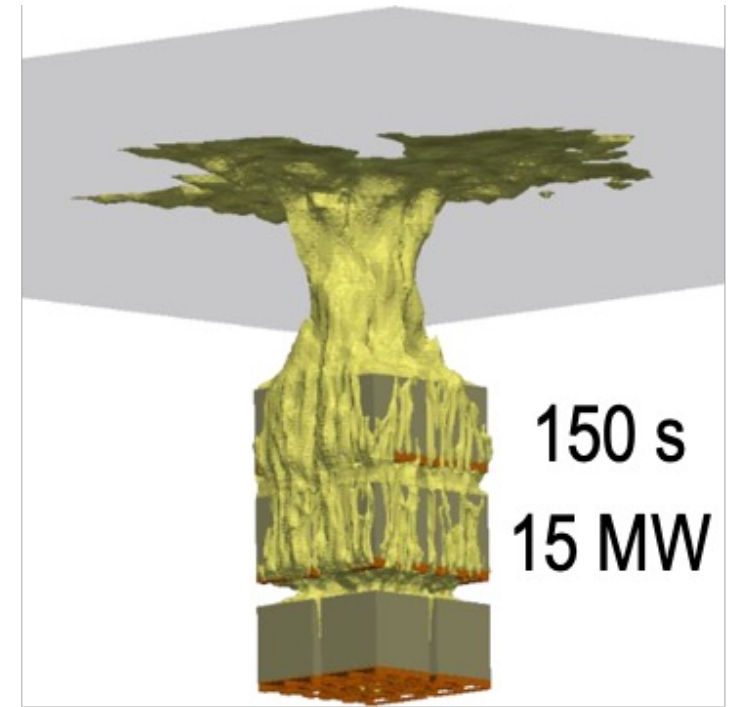
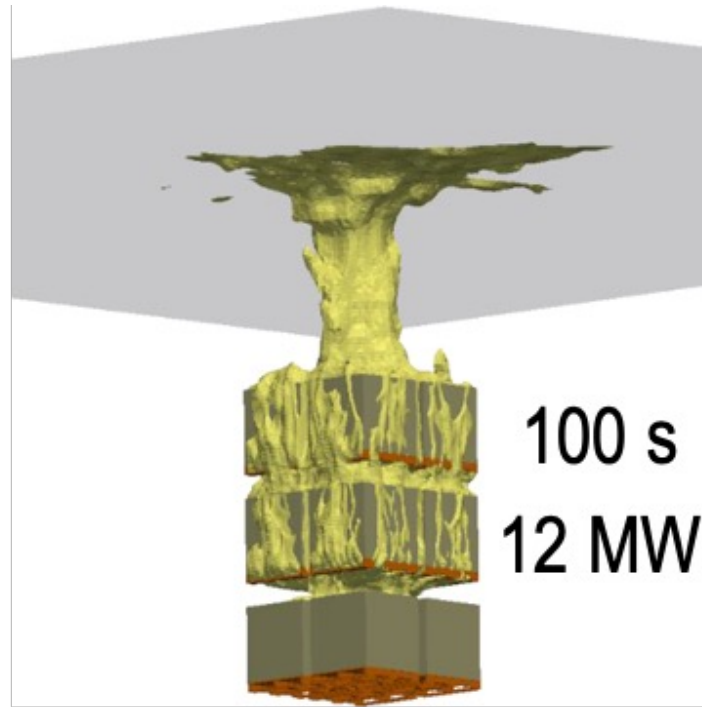
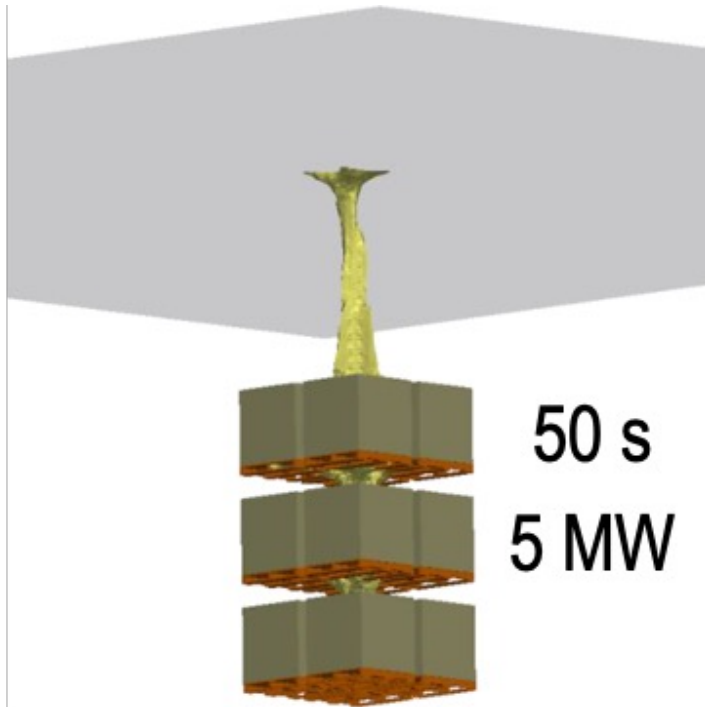
Activation Simulation Parameters

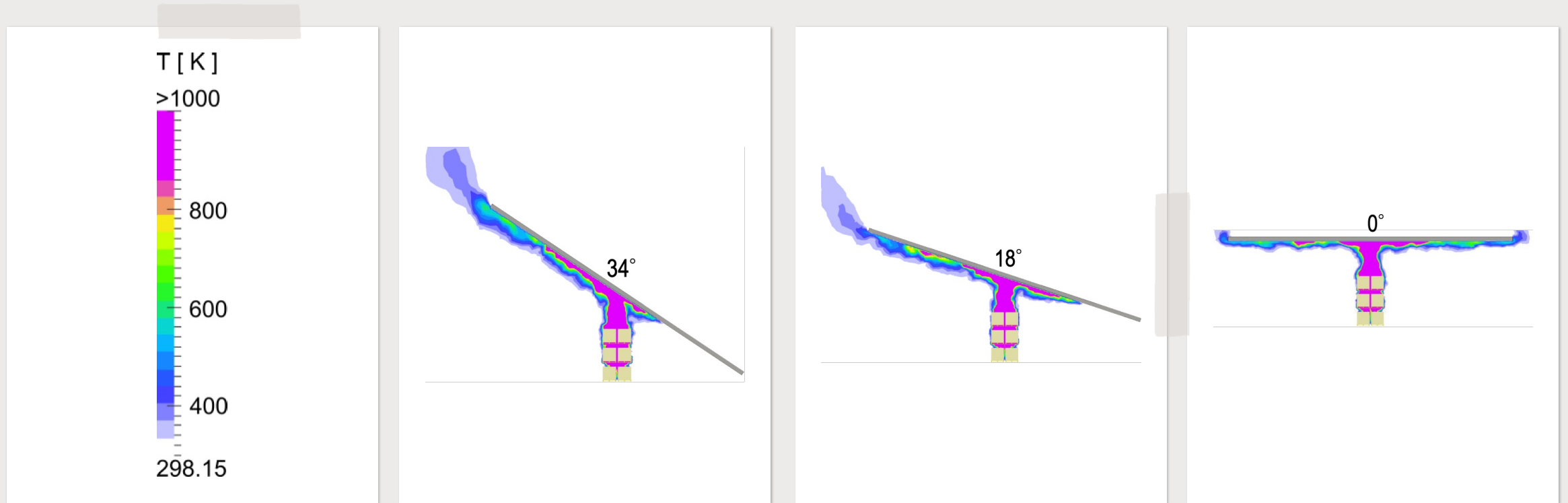
- Industrial-scale setup
 - 80 ft x 80 ft ceiling
 - 10 – 20 ft clearance
- 2:12 – 8:12 ceiling slopes (0° – 34° inclinations)
- Quick- and standard-response sprinklers
- Unobstructed and obstructed ceiling construction
 - 4 – 24 in. deep purlins, 5 ft spacing
 - 24 in. deep girders, 25 ft spacing
- Ceiling Ridge – 20 ft and 40 ft away



Numerical Model

- Industrial-scale setup
 - 3-tier high rack-storage of FM Global CUP commodity

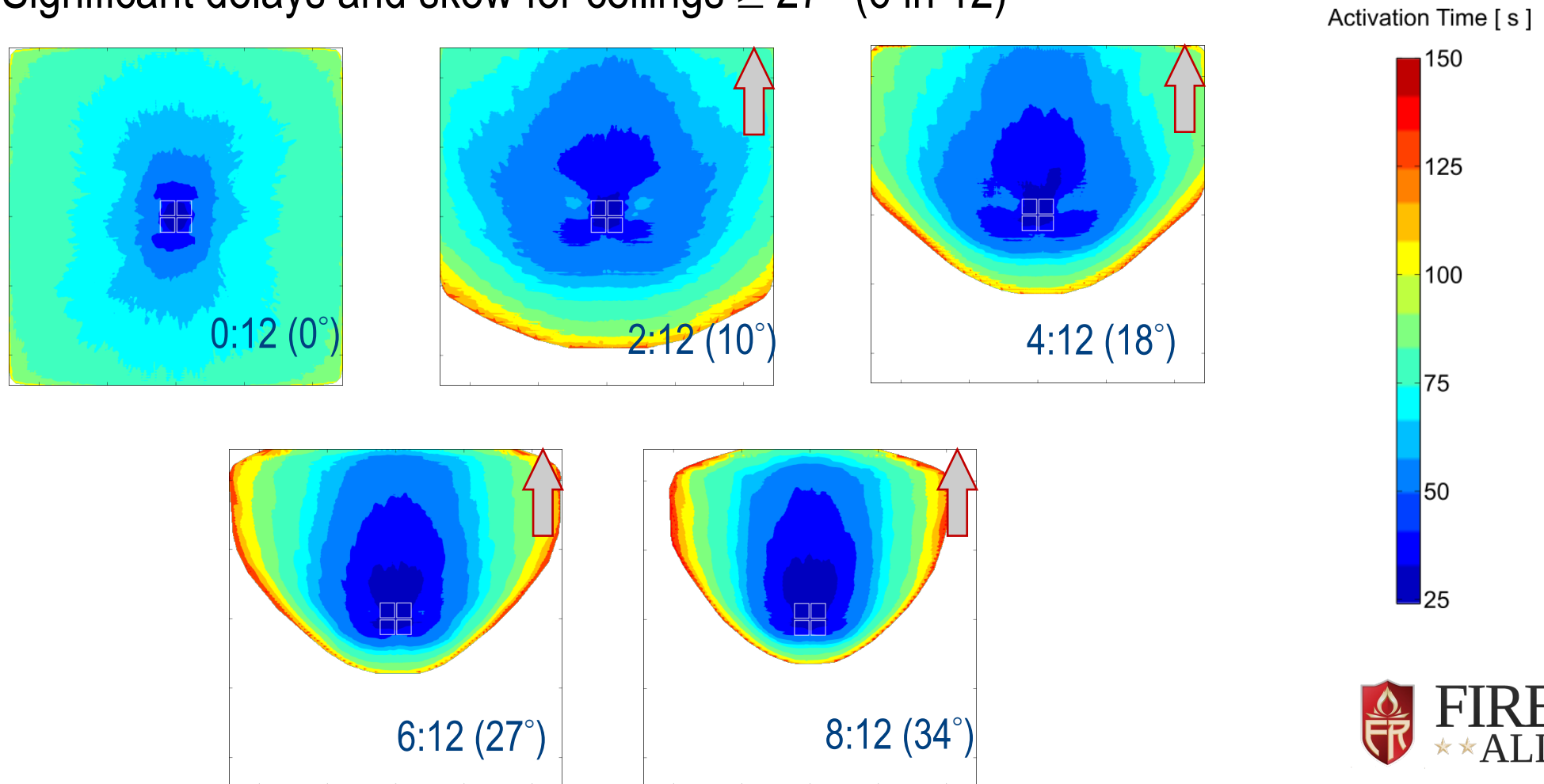




Effect of Ceiling Slope

Sprinkler Activation – Unobstructed Ceiling

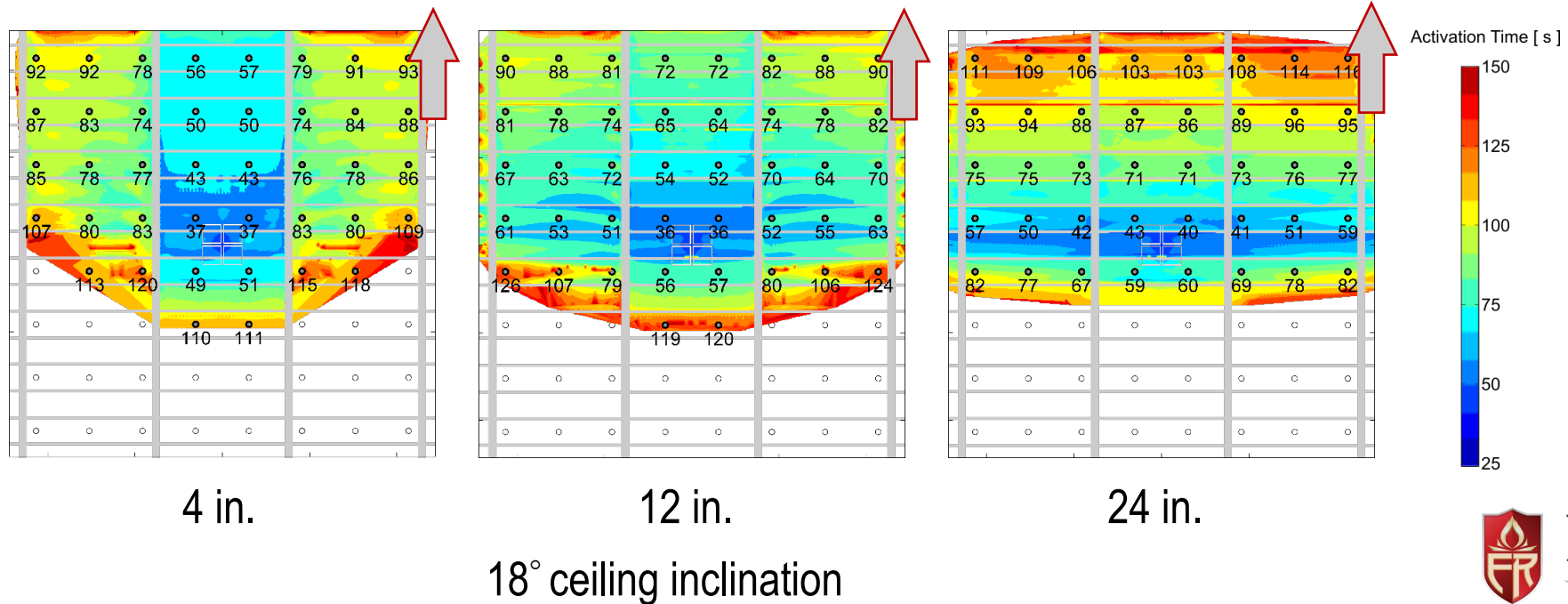
- Quick-response, ordinary temperature (QR/OT) sprinkler activations
 - Ceilings $\leq 18^\circ$ (4 in 12) similar to horizontal ceiling
 - Significant delays and skew for ceilings $\geq 27^\circ$ (6 in 12)



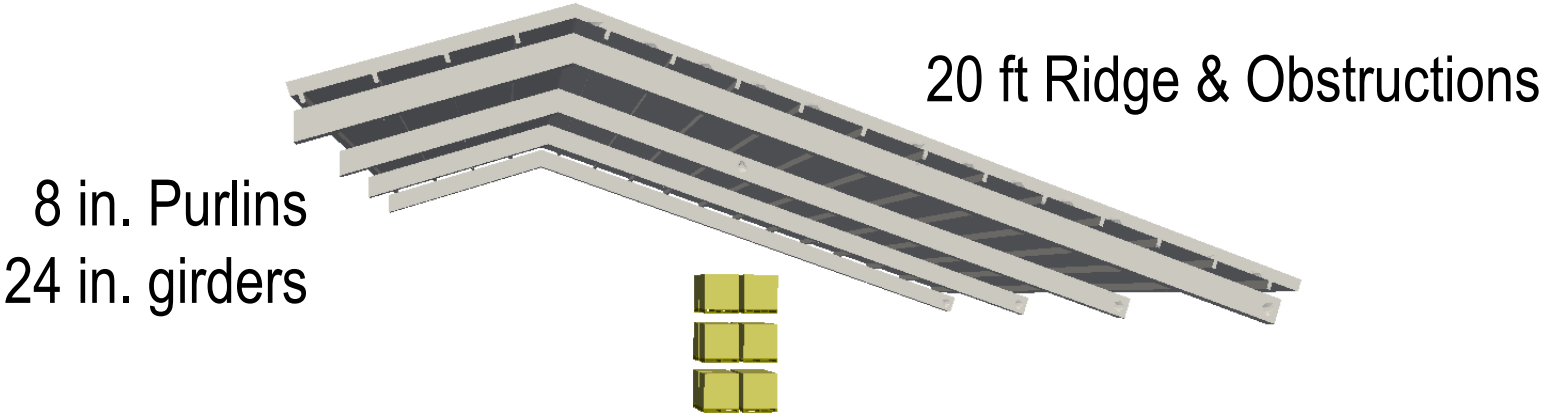
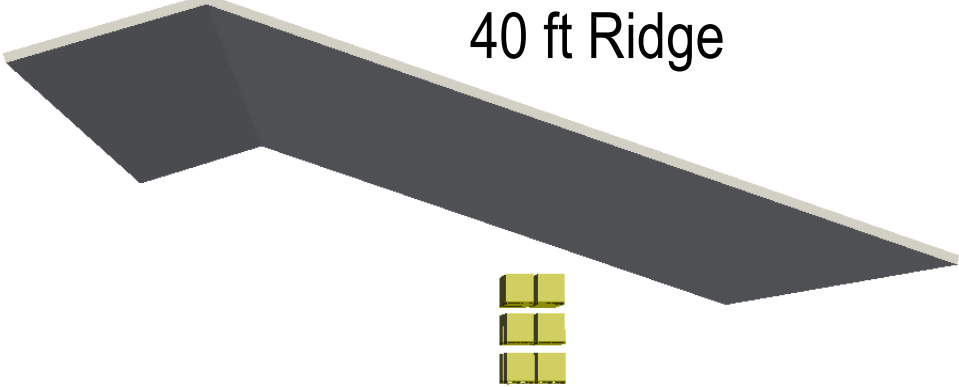
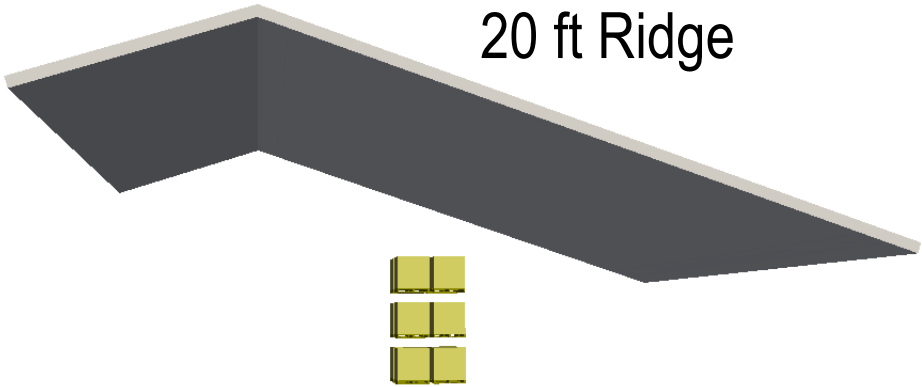
Sprinkler Activation – Obstructed Construction

QR/OT sprinkler activations:

Inclination	Purlin Depth			
	4 in.	8 in.	12 in.	24 in.
0°	●	●	●	●
10°	●	●	●	●
18°	●	●	●	●

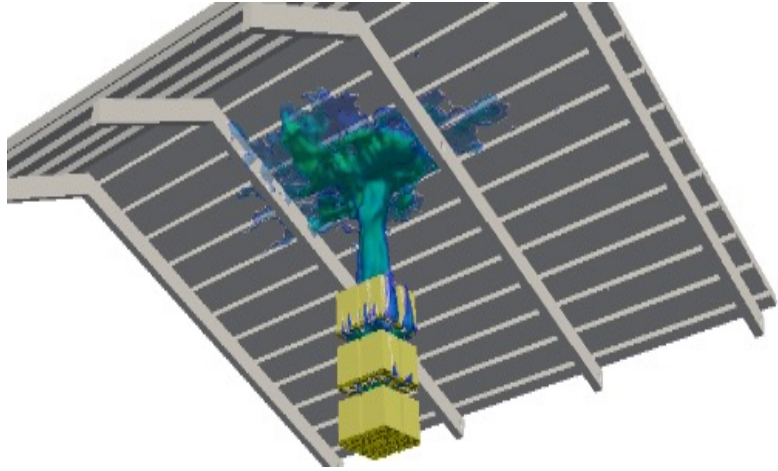
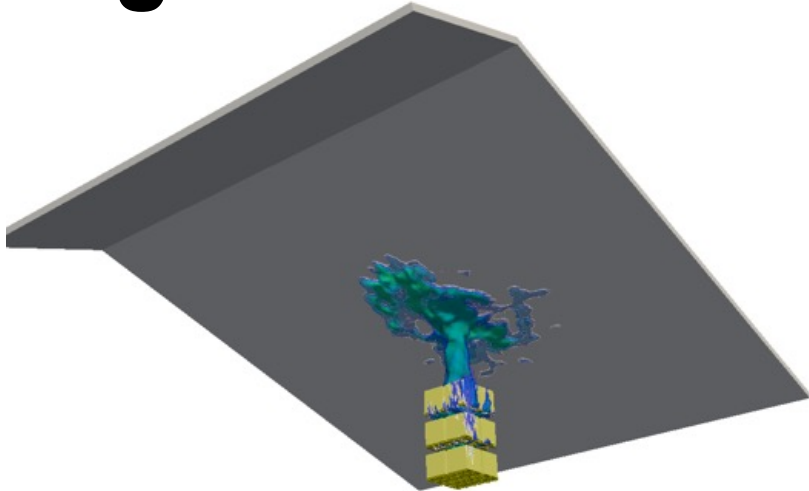
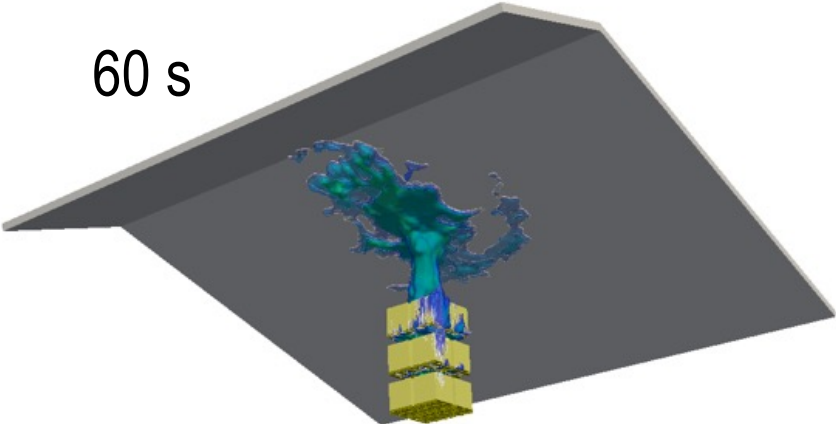


