A dry pipe valve is utilized on fire sprinkler systems in which there is a potential for the sprinkler system to be exposed to freezing conditions. Located in a heated space, the dry pipe valve prevents water from entering the pipe until a fire causes one or more sprinklers to operate. Once this happens, the air escapes and the dry pipe valve releases. Water then enters the pipe, flowing through open sprinklers onto the fire (refer to the December 2009 edition of the Quick Response newsletter).

To operate properly, a dry pipe valve requires a complex arrangement of piping, valves and switches. These components are known as the dry pipe valve “trim”. The additional control equipment and air pressure supply components increase the system complexity. Proper maintenance of the dry pipe valve and trim is essential to insure proper operation of the system.