Ridge Simulations

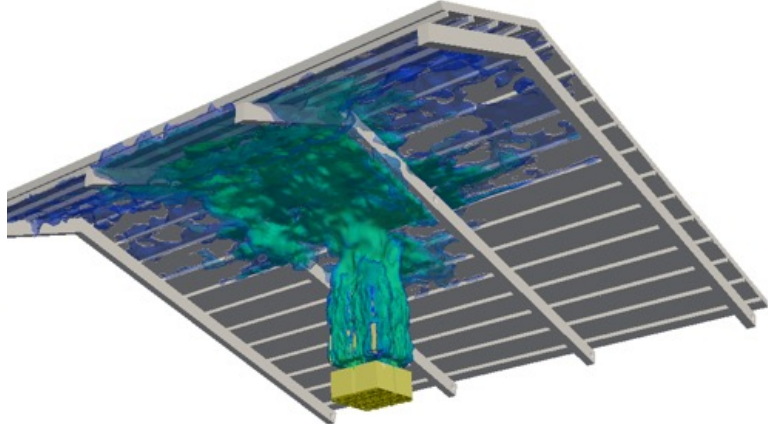
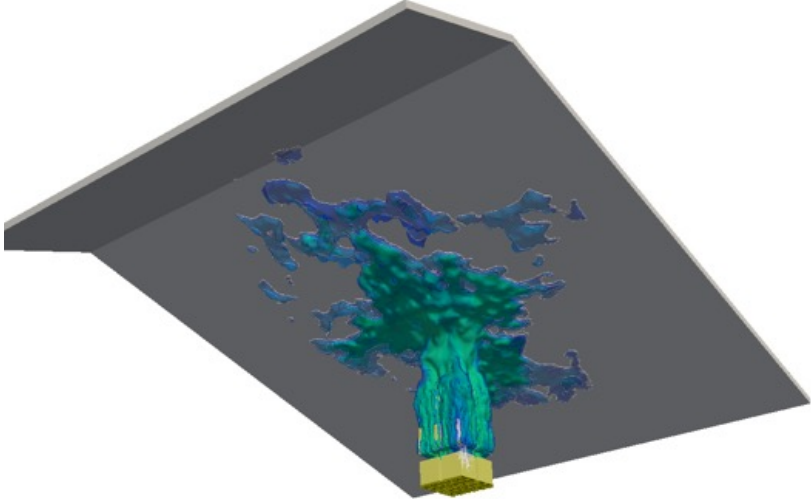
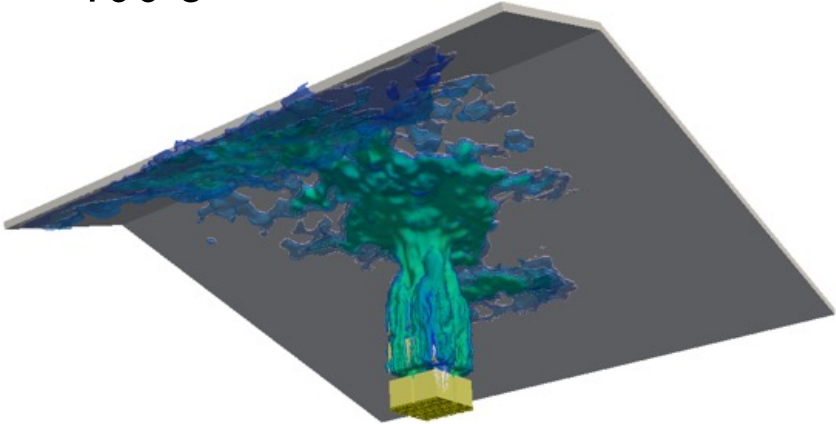


Ceiling Jet with Ridge

60 s

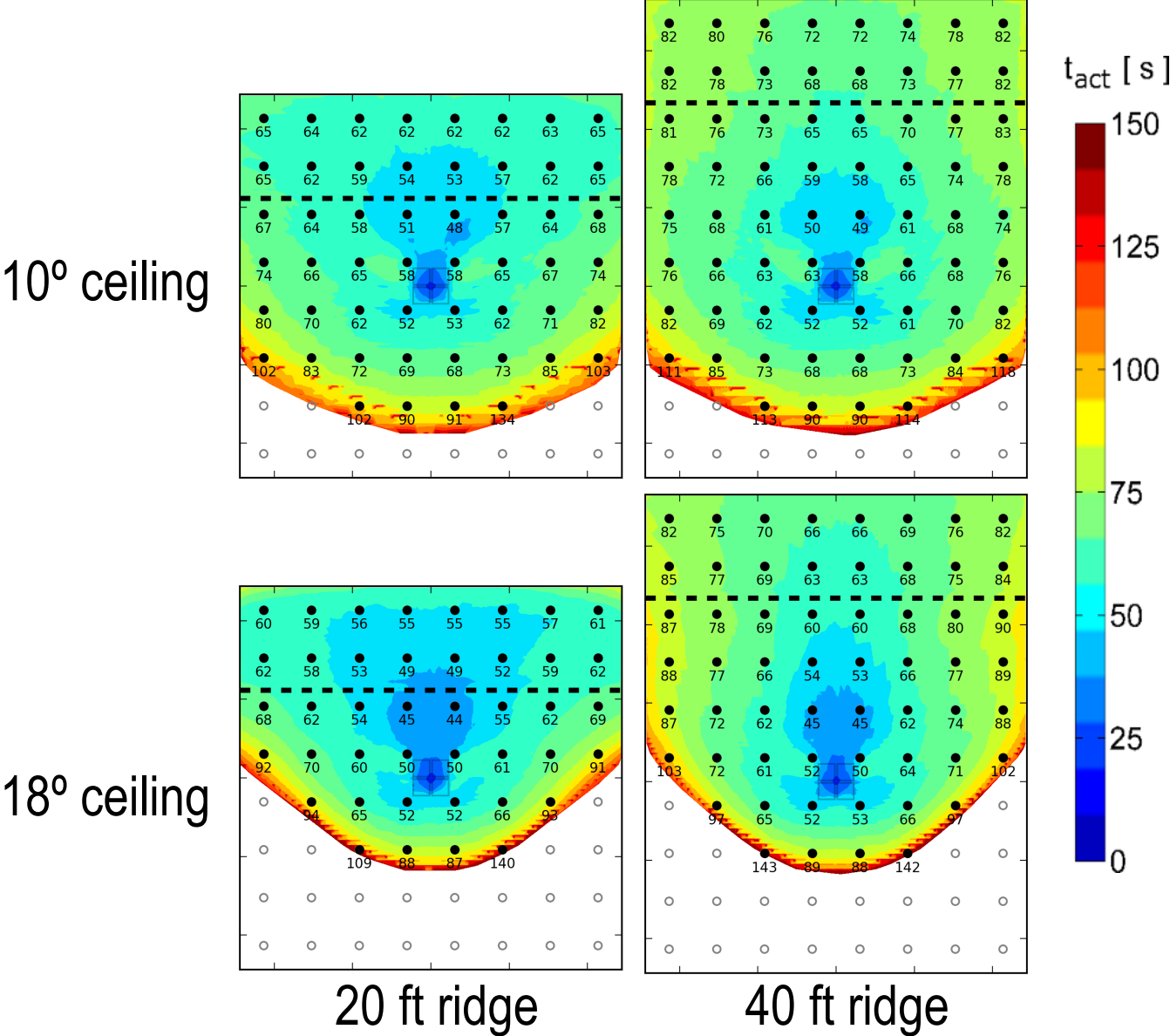


100 s



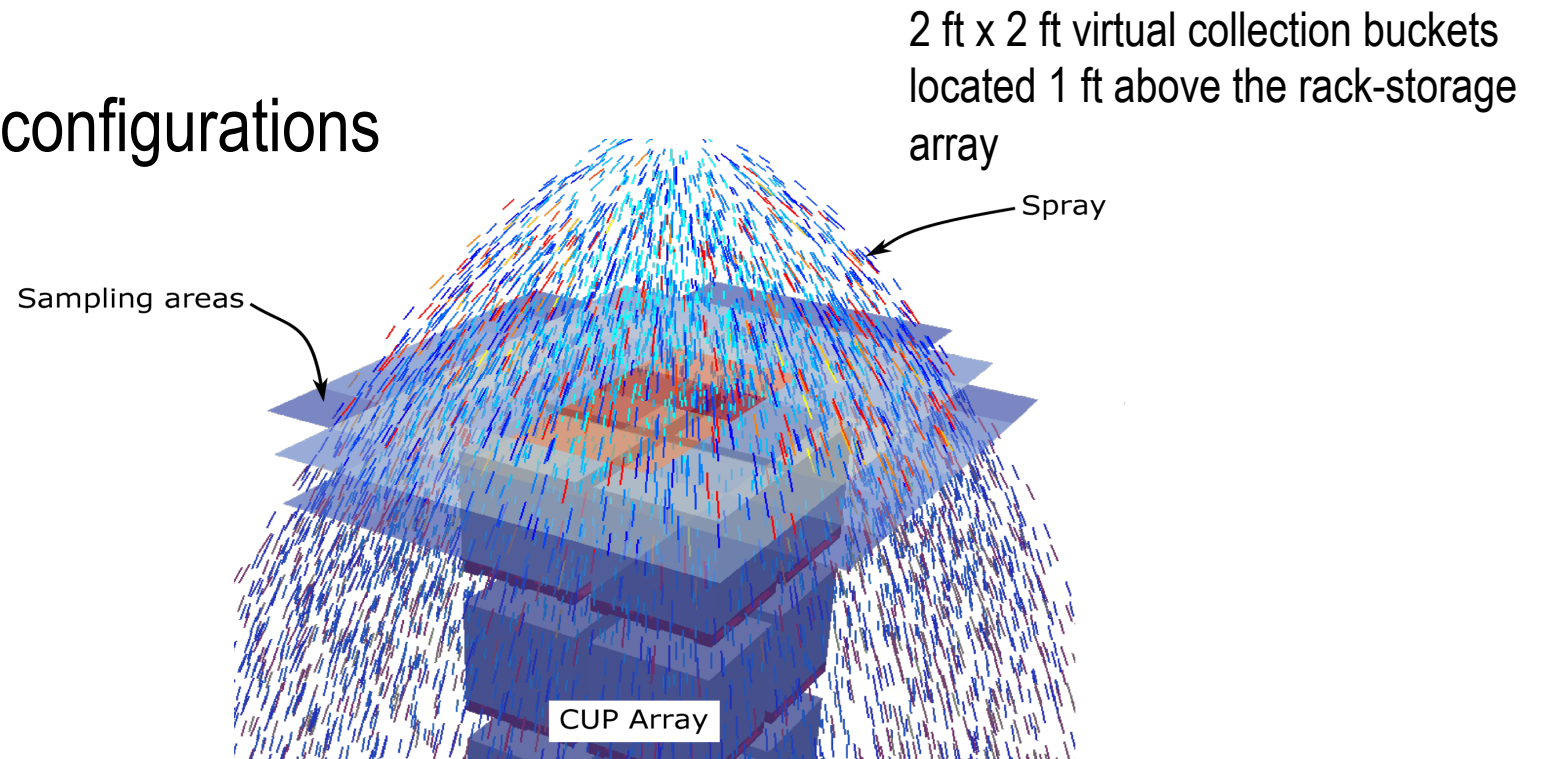
20 ft Ridge & Obstructions

Sprinkler Activation Comparisons



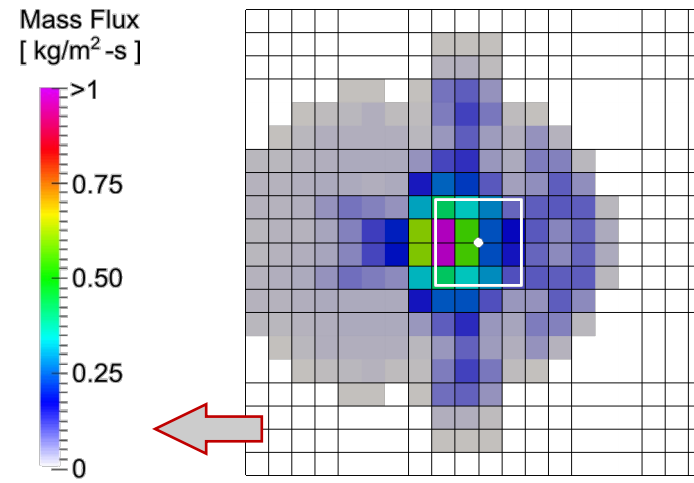
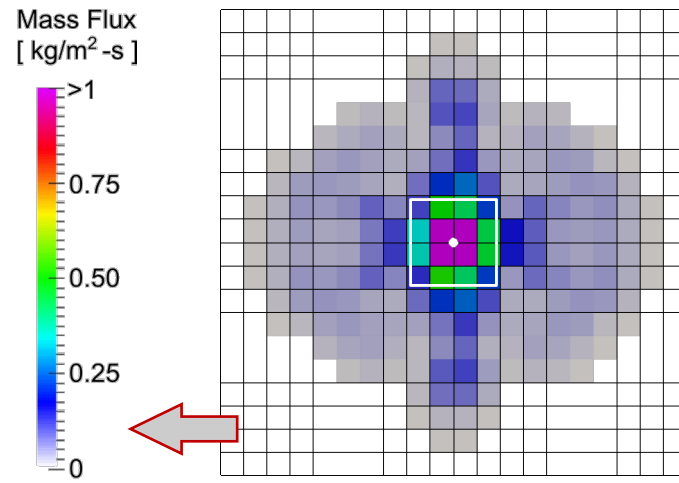
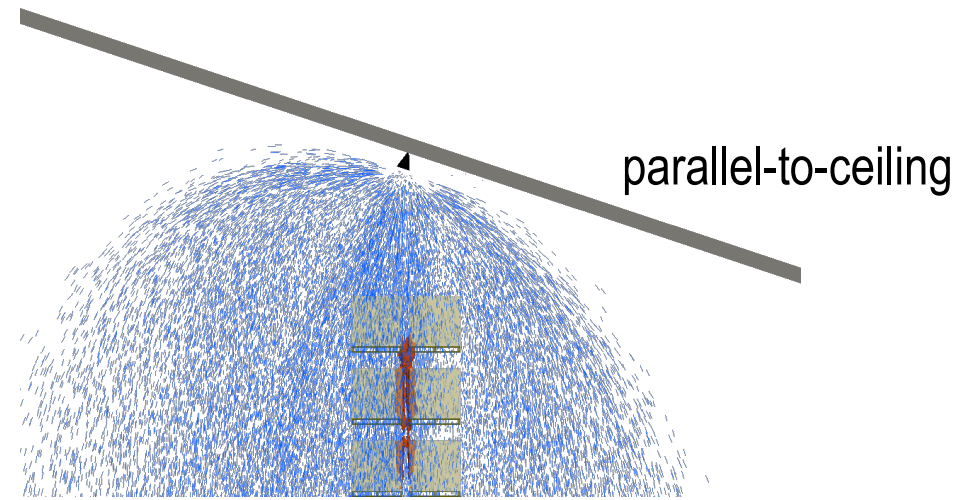
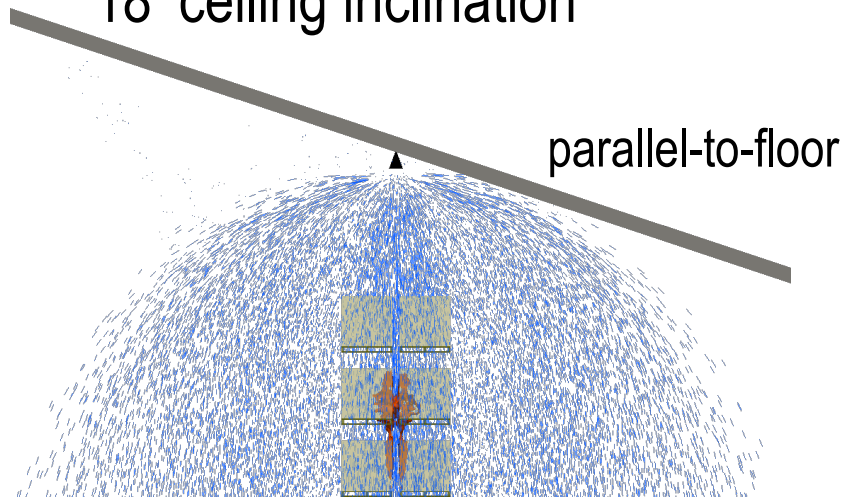
Sprinkler Sprays

- Sprinklers with Flow Rate ~100 gpm
 - K-14 pendent sprinkler
 - K-17 pendent sprinkler
 - K-11.2 upright sprinkler
- Single and four sprinkler configurations

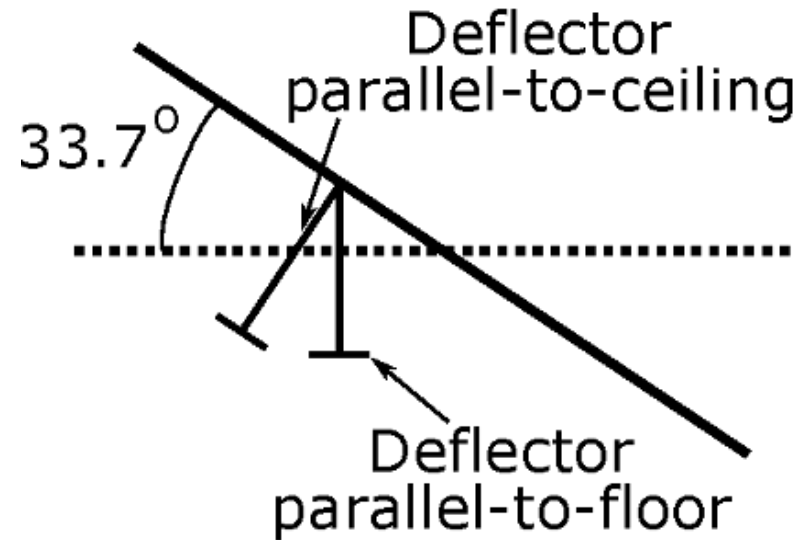


Water Flux – Single Pendent K-17 Sprinkler

18° ceiling inclination



Sprinkler Sprays

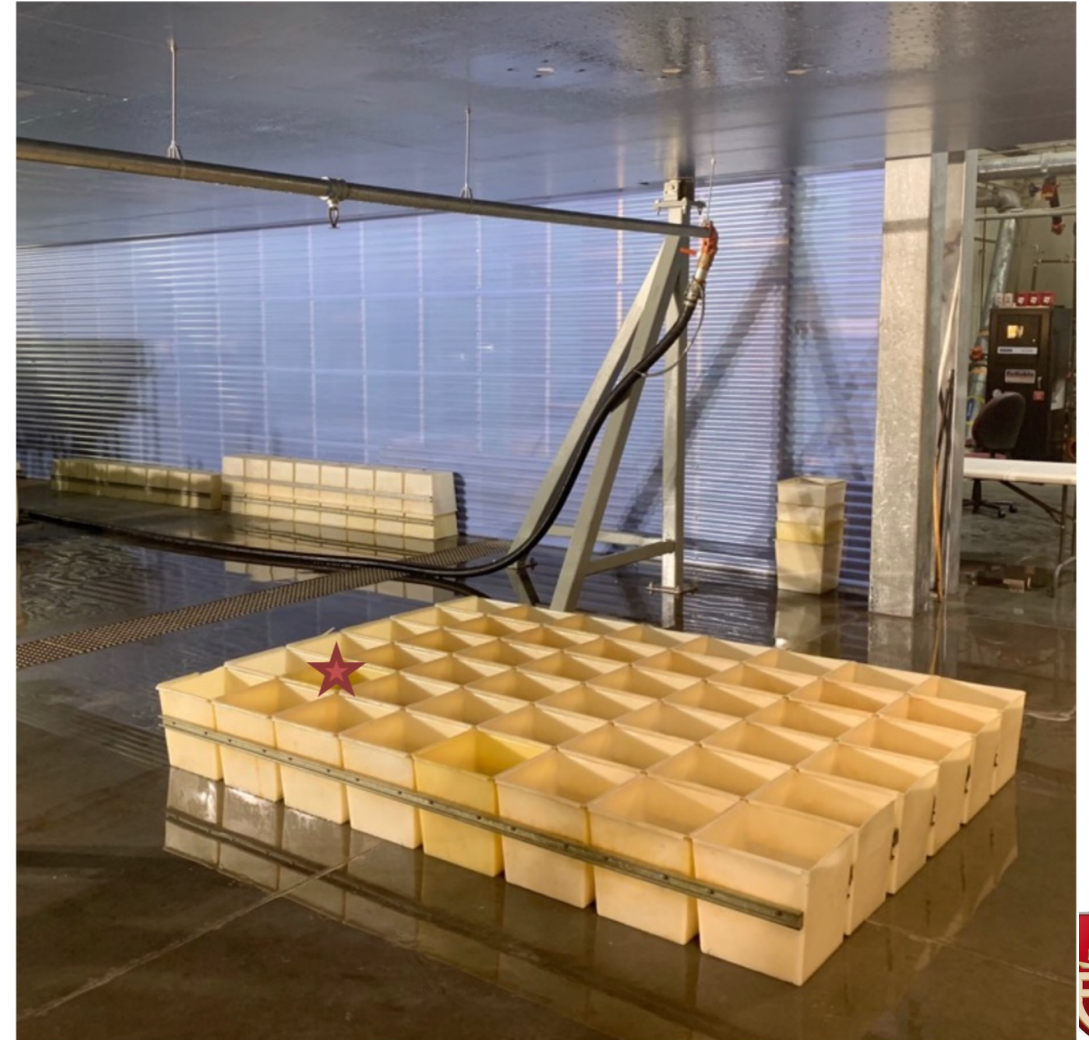


Deflector

- Evaluate ceiling slope effect on water distribution above rack-storage commodity
- Determine optimal sprinkler installation orientation
 - parallel-to-floor
 - parallel-to-ceiling

Sloped Ceiling Tests @ Reliable

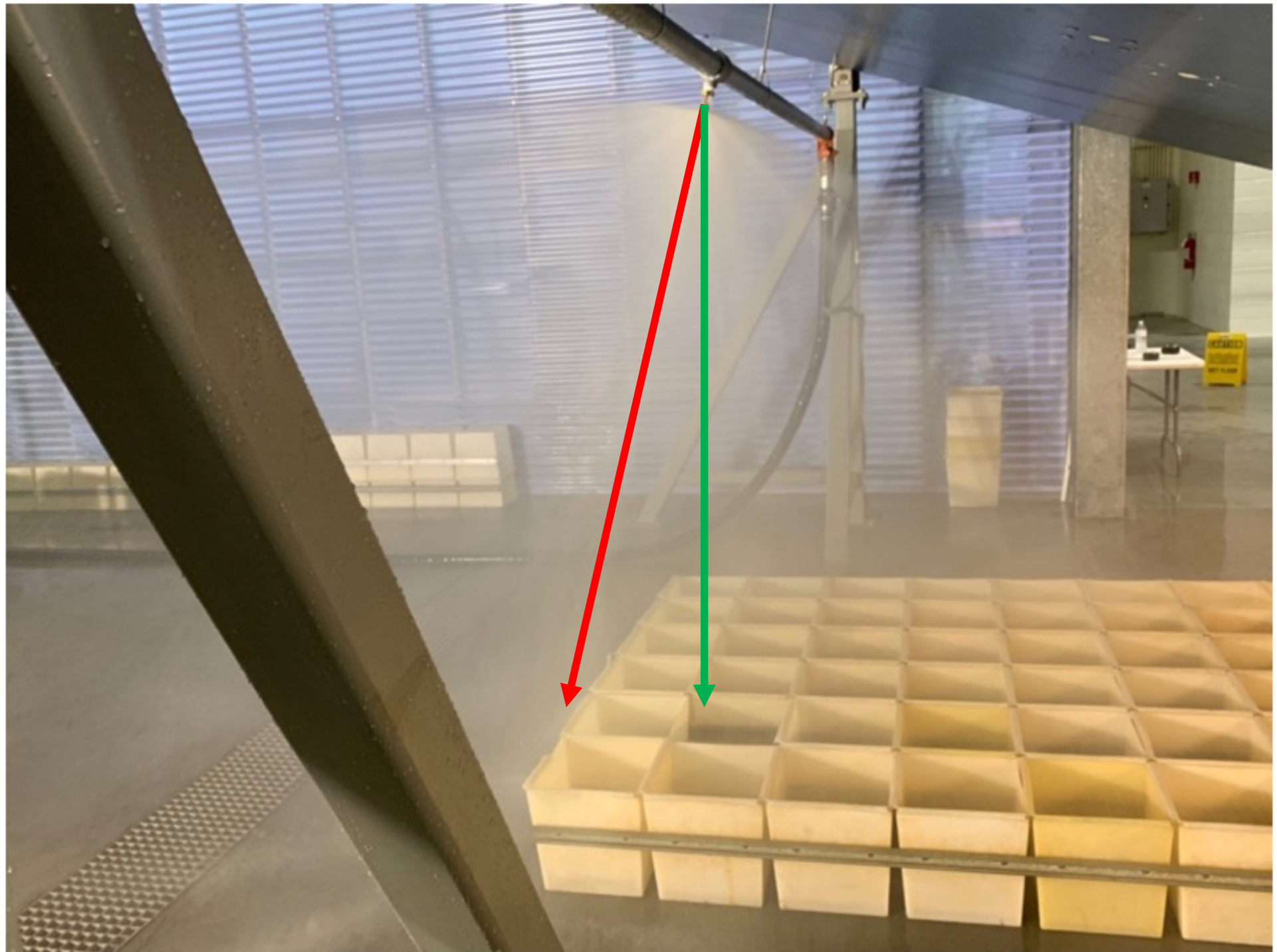
Sprinkler Manufacturer	1	2	
K-factor	14	16.8	
Pressure (psi)	35	50	75
Ceiling Slope	0:12	4:12	
Nominal Standoff Distance	8"	18"	
Deflector Parallel Orientation	Ceiling	Floor	



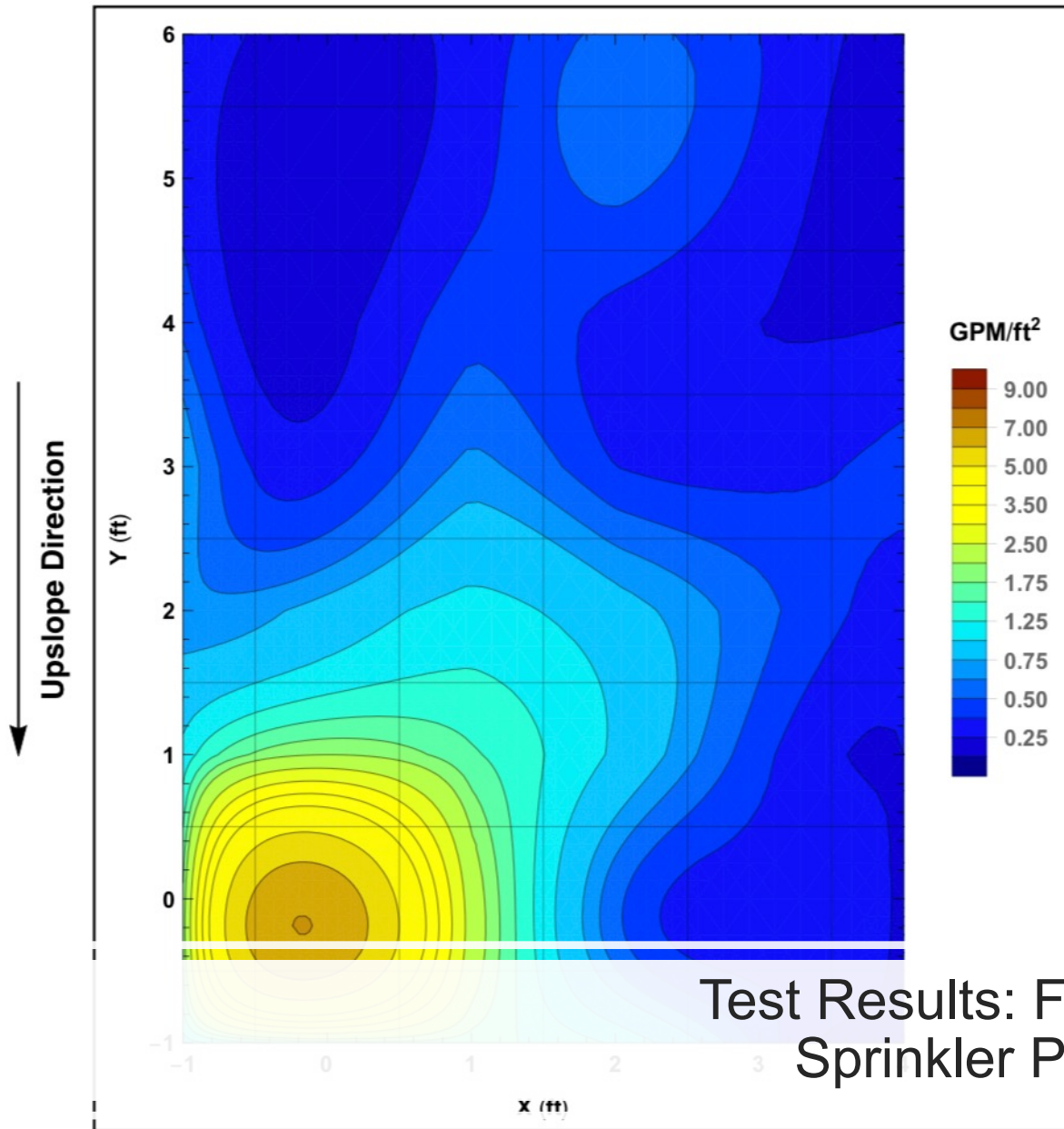


Test Matrix

		K-Factor	14		16.8	
		Sprinkler	A	B	C	D
Ceiling Slope: 0:12 (0°) Deflector Parallel to the Floor Nominal Standoff Distance: 18"	Pressure (psi)	35	Test 02	Test 06	Test 10	Test 07
		50	Test 01	Test 05	Test 09	Test 08
		75	Test 03	Test 04	-	-
Ceiling Slope: 4:12 (18.4°) Deflector Parallel to the Ceiling Nominal Standoff Distance: 18"		35	-	-	Test 11	Test 14
		50	Test 18	Test 15	Test 12	Test 13
		75	Test 17	Test 16	-	-
Ceiling Slope: 4:12 (18.4°) Deflector Parallel to the Floor Nominal Standoff Distance: 18"		35	-	-	-	-
		50	Test 19	-	-	-
		75	Test 20	-	-	-
Ceiling Slope: 4:12 (18.4°) Deflector Parallel to the Floor Nominal Standoff Distance: 8"		35	-	-	Test 21	Test 24
		50	Test 28	Test 25	Test 22	Test 23
		75	Test 27	Test 26	-	-
Ceiling Slope: 4:12 (18.4°) Deflector Parallel to the Ceiling Nominal Standoff Distance: 8"	35	-	-	Test 33	Test 36	
	50	Test 29	Test 32	Test 34	Test 35	
	75	Test 30	Test 31	-	-	

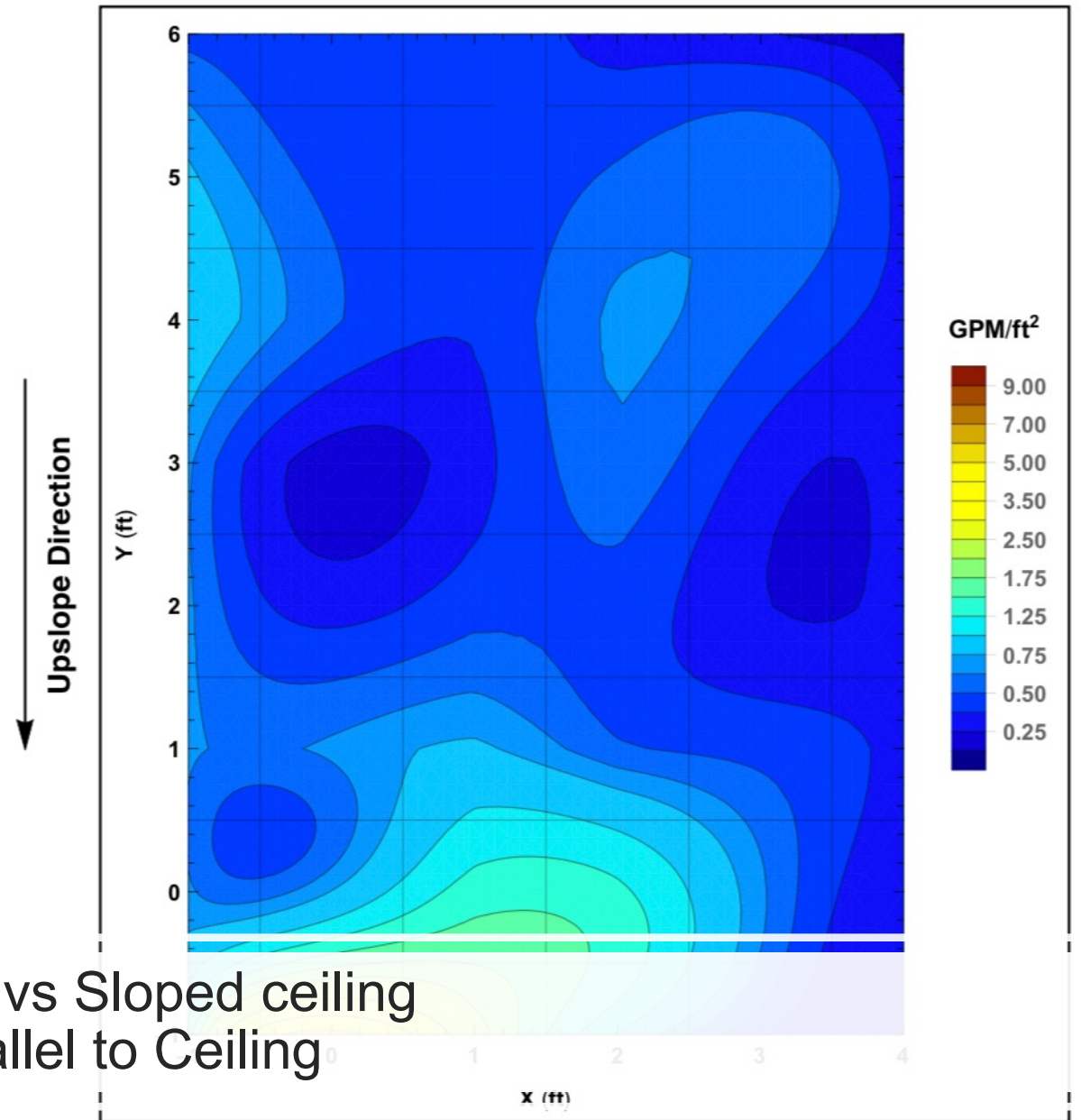


Test: 01; Sprinkler: A (K14); Pressure: 50 psi; Slope: 0



Deflector Height: 72"; Standoff Distance: 19.0";
Deflector Orientation: Parallel to Ceiling

Test: 18; Sprinkler: A (K14); Pressure: 50 psi; Slope: 4:12



Deflector Height: 66"; Standoff Distance: 18.0";
Deflector Orientation: Parallel to Ceiling

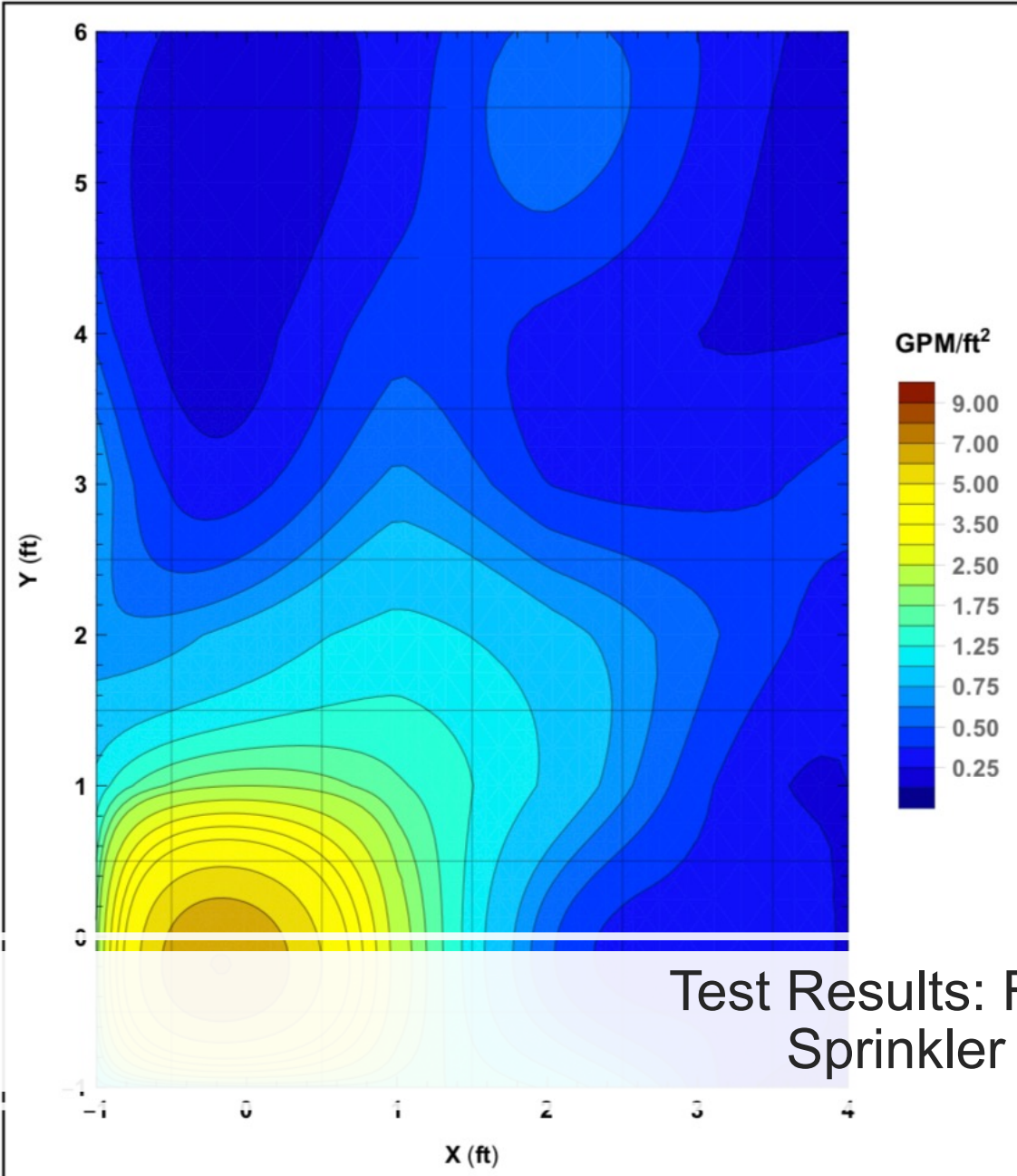
Test Results: Flat vs Sloped ceiling
Sprinkler Parallel to Ceiling



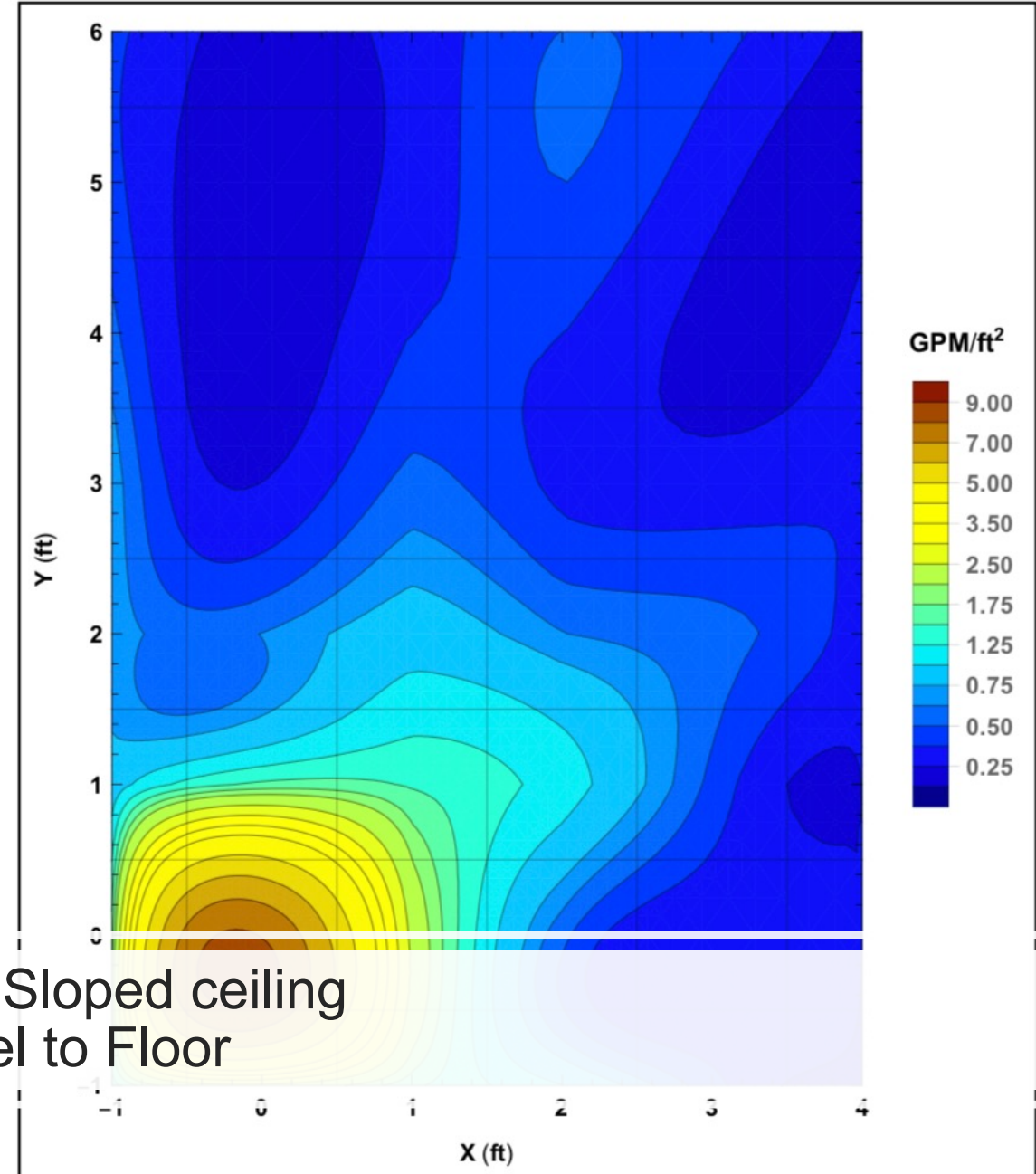
Test: 01; Sprinkler: A (K14); Pressure: 50 psi; Slope: 0

Test: 19; Sprinkler: A (K14); Pressure: 50 psi; Slope: 4:12

Upslope Direction



Upslope Direction



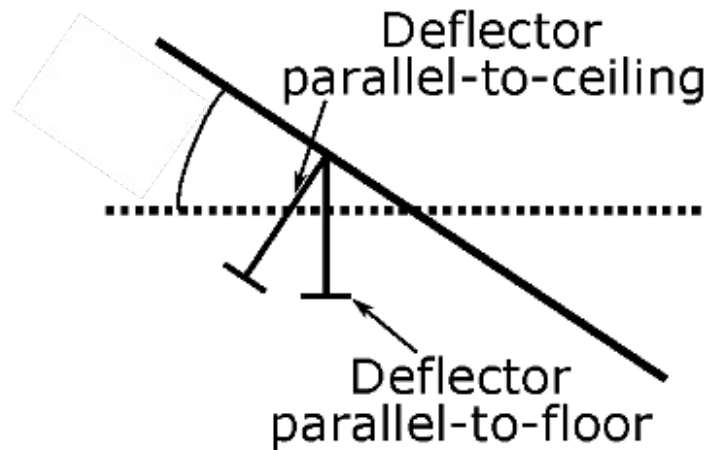
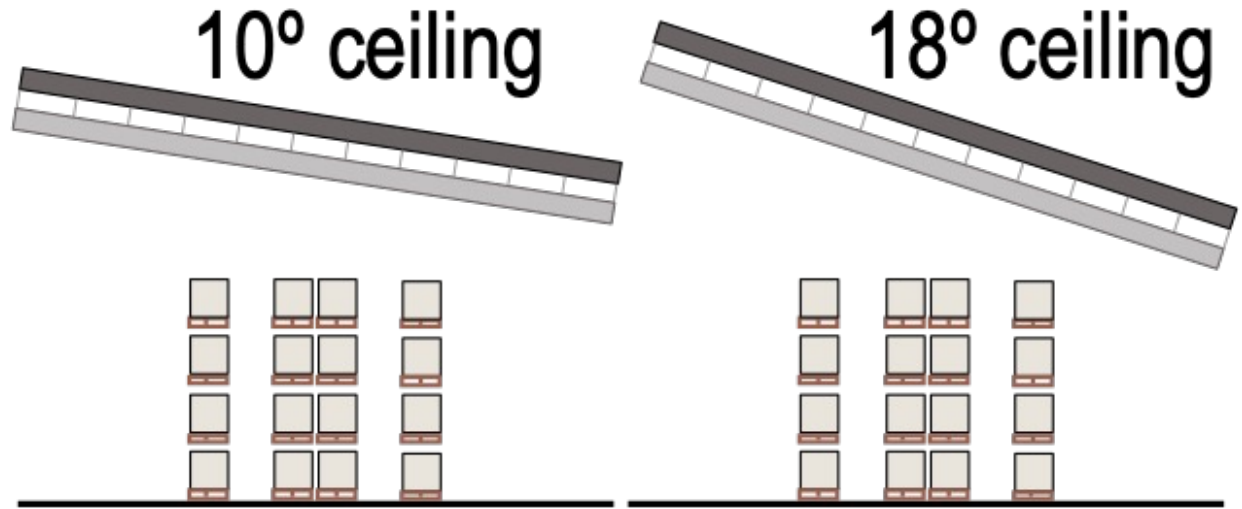
Test Results: Flat vs Sloped ceiling
Sprinkler Parallel to Floor

Deflector Height: 72"; Standoff Distance: 19.0";

Deflector Height: 66"; Standoff Distance: 19.0";

Sloped Ceiling Tests – Primary Variables

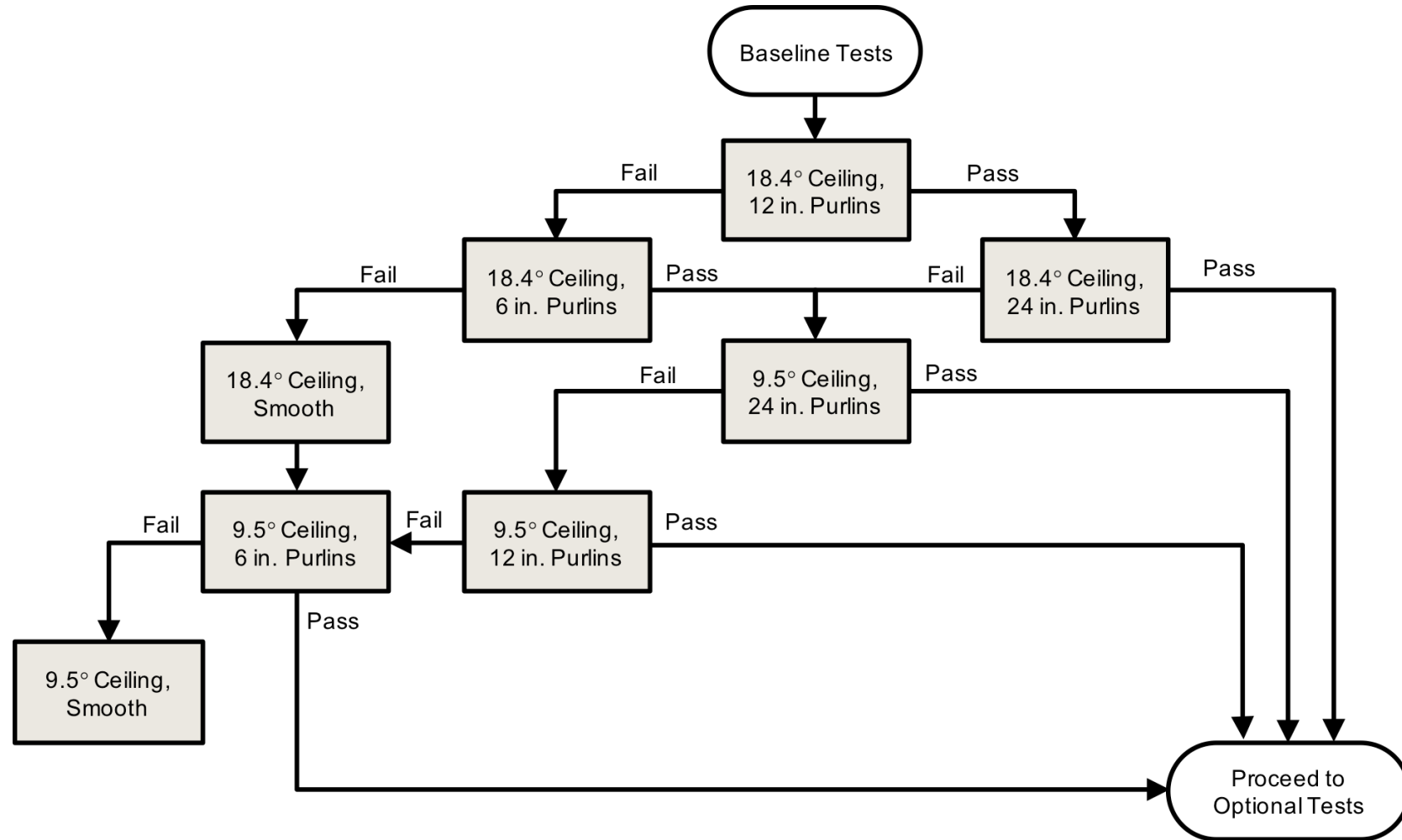
- Ceiling inclination
 - 10° (2 in 12)
 - 18° (4 in 12)
- Purlin depth
- Deflector orientation
 - Parallel-to-Floor
 - Parallel-to-Ceiling



Deflector

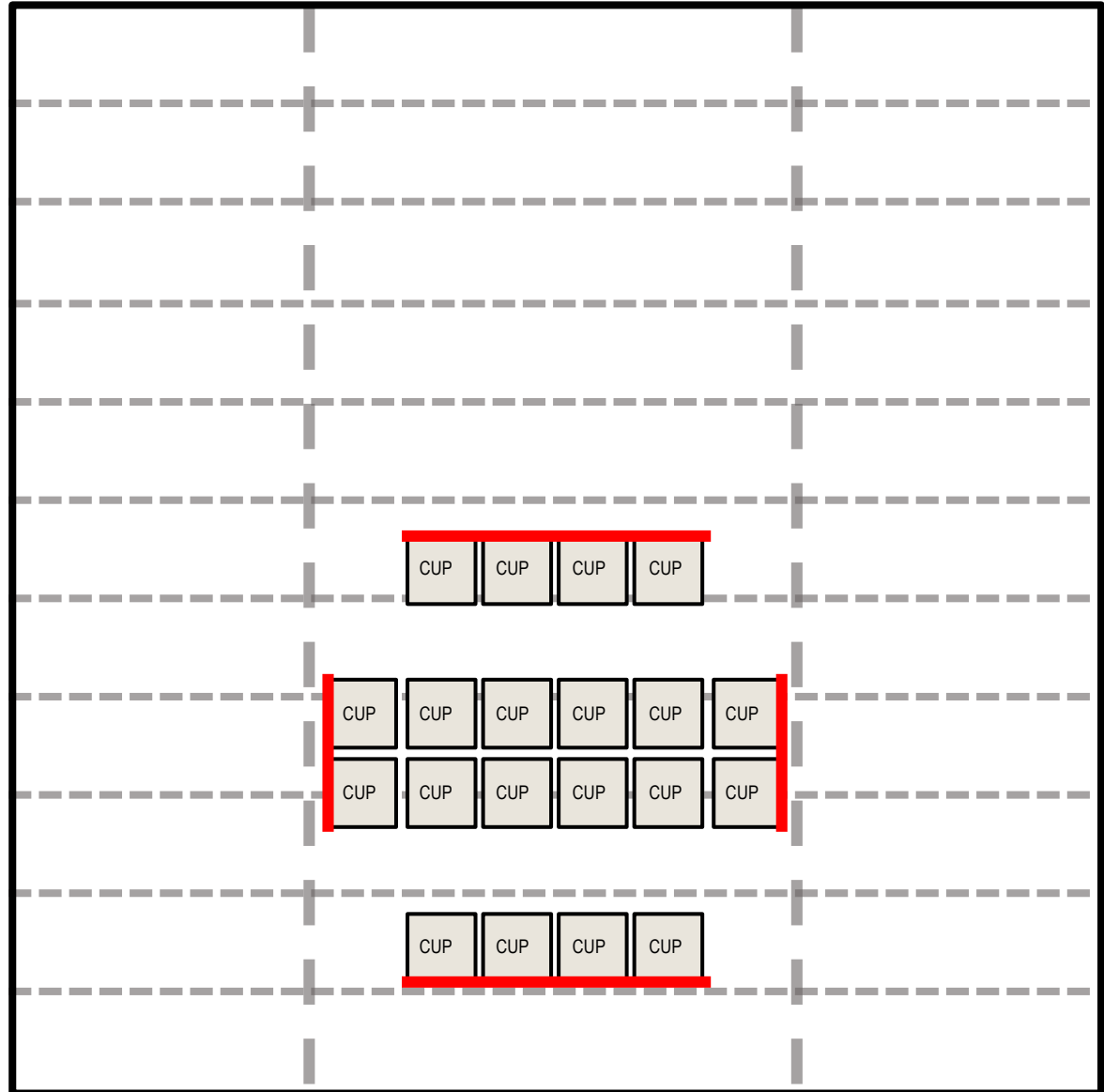
Sloped Ceiling Tests – Test Progression

- Start with 18° ceiling and sprinklers deflectors oriented parallel-to-floor
 - Success – increase purlin depth
 - Failure – decrease purlin depth
- Once conditions for 18° ceiling established, examine 10° ceiling (if needed)



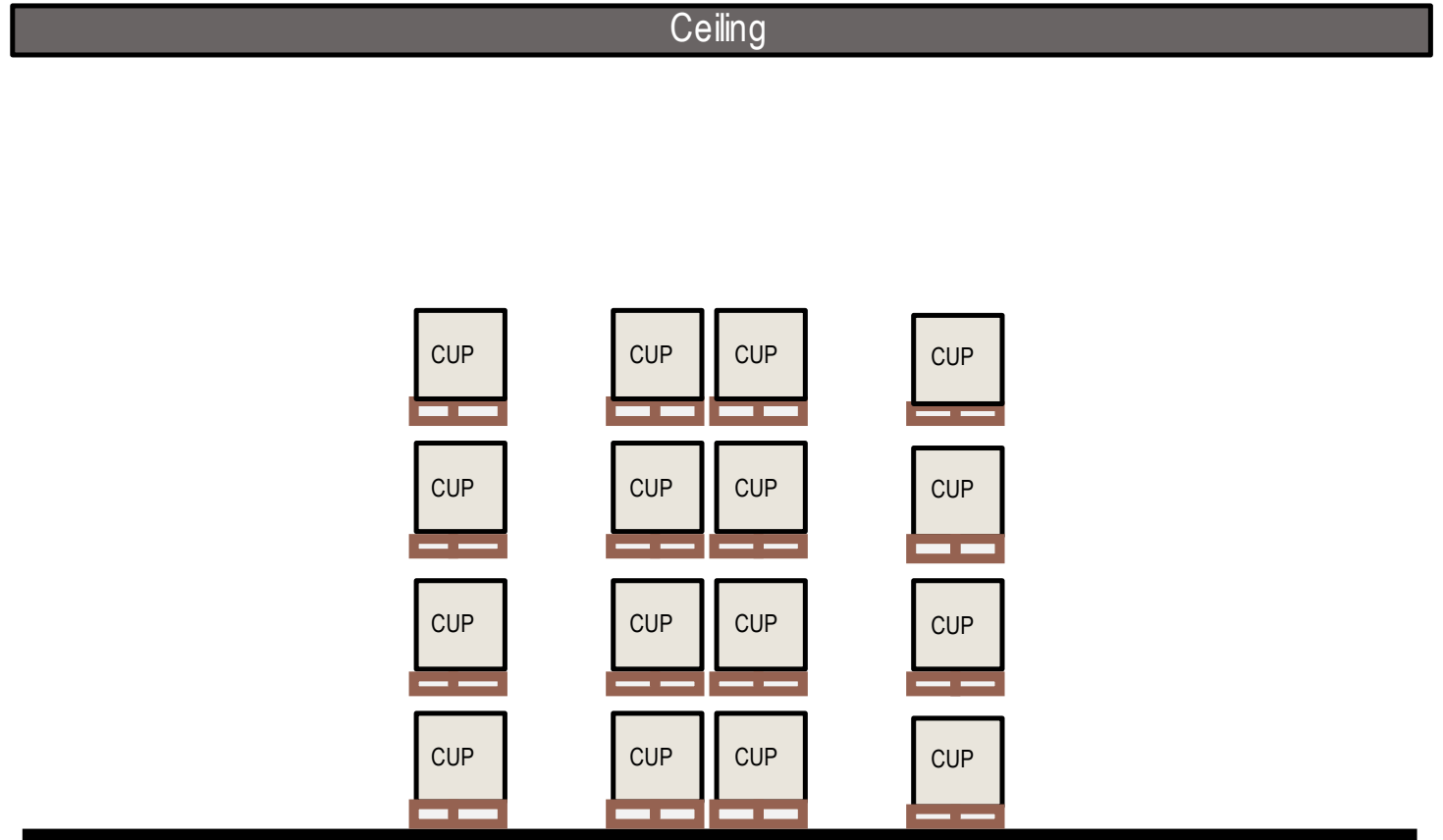
Evaluation Criteria

- Extent of fire spread
- Number of sprinkler activations
- Ceiling steel temperatures $>1000^{\circ}\text{F}$



Baseline Test

- Horizontal ceiling, no obstructions
- Benchmark suppression performance
- Start with K-16.8 at 35 psi (100 gpm)





Large-Scale Testing Results

	Baseline	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Test 4	Test 5	Test 6	Test 7
Slope (degrees)	0	18	18	10	10	10	10	18
Deflector Orientation	Floor	Floor	Floor	Floor	Ceiling	Floor	Floor	Floor
Deflector Distance from Ceiling mm (in)	330 (13)	330 (13)	460 (18)	460 (18)	460 (18)	610 (24)	610 (24)	460 (18)
Purlin Depth mm (in)	-	-	300 (12)	300 (12)	300 (12)	450 (18)	450 (18)	300 (12)
Purlin Channels Open/Closed	-	-	Open	Open	Open	Closed	Closed	Closed
Girder Depth mm (in)	-	-	600 (24)	600 (24)	600 (24)	600 (24)	600 (24)	600 (24)
First Sprinkler Operation (s)	82	78	74	82	76	97	83	73
Last Sprinkler Operation (s)	85	210	186	101	152	647	94	233
Total # Sprinkler Operations	3	10	13	6	4	9	7	7
Perimeter Sprinkler Operations	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Fire to Ends of main Array	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Aisle Jump	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No



Guidance

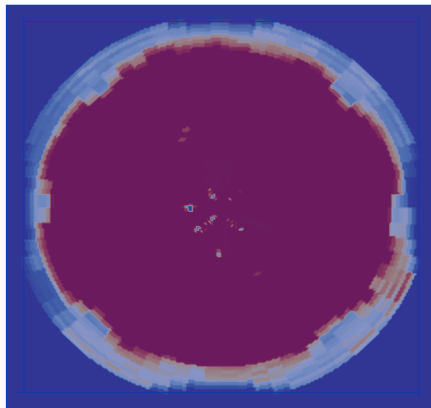
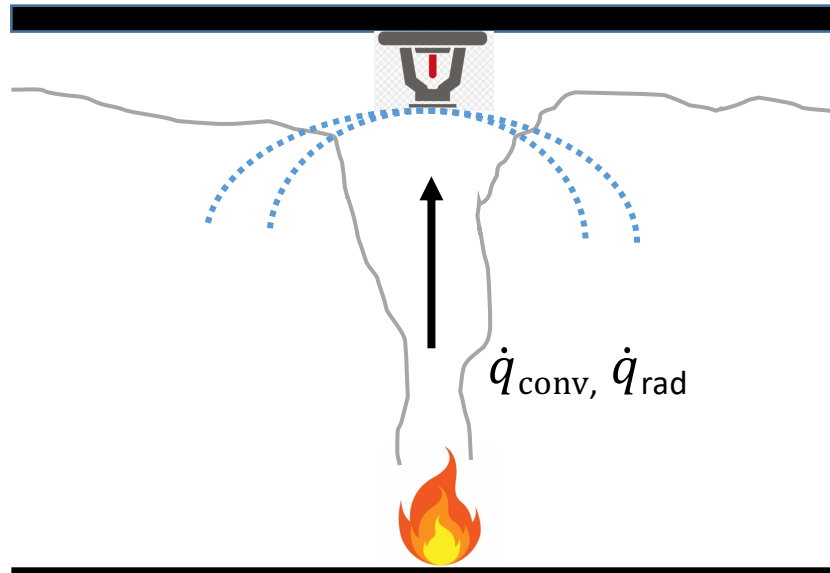
Protection guidelines are available

- NFPA 13: *Standard for Installation of Sprinkler Systems*
- FM Global Data Sheet 2-0: *Installation Guidelines for Automatic Sprinklers*

Max ceiling slope/inclination specified (now 4:12)

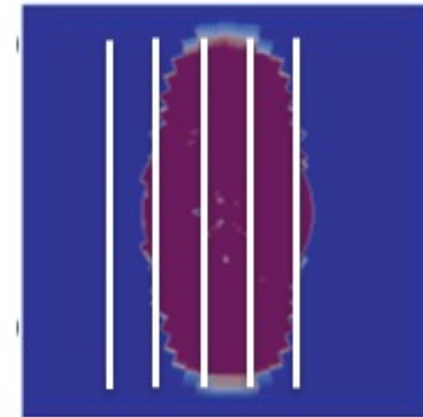
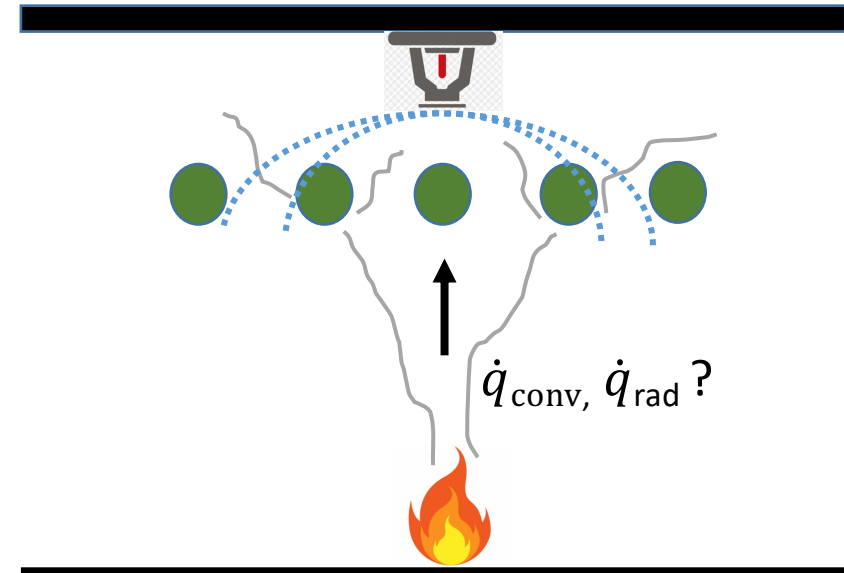
Require installation of drop ceiling or in-rack sprinklers for higher slopes

Challenge: Obstructions



Actual Delivered Density to Floor

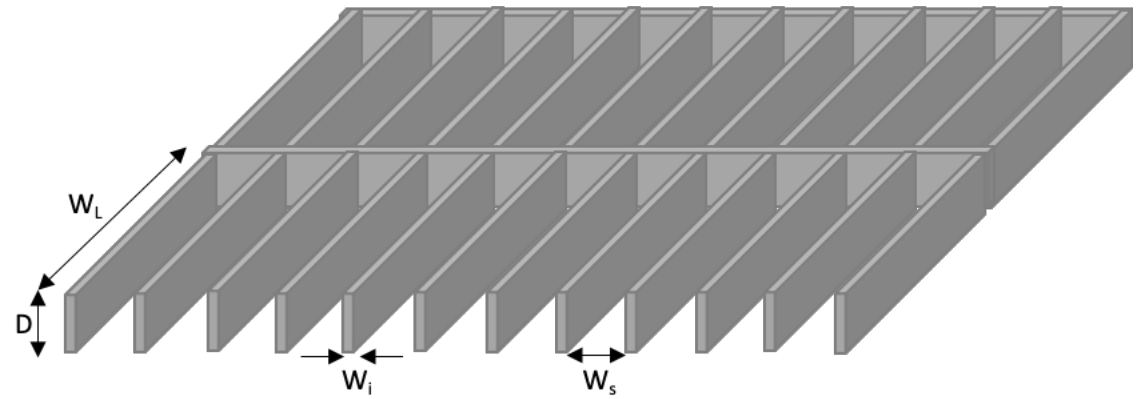
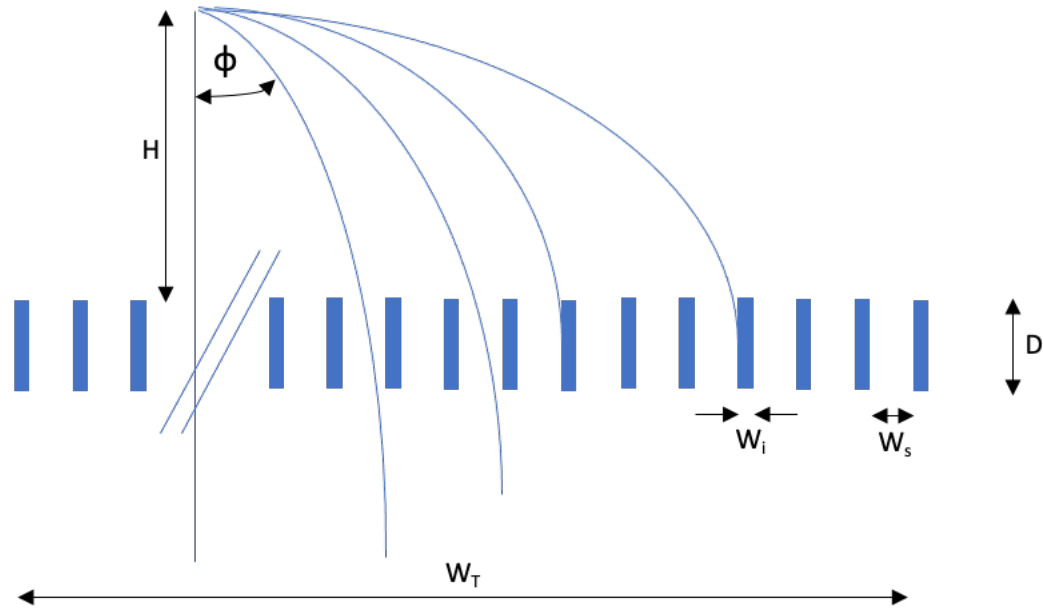
No Obstructions



Actual Delivered Density to Floor

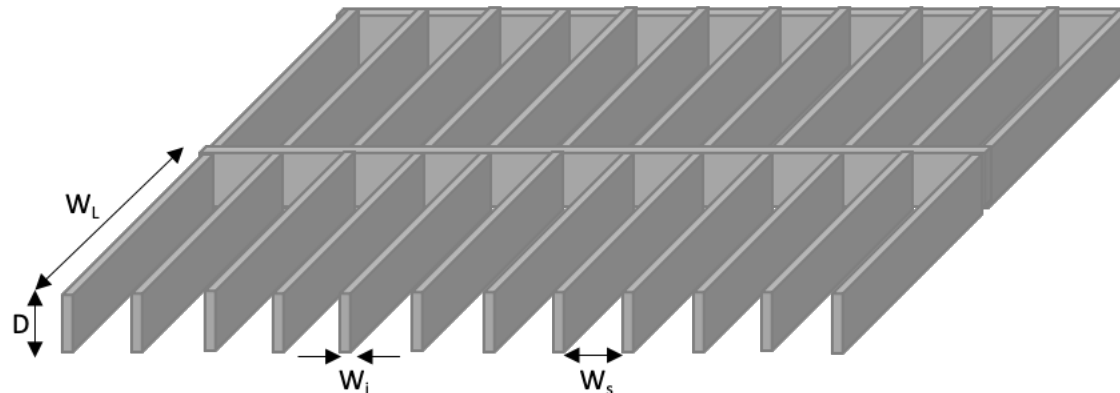
With Obstructions

Walkways, Ceiling Grates, Mezzanine, & Others

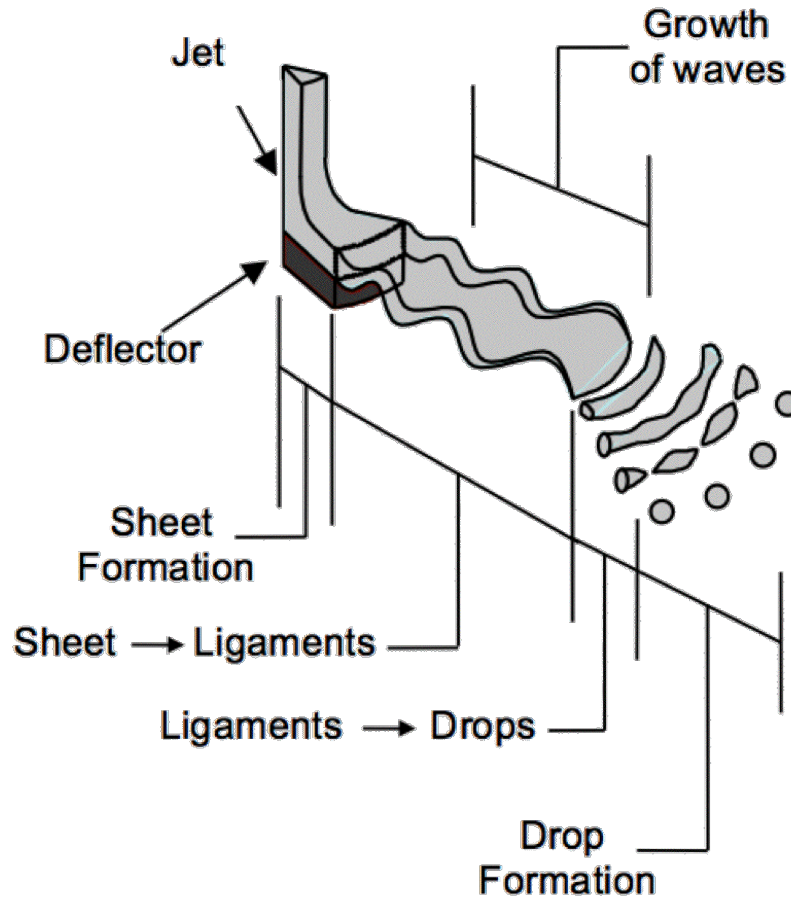


Research Plan: Modeling & Cold Flow Experiments

			K-Factor	11.2	17	22
Modeling Parameters			Sprinkler	1	2	3
Baseline No Mezzanine			7, 20, 50	NA		
D (in) = 1/4, 3/8, 1/2, 3/4, 1.0			Pressure (psi)	7, 20, 50	$W_T = 36, 44, 52, 60$	
L (in) = 1, 1.5, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6						
W_i (in) = 1/8, 1/4, 3/8						
W_s (in) = 1/2, 3/4, 1, 1.25, 1.5						



Background: Spray characteristics

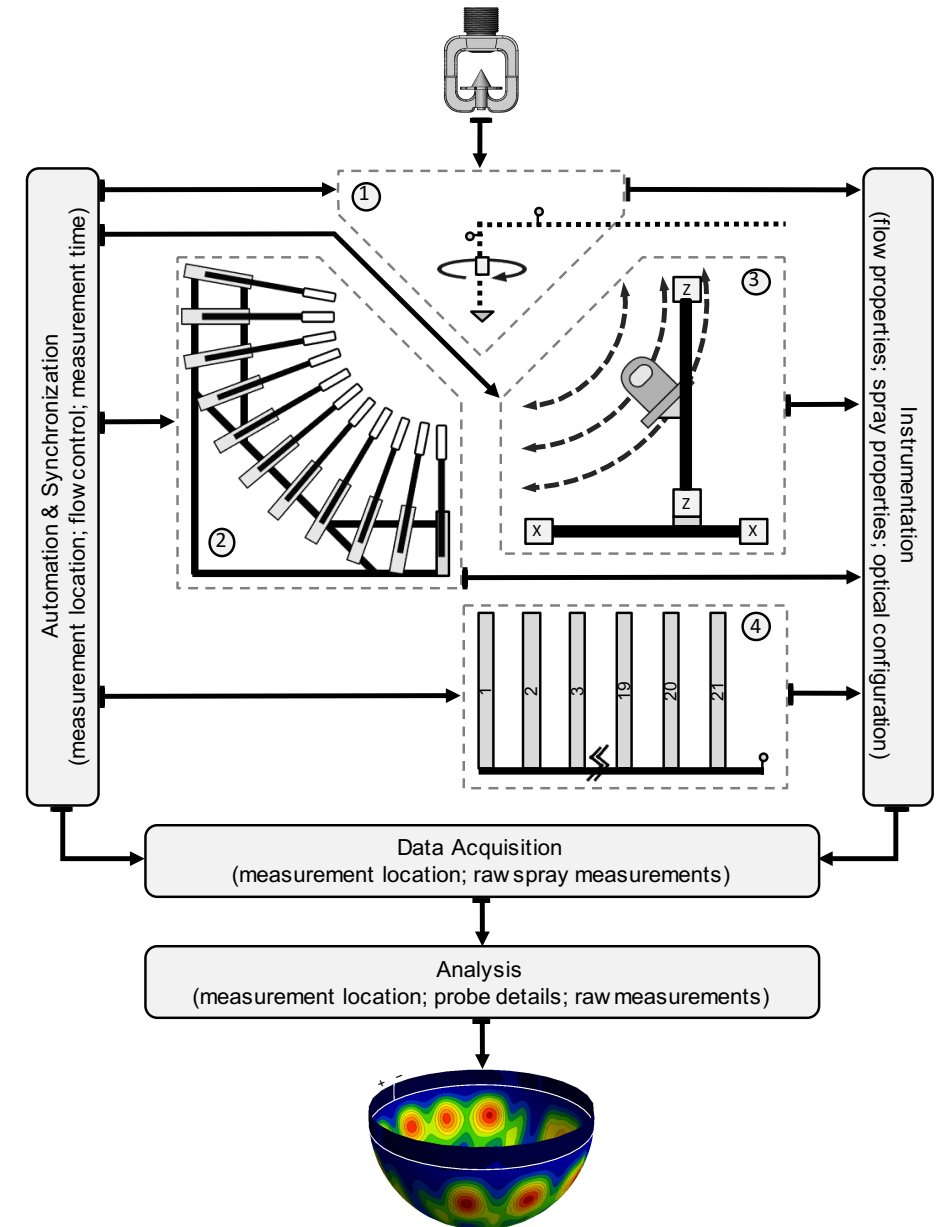


- Droplet formation differs for each sprinkler arrangement (k-factor, pressure, type).



Technology: 4S Spray Measurements

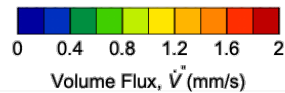
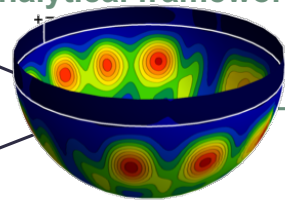
- Primary Subsystems:
 - (1) Flow Control & Sprinkler Rotation
 - (2) Mechanical Sphere Patternation
 - (3) Optical Sphere Patternation
 - (4) Integral Line Patternation
- Supported by:
 - Automation & Synchronization
 - Instrumentation
- Complete characterization of the discharged spray characteristics.
 - 1250 GB of data per characterization
 - After data reduction approaches: < 1 MB



Spray Characterization

Suppression evaluation Method

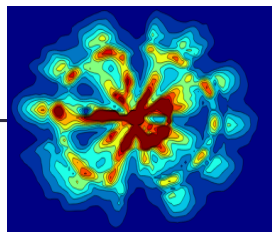
4S measurements + analytical framework



Answer to the fundamental question : What is the Spray

Spatially-resolved Spray Scanning System (4S)

Method of Direct Evaluation of Nozzle Spraying Performance



Unprecedented fast sprinkler spray evaluation

Answer to the fundamental question : Where does the water go?

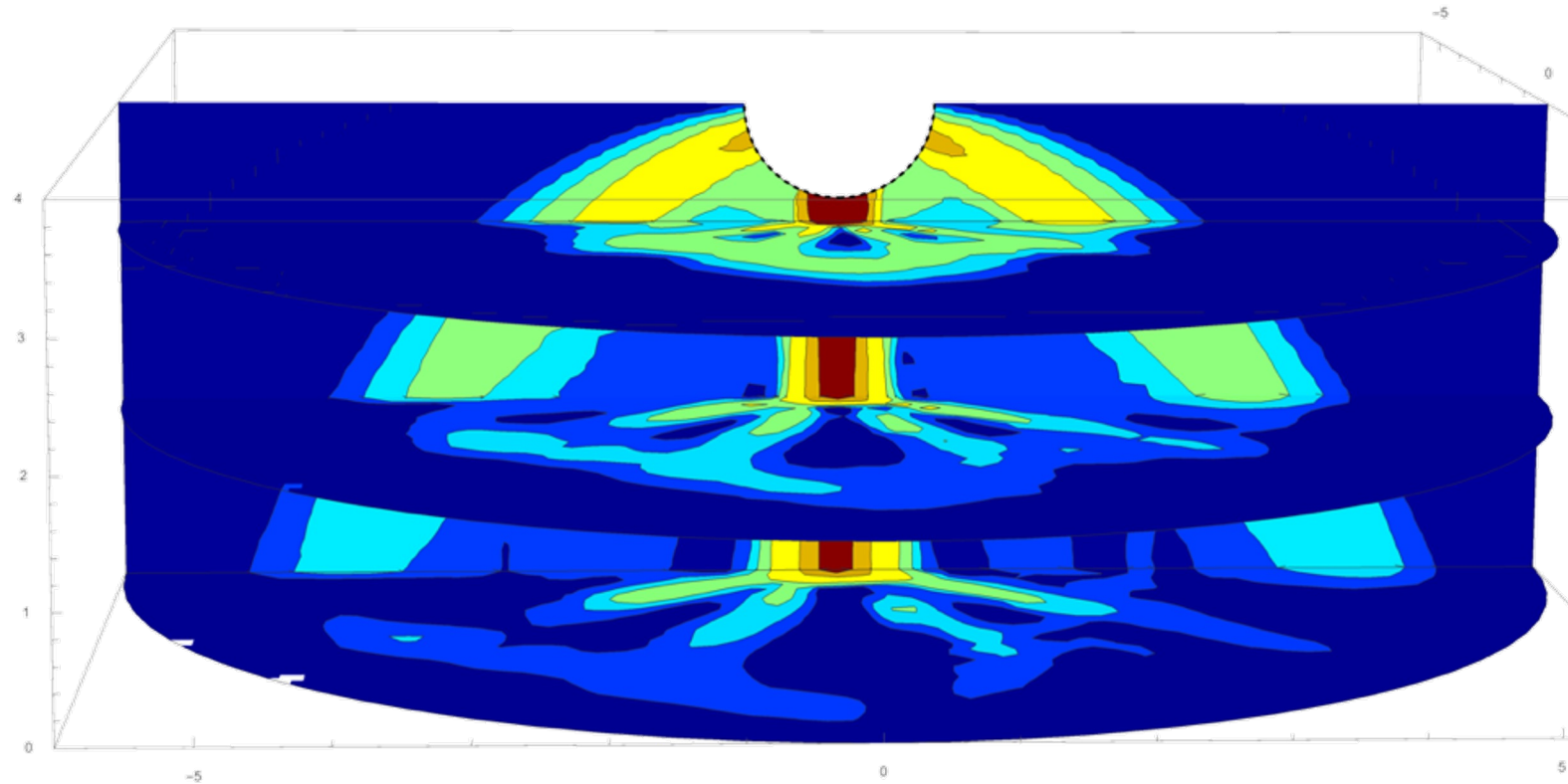
BIM Environment: Initialize the sprinkler spray

BIM Environment: Evaluate sprinkler performance

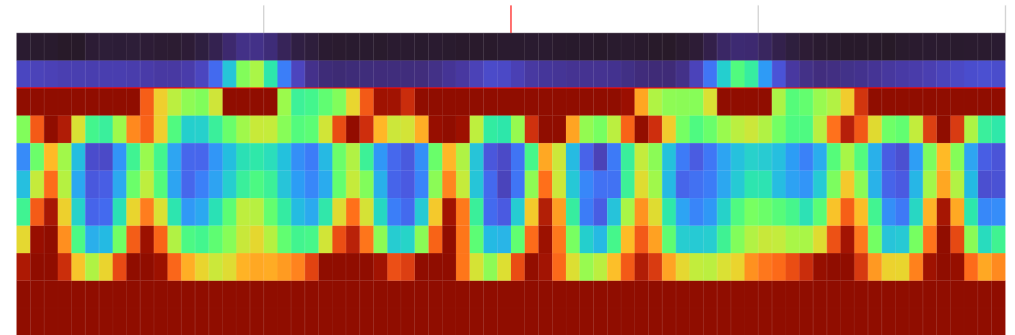
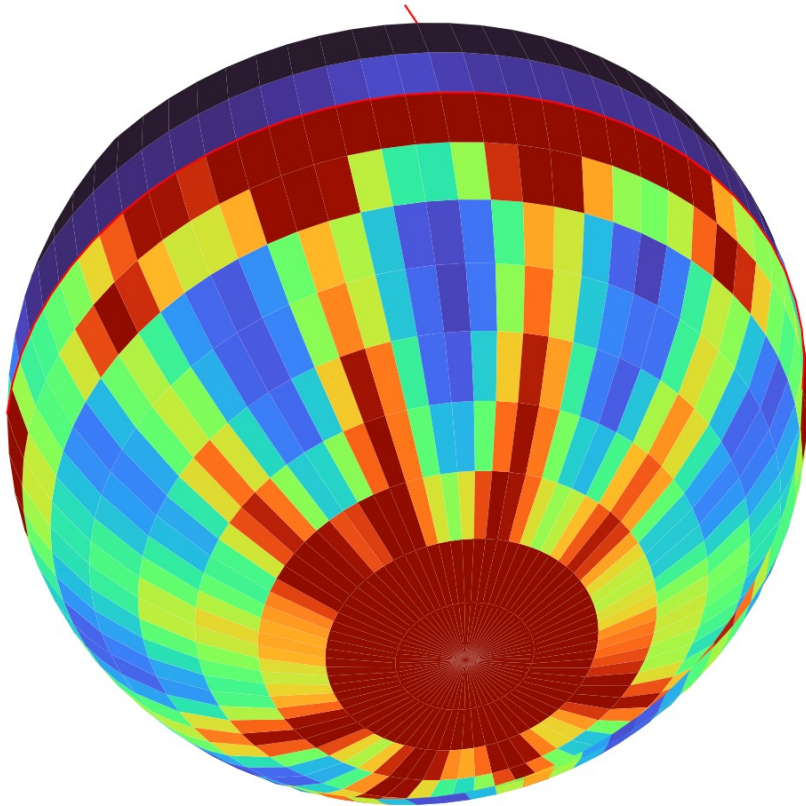


What is Generated

- 4S output produces “slice” files
- These results are for “cold flow” environments
- How does introduction of a fire/buoyant plume impact results?



Spray Characterizations: K14 ESFR (35 psi)

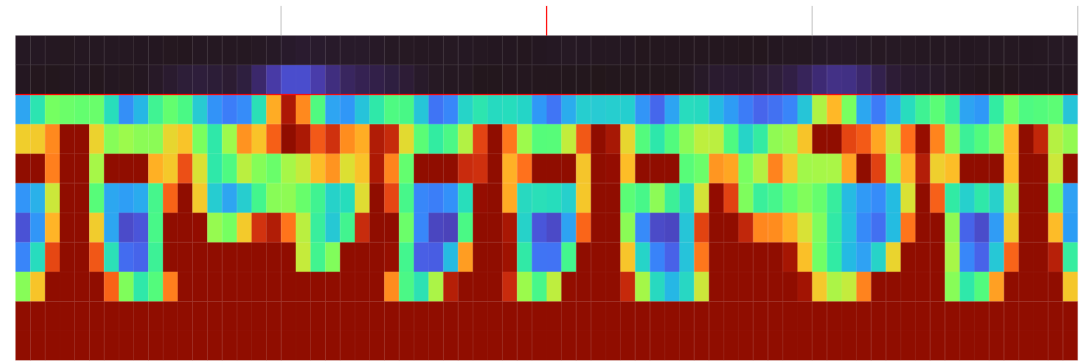
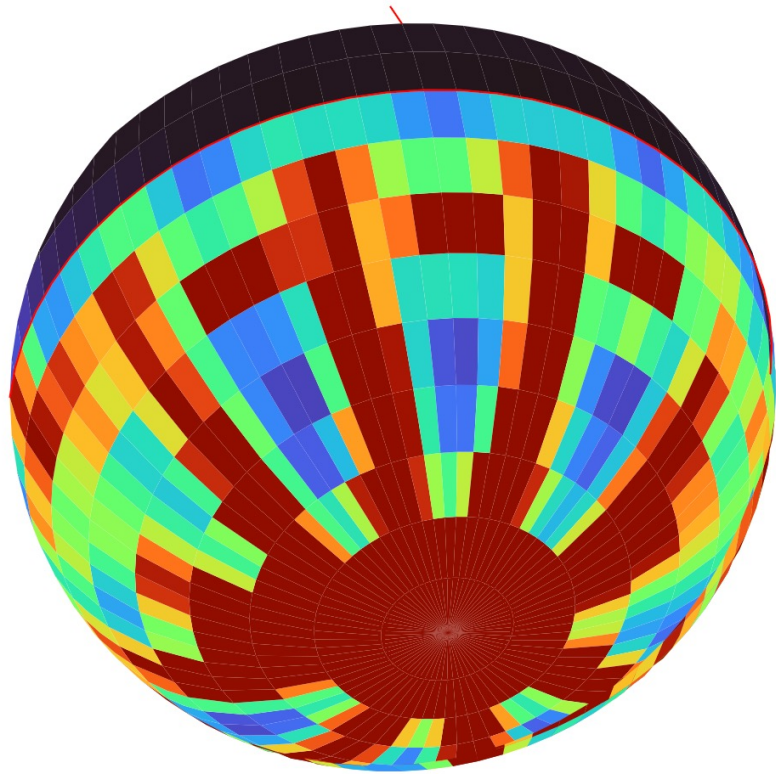


Flux (mm/min)
0 100 200 300 400 500

Maximum Display Value: 500 mm/min



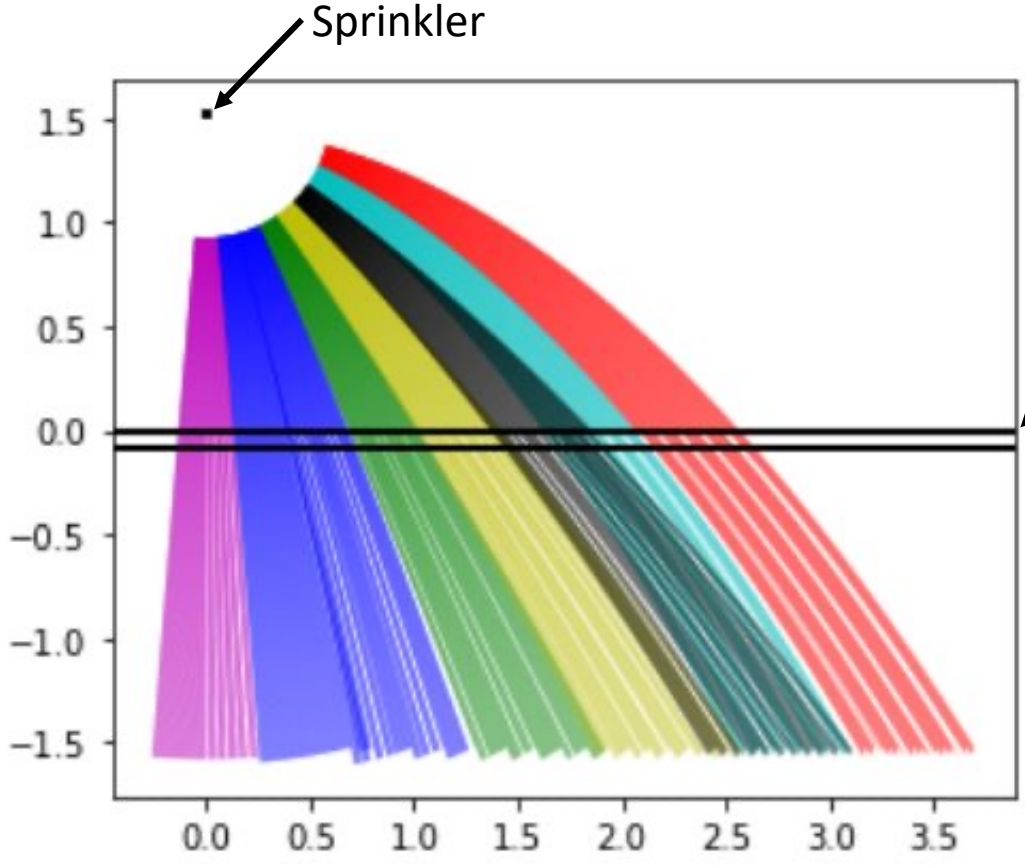
Spray Characterizations: K16.8 ESFR (35 psi)



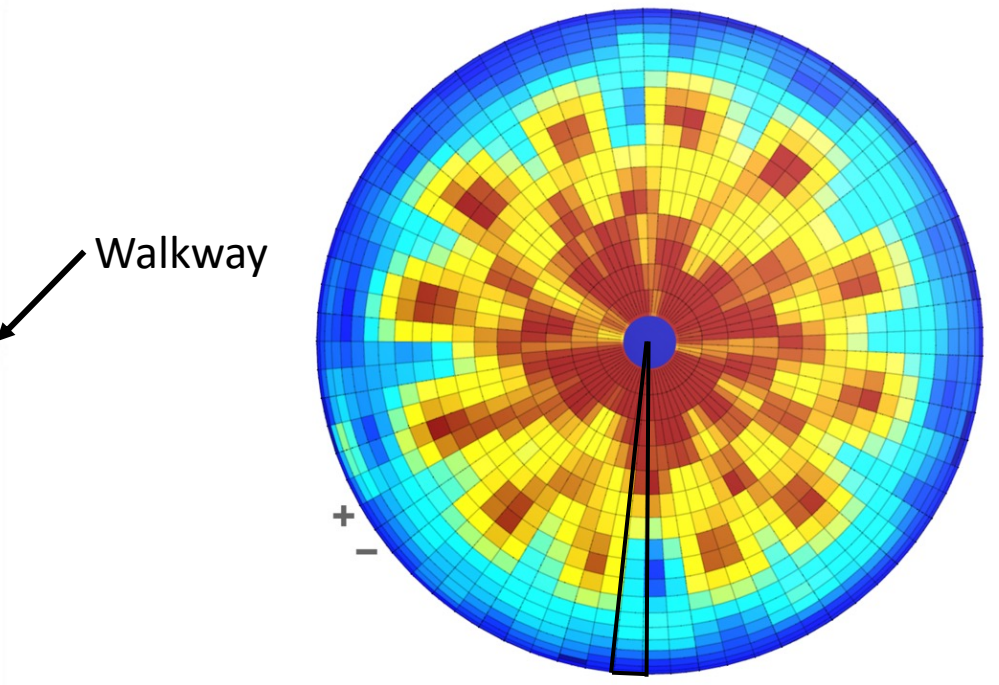
Flux (mm/min)
0 100 200 300 400 500
Maximum Display Value: 500 mm/min



Simulation Visualization



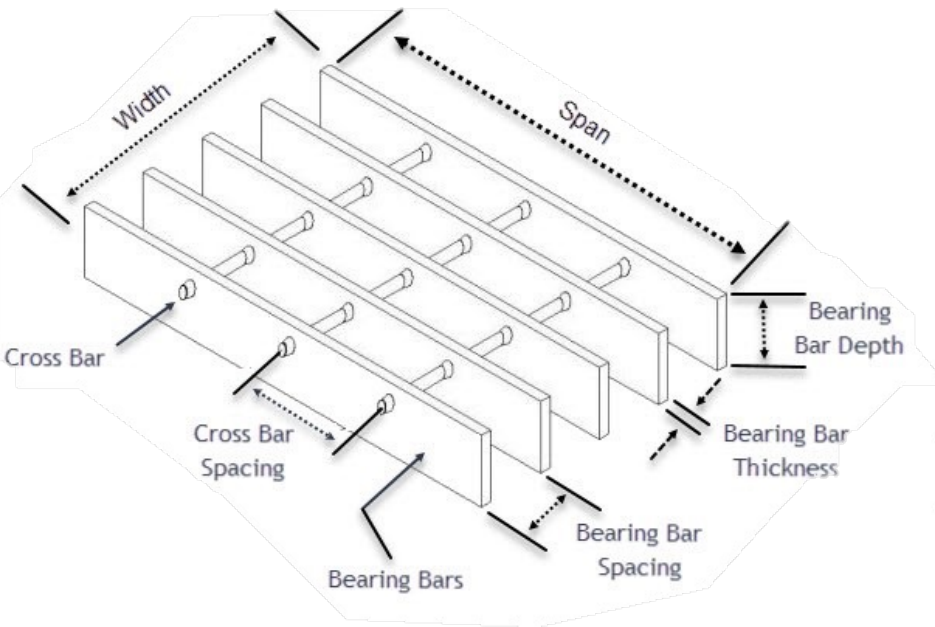
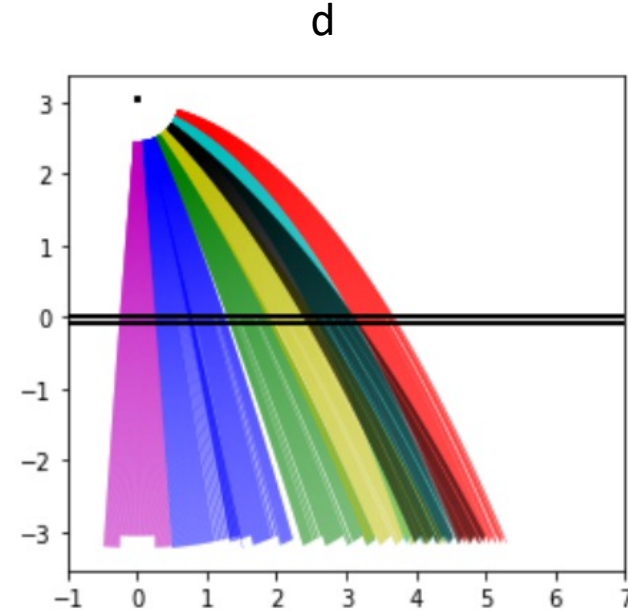
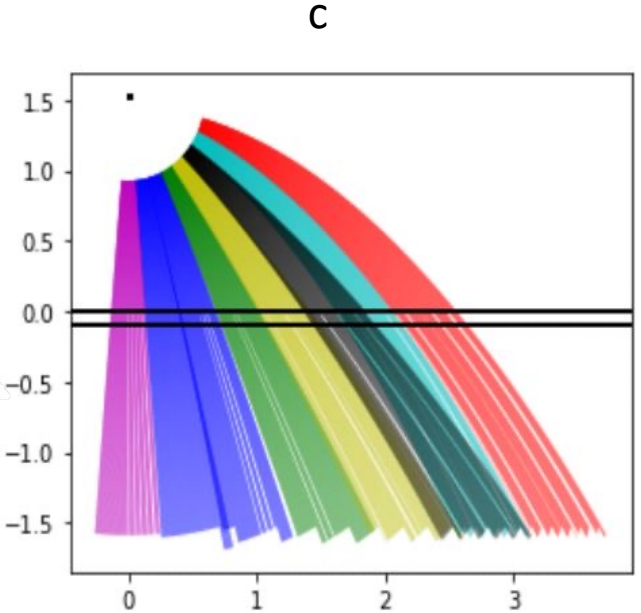
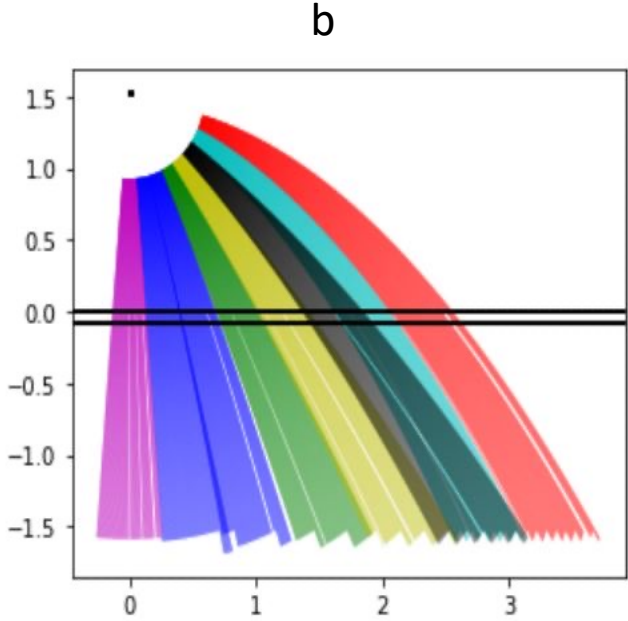
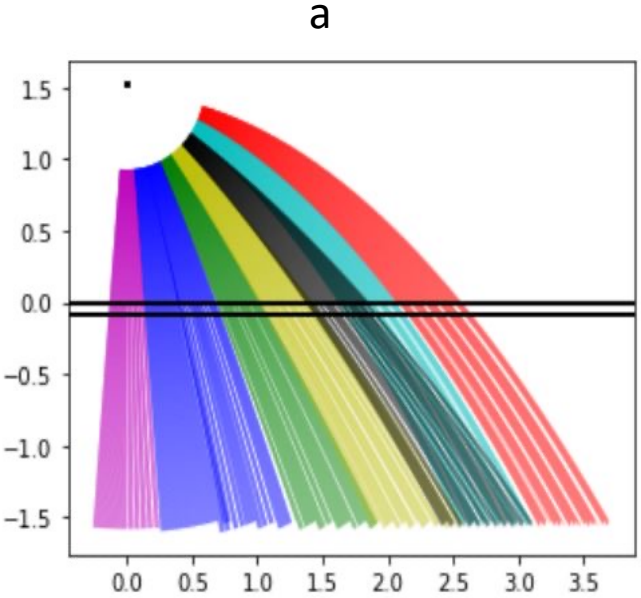
Spray visualization represents a 5° wedge of full 360° sprinkler characterization.



Input parameters are supplied by the characterization conducted with the 4S.

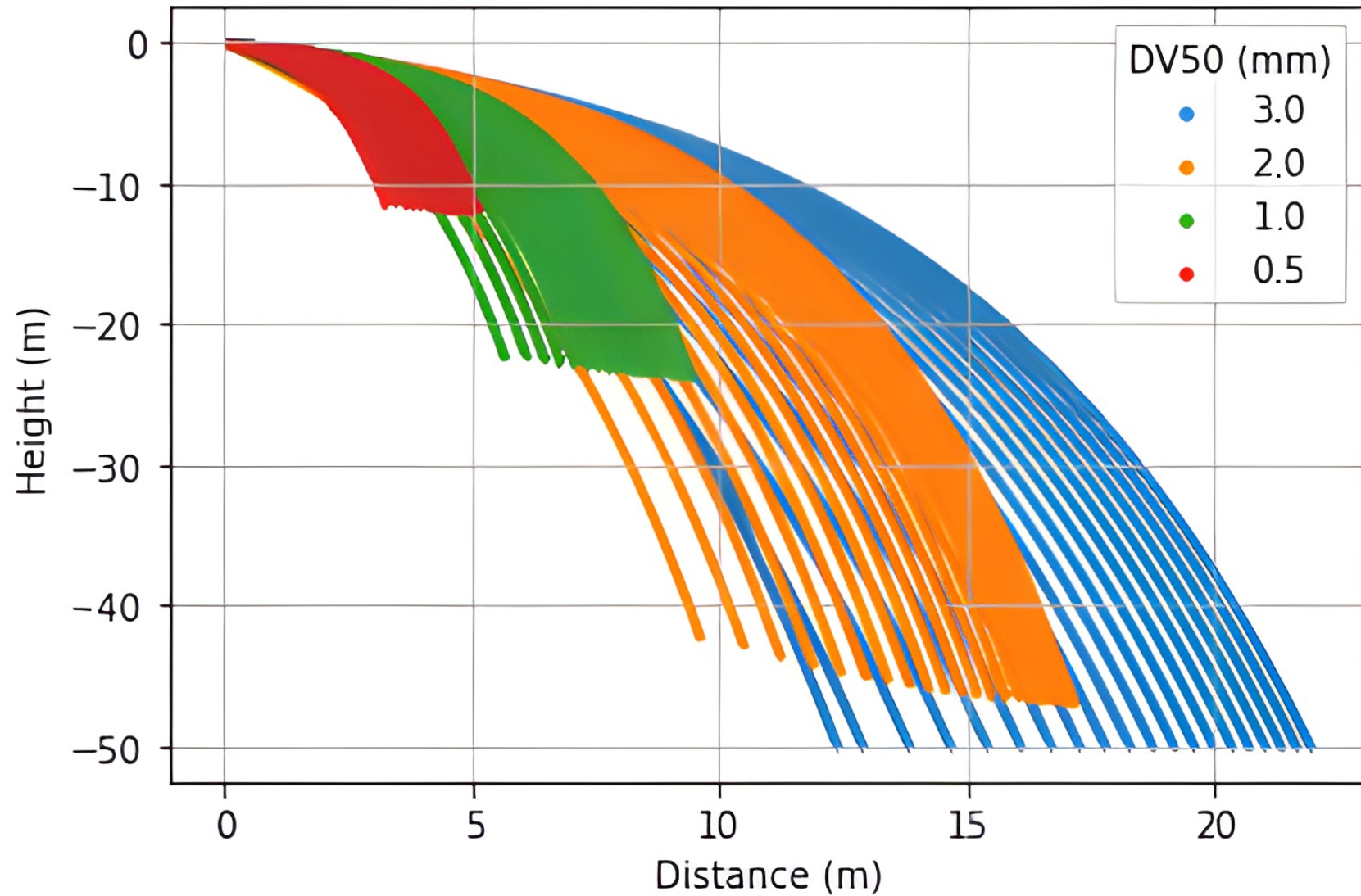
Simulation Visualization

Grate Specifications				
	Height (ft)	Bar Depth (in)	Bar Thickness (in)	Bar Spacing (in)
a	5	1	.25	1
b	5	1	.25	2
c	5	4	.25	1
d	10	4	.25	1



$V_x \rightarrow \text{Zero}$ Impact of Drop Size and Velocity

- Velocity from 5-25 m/s
- Drop sizes from 0.5-3mm



Simulation Output

- Each simulation represents a single row of the output. By running the simulation for each azimuthal angle section, a percentage of drops that pass through on their original trajectory is calculated for the entire characterization.
- Using the fraction of water that makes it through the elevated walkway we can scale the volume flux from the original sprinkler characterization.

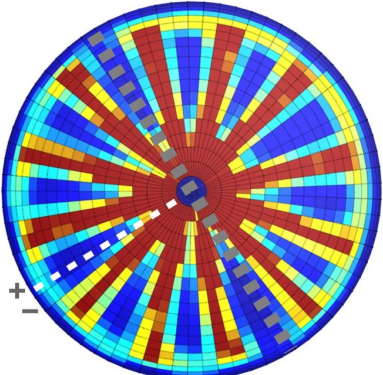
		Elevation Angle								100
		180	170	160	150	140	130	120	110	
Azimuthal Angle	0	0.87	0.98	0.87	0.92	0.88	0.78	0.79	0.81	
	5	0.87	0.98	0.85	0.92	0.86	0.79	0.8	0.75	
	10	0.87	0.98	0.83	0.92	0.81	0.87	0.76	0.81	
	15	0.87	0.98	0.85	0.86	0.84	0.83	0.77	0.85	
	20	0.87	0.96	0.87	0.85	0.81	0.79	0.75	0.8	
	25	0.87	0.96	0.91	0.85	0.87	0.76	0.77	0.8	
	30	0.87	0.96	0.91	0.87	0.86	0.79	0.7	0.75	
	35	0.87	0.96	0.91	0.92	0.85	0.85	0.77	0.8	
	40	0.87	0.96	0.91	0.92	0.81	0.87	0.75	0.8	
	45	0.87	0.94	0.91	0.86	0.84	0.82	0.78	0.8	
	50	0.87	0.94	0.86	0.86	0.85	0.87	0.74	0.8	
	55	0.87	0.94	0.91	0.86	0.81	0.79	0.8	0.81	
	60	0.87	0.96	0.91	0.85	0.86	0.73	0.71	0.8	
	65	0.87	0.96	0.87	0.92	0.86	0.78	0.8	0.85	
	70	0.87	0.96	0.87	0.92	0.8	0.86	0.75	0.85	
	75	0.87	0.96	0.91	0.91	0.81	0.86	0.79	0.75	
	80	0.87	0.96	0.86	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.8	0.81	
	85	0.87	0.96	0.86	0.85	0.87	0.78	0.74	0.84	
90	0.87	0.96	0.91	0.84	0.86	0.79	0.79	0.87	0.68	



Effect on Volume Flux: K16.8 (35 psi)

Original Pattern

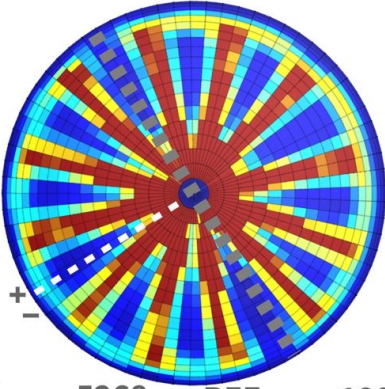
Volume Flux (mm/min)



$\dot{V}''_{MAX} = 5268.$ $REF_{MAP} = 1000.0$
 $\dot{V}''_{AVG} = 473.5$

a

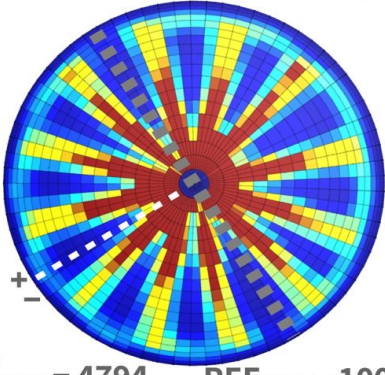
Volume Flux (mm/min)



$\dot{V}''_{MAX} = 5268.$ $REF_{MAP} = 1000.0$
 $\dot{V}''_{AVG} = 449.9$

b

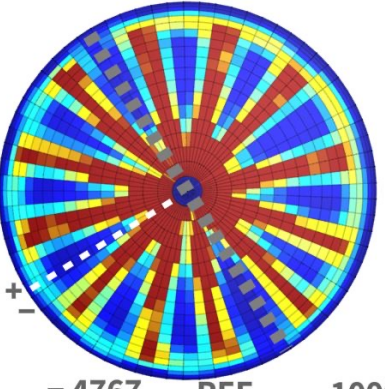
Volume Flux (mm/min)



$\dot{V}''_{MAX} = 4794.$ $REF_{MAP} = 1000.0$
 $\dot{V}''_{AVG} = 342.3$

c

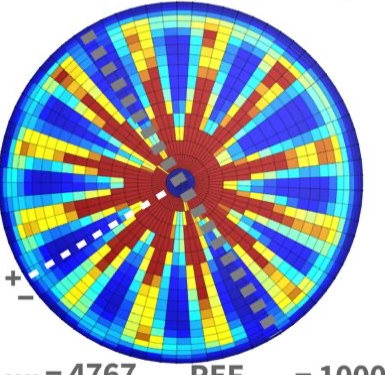
Volume Flux (mm/min)



$\dot{V}''_{MAX} = 4767.$ $REF_{MAP} = 1000.0$
 $\dot{V}''_{AVG} = 456.3$

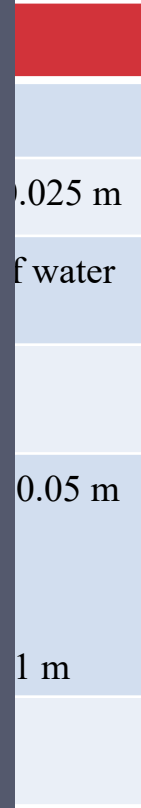
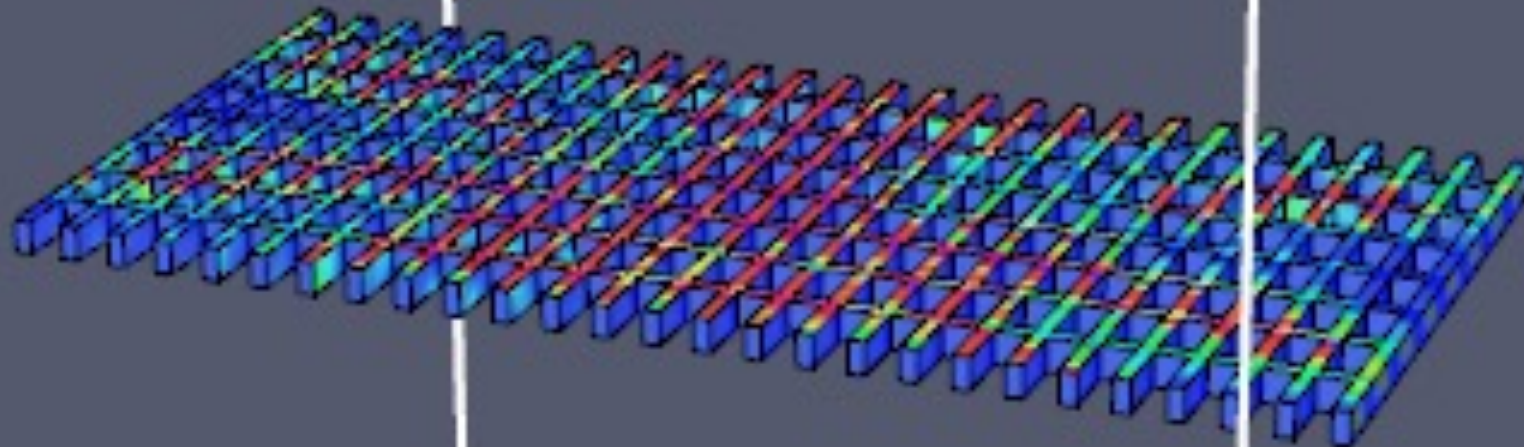
d

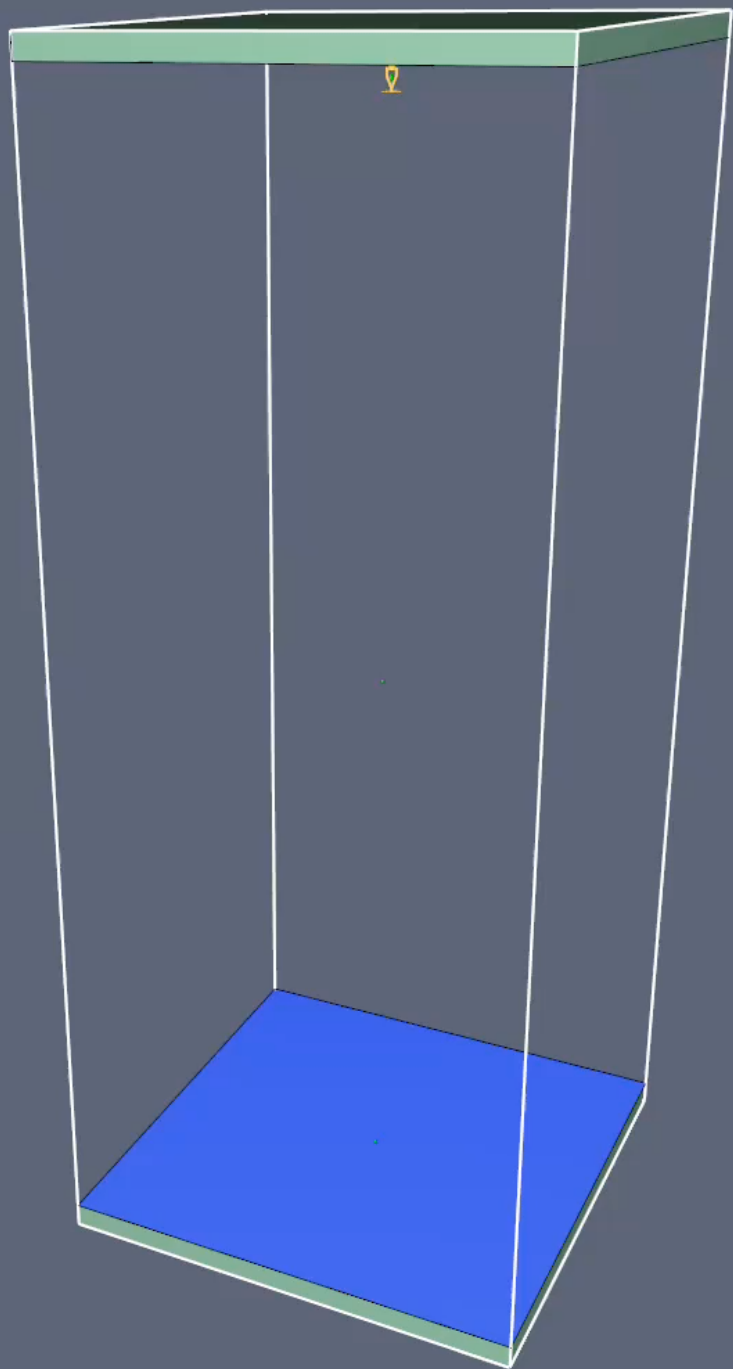
Volume Flux (mm/min)



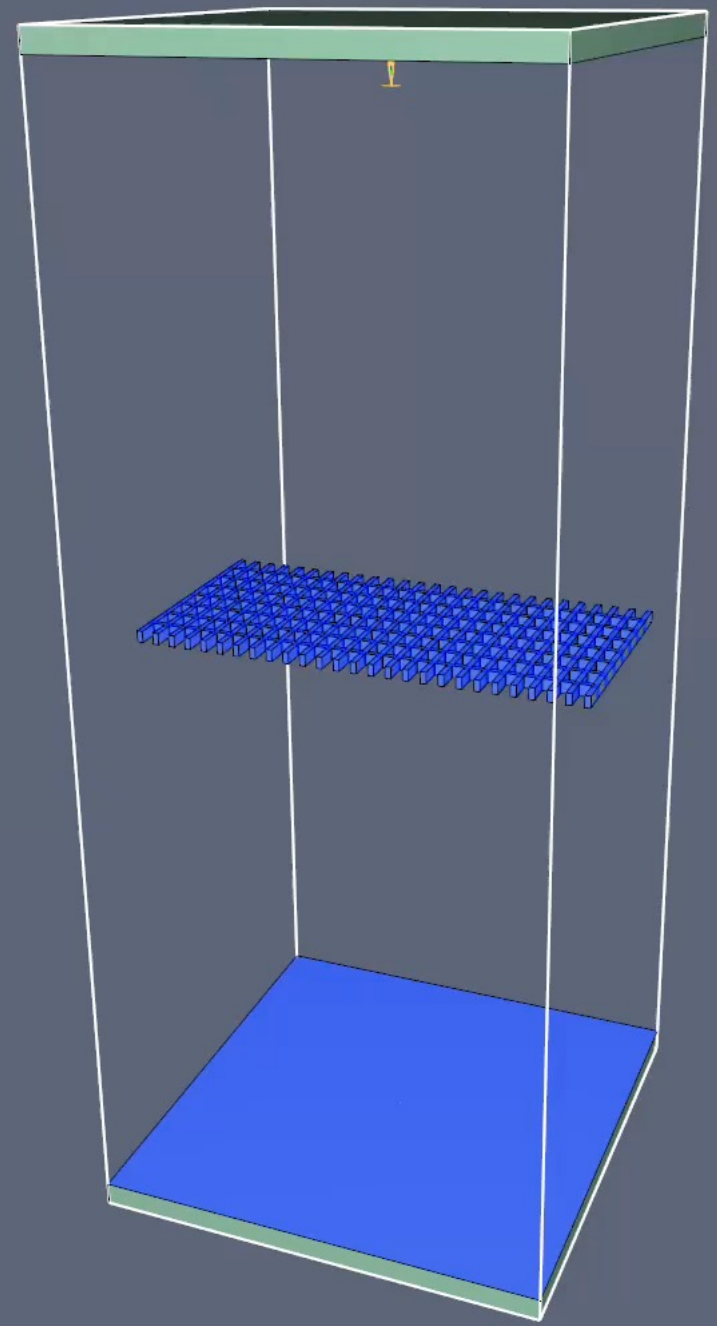
$\dot{V}''_{MAX} = 4767.$ $REF_{MAP} = 1000.0$
 $\dot{V}''_{AVG} = 376.0$

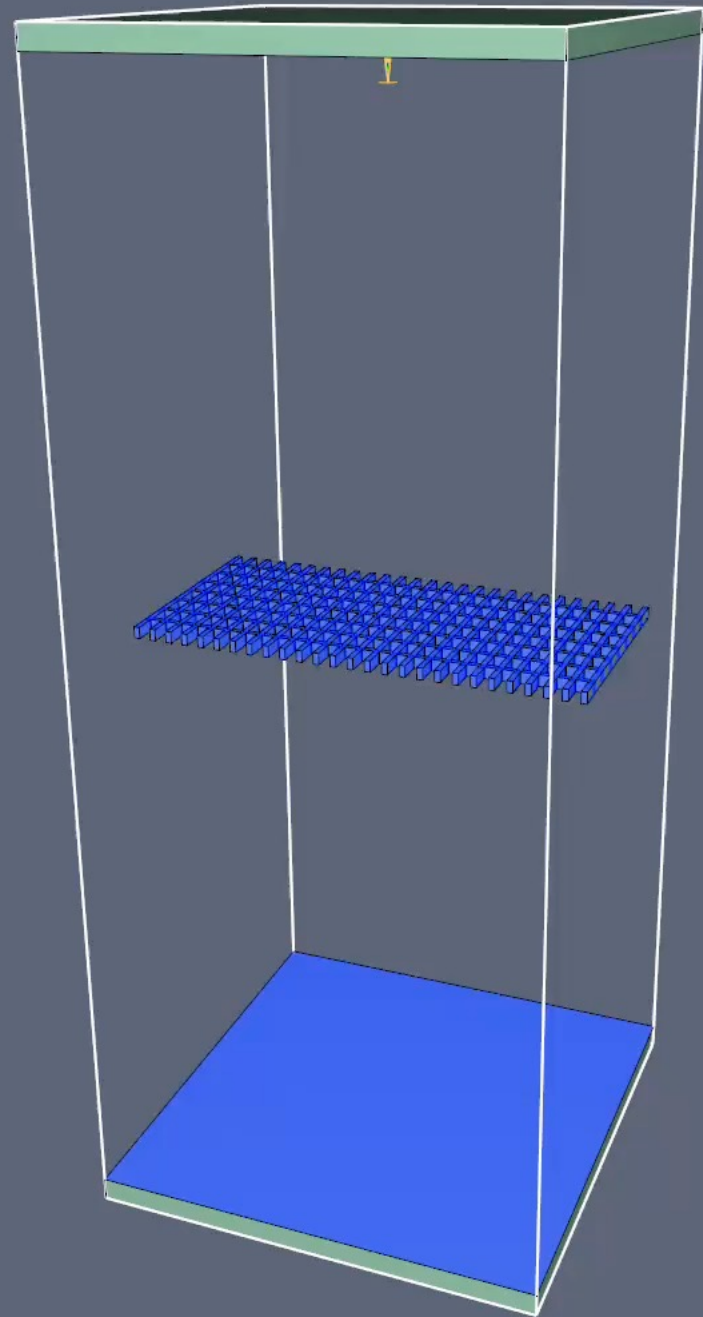
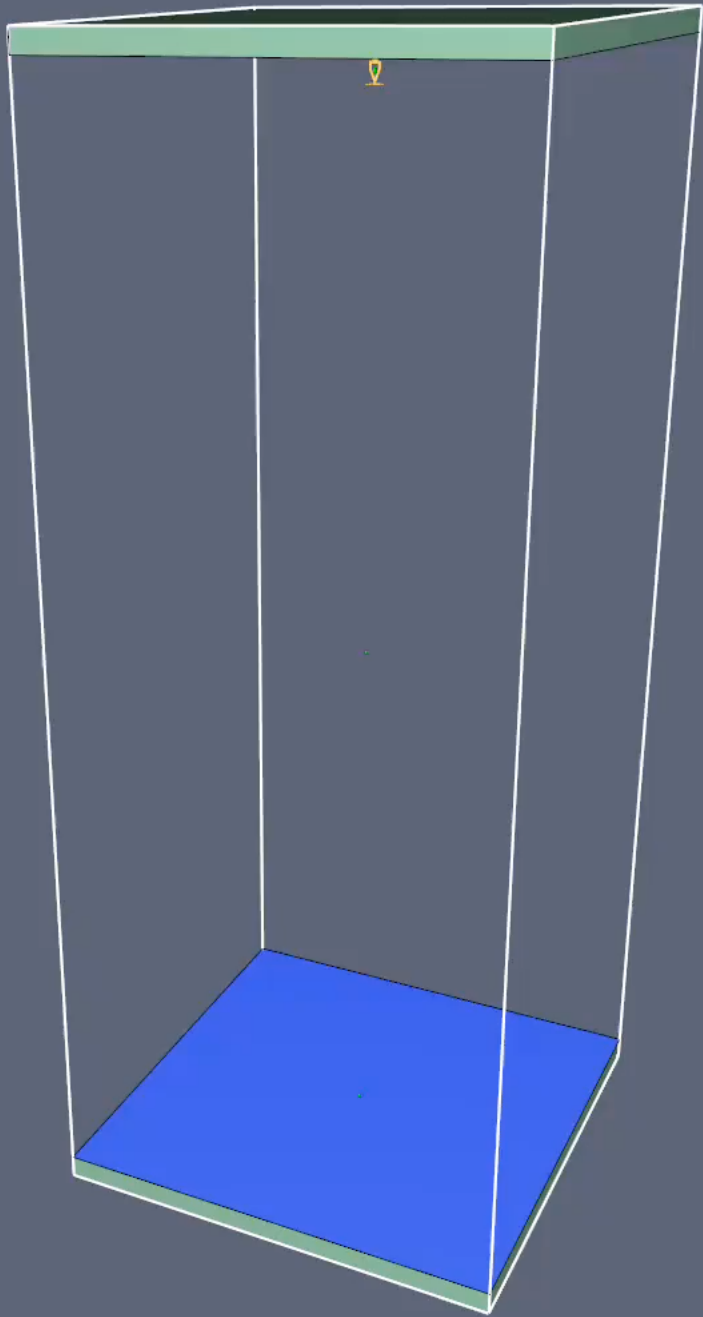
	Height (ft)	Bar Depth (in)	Bar Thickness (in)	Bar Spacing (in)	Volume Passed
a	8	1	0.1875	1	94.8%
b	8	6	0.1875	1	72.0%
c	20	1	0.1875	1	96.3%
d	20	6	0.1875	1	79.4%



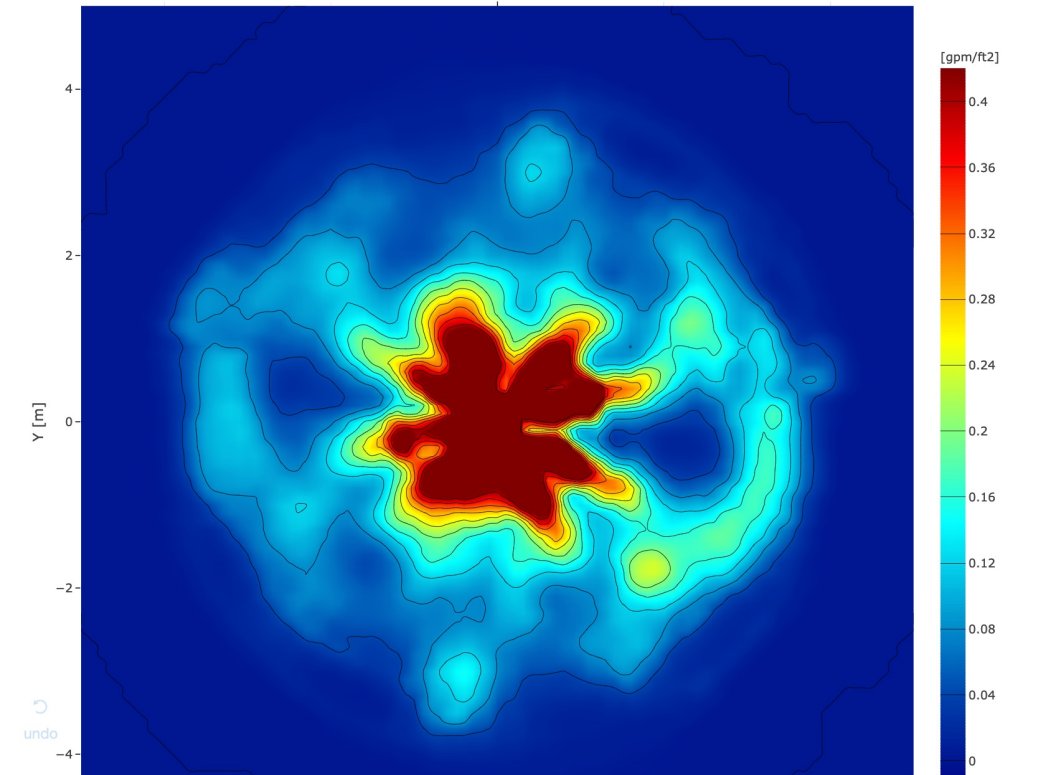
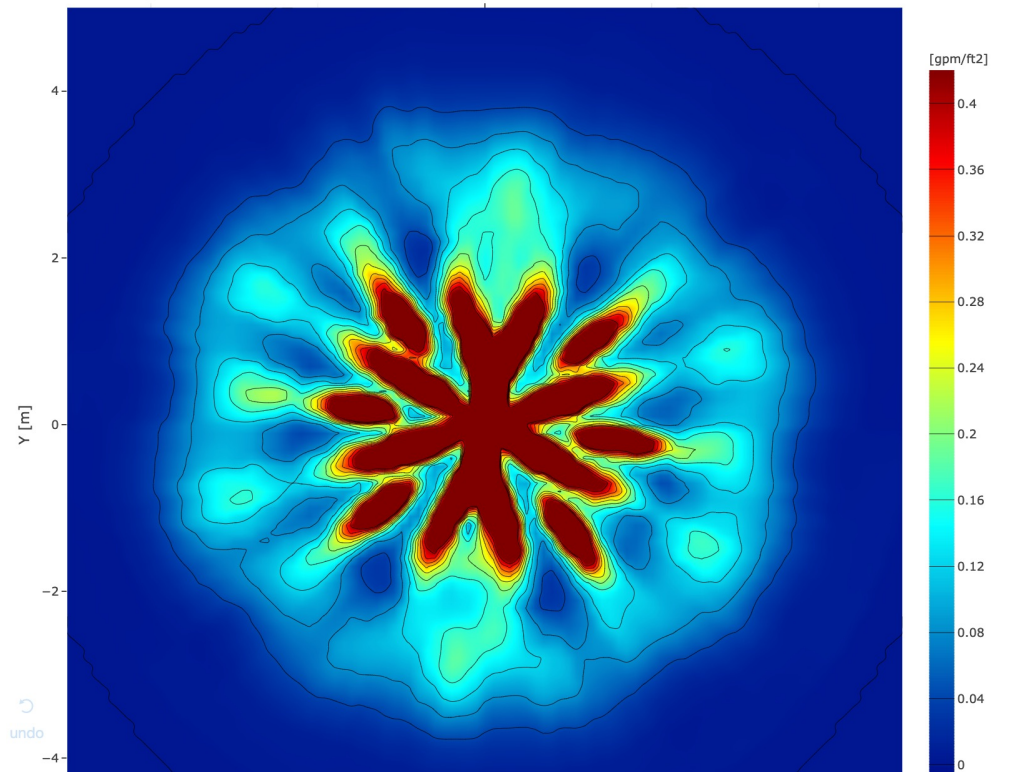


mpua_z_H2O
(kg/m²)



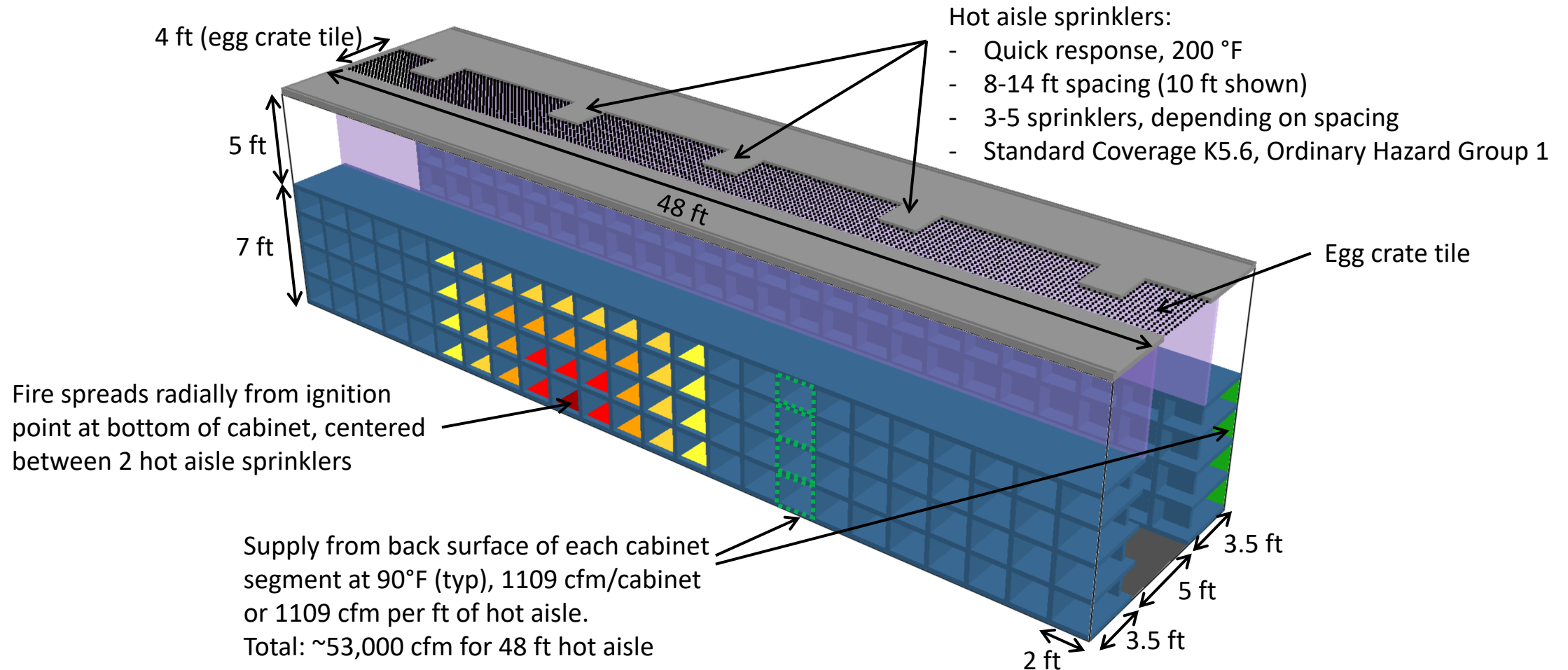


Before & After



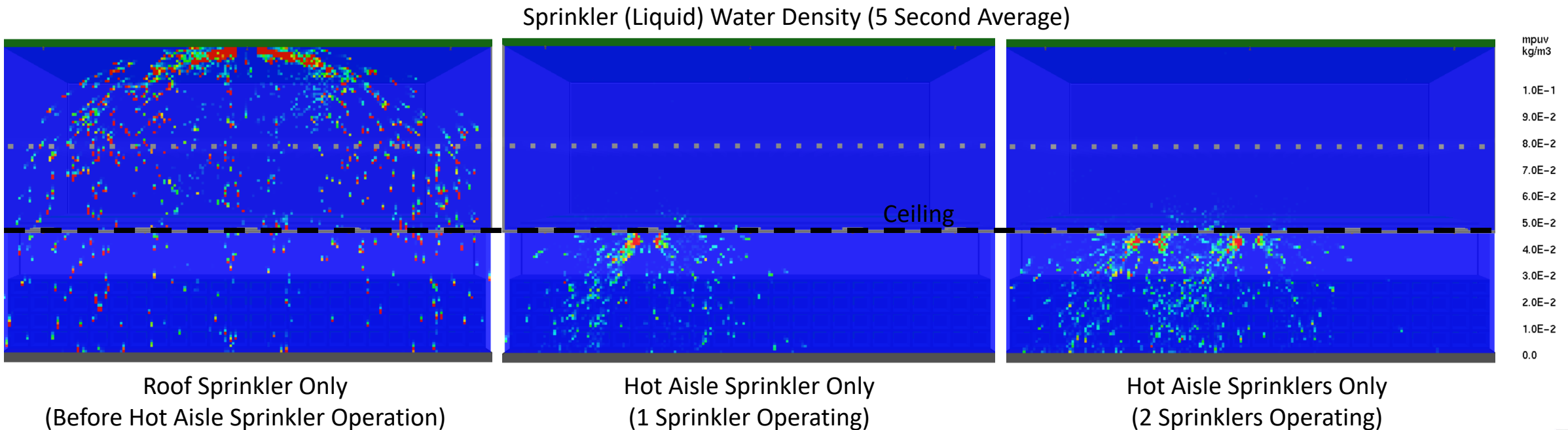
Model Overview

- Hot aisle extended to 48 ft length to match plenum



Sprinkler Spray: Baseline Configuration

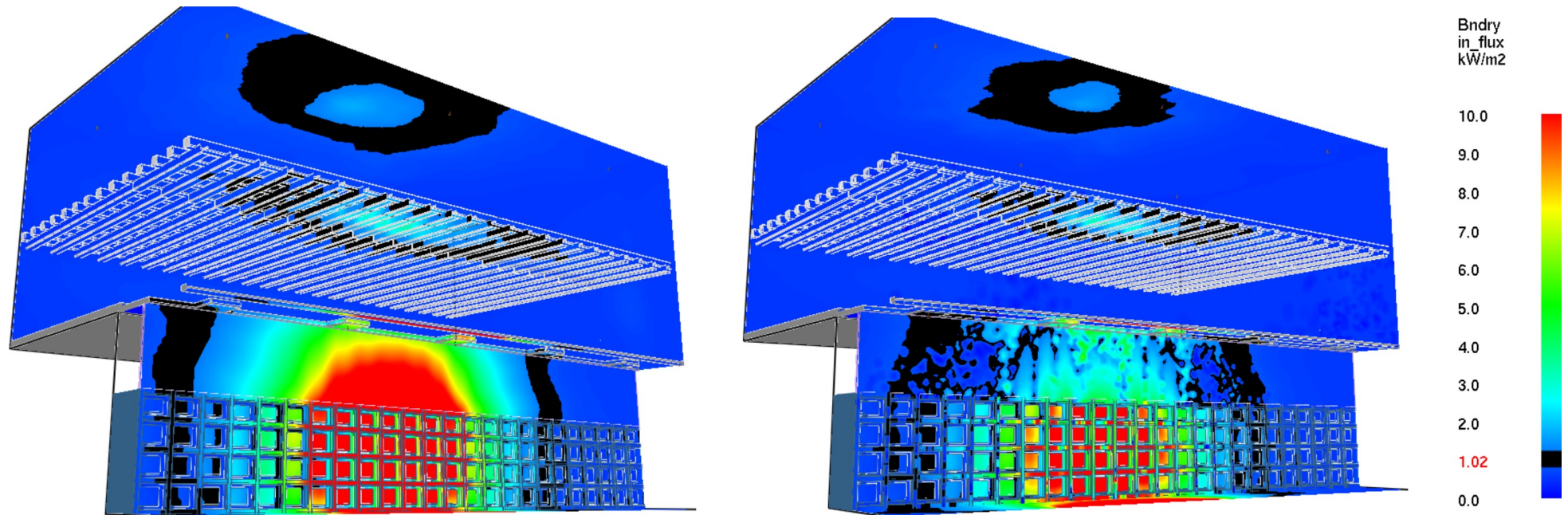
- When viewing sprinkler (liquid) water density by source (roof versus hot aisle sprinklers):
 - Compared to the water spray provided by the hot aisles, roof water spray within the hot aisle is limited and distributed across the hot aisle rather than concentrated near the fire



Model Results

- Sprinklers provide considerable cooling to surfaces in hot aisle
- Impact of ceiling tiles on heat flux clearly observable

Incident Heat Flux at 5 Minutes:



Initial Takeaways

- What % of spray altered is acceptable needs to be determined
- Sprinklers with strong downward central cores (170-190°) less impact to spray
- Smaller droplets (less momentum) transition to primarily vertical velocity component earlier, larger drops later
- Percent open is not only driver of blockage, horizontal component of droplet velocity also what drives obstruction with grating



Tools, Aides, & Advances in Technology

- Sprinkler characterization details required for analysis
 - Drop size, number concentration, pressure, velocity all matter
- Modeling of suppression sprays, REVIT BIM plugin evaluating sprinkler orientation and effect of obstructions
- FireFOAM and FDS CFD allows for more detailed analysis

- SMART and Specialty Sprinklers and Suppression Devices
- Targeted Sprays
- Robots and Drones
- “Common Sense Solutions”

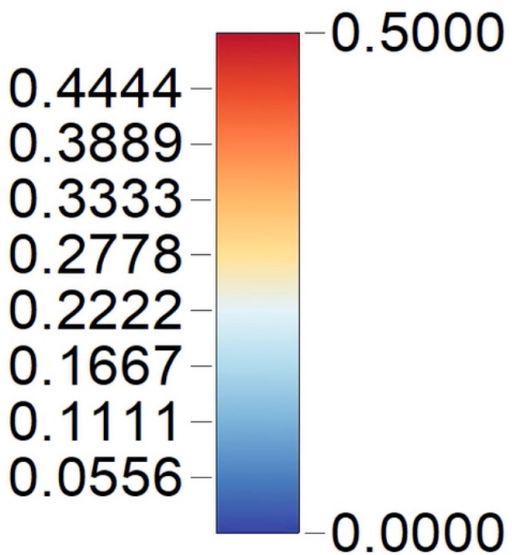
NONE OF THE FOLLOWING ARE ENDORSEMENTS FOR ANY SPECIFIC PRODUCT OR TECHNOLOGY



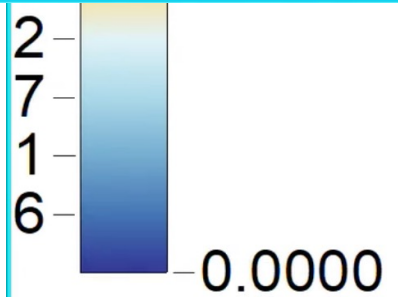
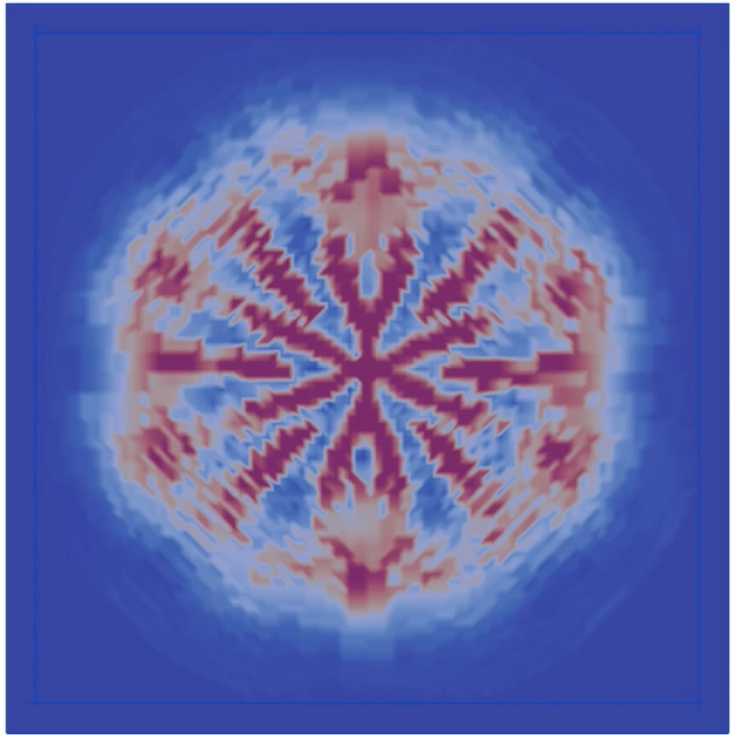
Tools, Aides, & Technology



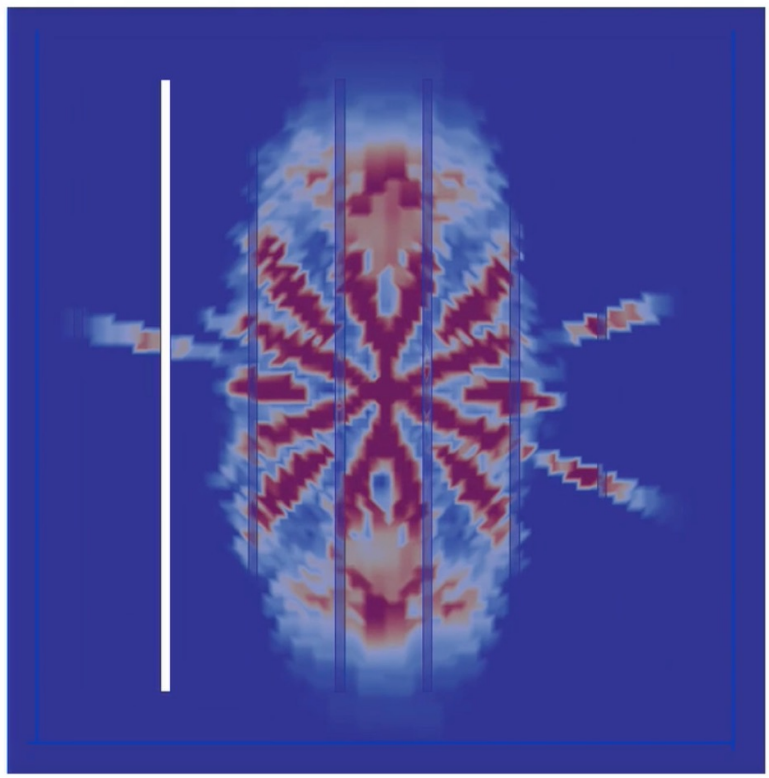
SprayViz



Data 0



Data 0



Advanced Sprinkler Spray Data

Using a revolutionary spray characterization device, the Spatially-resolved Spray Scanning System (4S), a complete description of a sprinkler spray, including spray angle, droplet size, and detailed spatial data is captured. This data allows us to make detailed comparisons between sprinklers and allows us to predict the sprinkler spray pattern.

[Learn More](#)

Sprinkler Database

Explore Spray Data

Advanced spray data requires advanced tools. Explore the sprinkler spray patterns and initial spray metrics from the 4S using the the tools below.

[☂ Spray Pattern](#)[🌐 Spray Metrics](#)

Specialty Sprinklers



SMART Sprinklers

- Solenoid valves or similar per sprinkler
- Activate based on detection (ASD, heat, smoke, etc.)
- Can be opened/closed “as needed”
- Monitored for P, flow, etc. often have TC for temperature as well



SMART Sprinklers

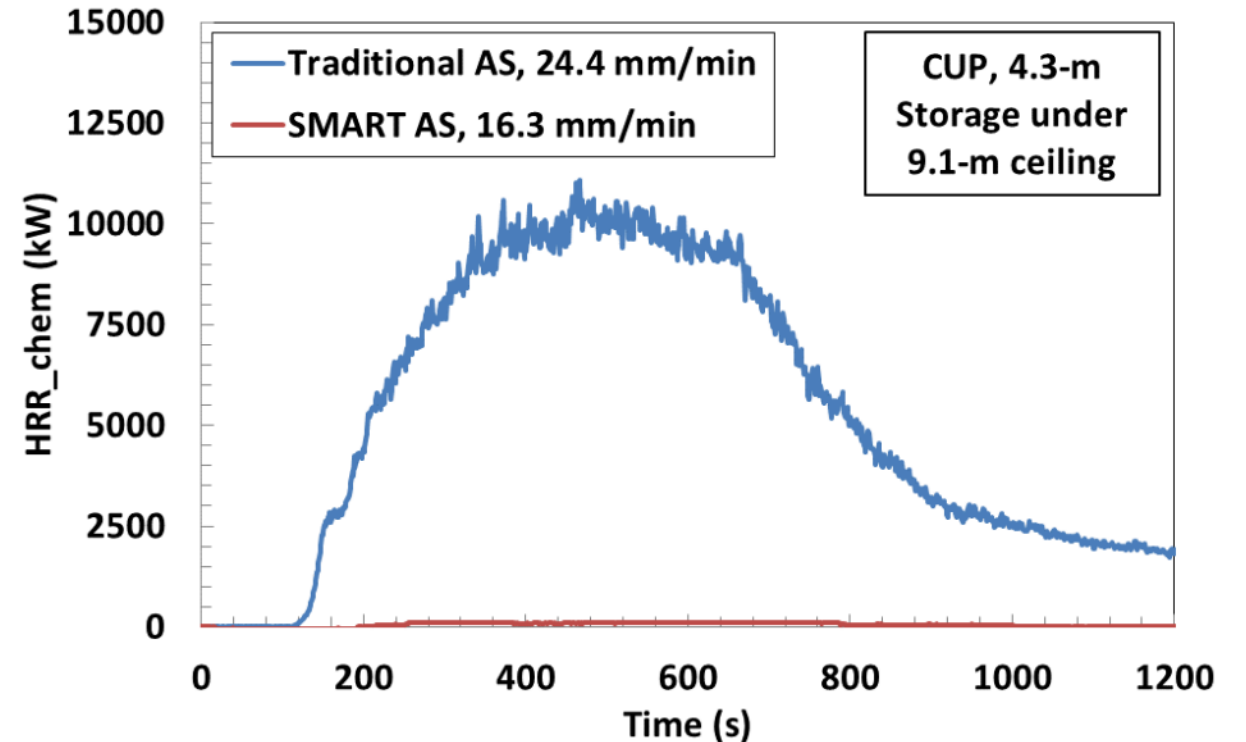
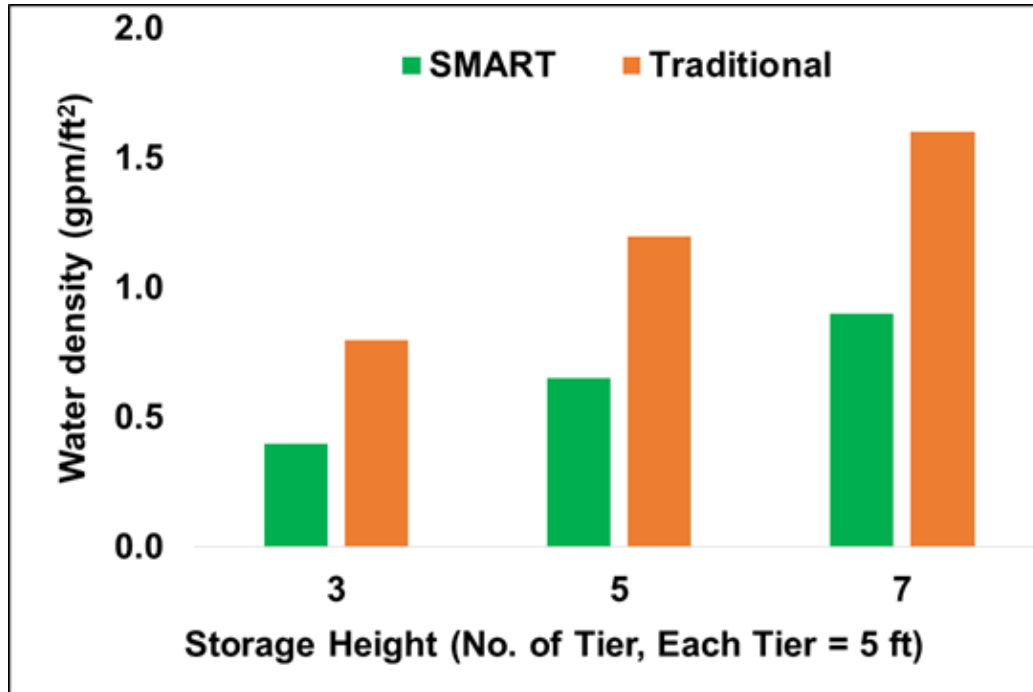


Figure 3-5: HRRs in 3-tier CUP rack storage tests using traditional and SMART sprinklers.

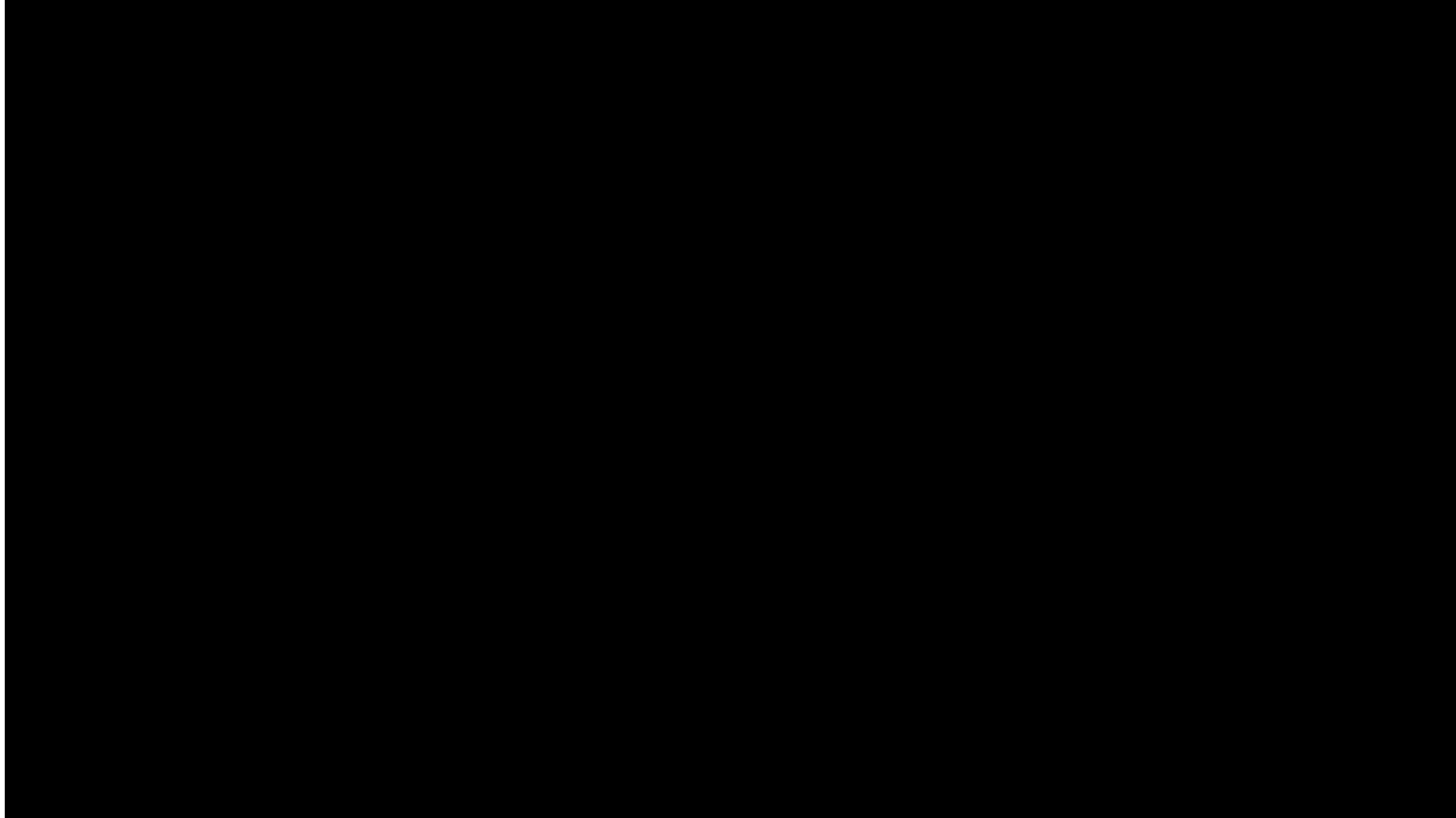
EV Fire Suppression



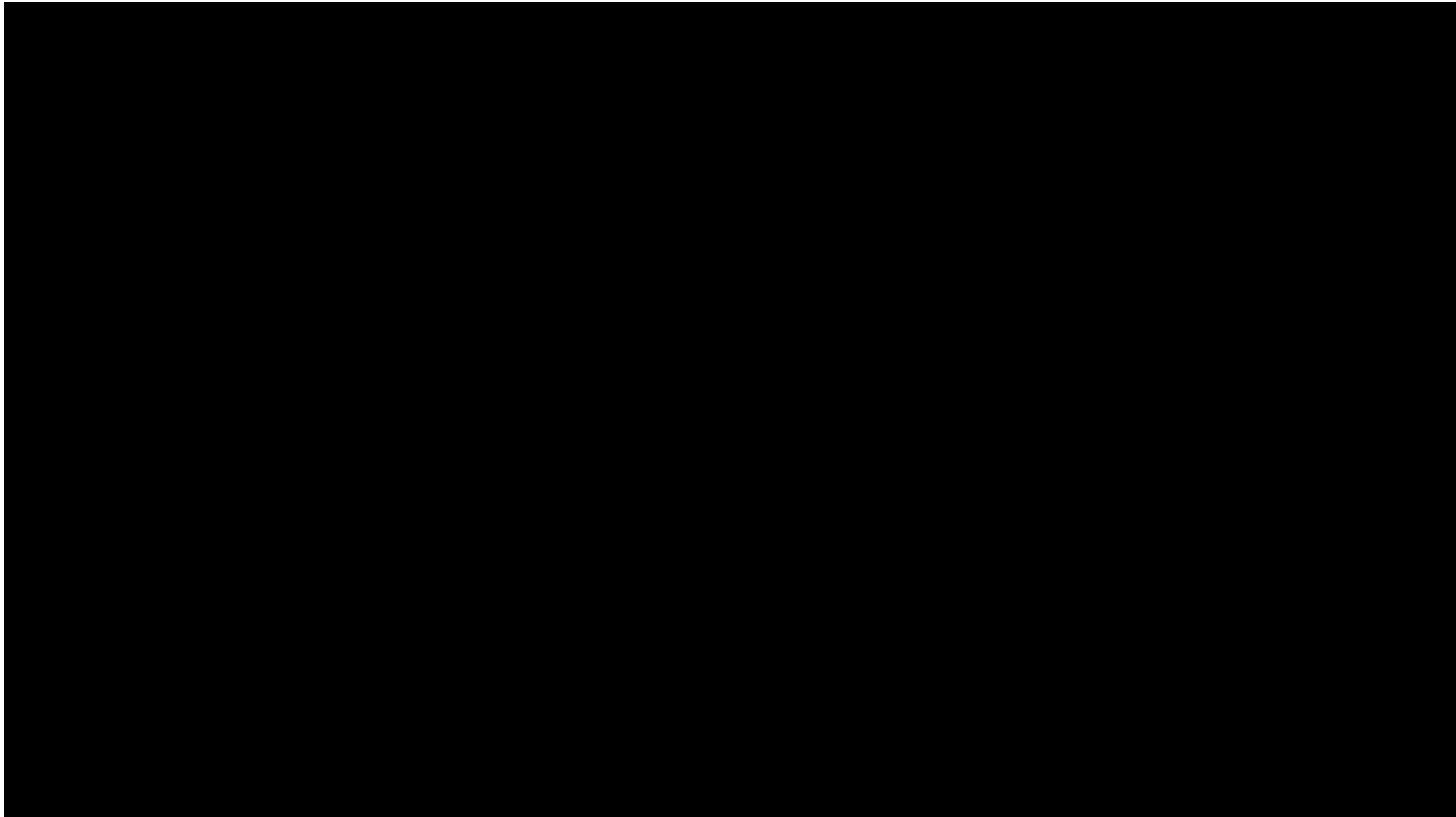
<https://www.beros.dk/>



Detection & Targeted Suppression



Drones



Thank
You!

Noah Ryder

nryder@fireriskalliance.com

301.775.2967

