



Stephen Comunale, CEO (Left)  
Steve Salmen, (Right)

S.A. Comunale recently celebrated the retirement of **Steve Salmen**, an industry veteran whose dedication has left an indelible mark on the sprinkler design profession. After 44 remarkable years in the industry—25 of those with S.A. Comunale as a layout technician—Steve is beginning his well-deserved retirement. Former colleagues gathered to celebrate his career, sharing memories of both challenging and rewarding projects over the decades.

Based in our Youngstown, OH, office, **Steve invested more than 50,000 hours in sprinkler design**, working on projects across the country and consistently exceeding client expectations. Throughout his career, his passion for the industry never wavered. In Steve's words, he's "never not liked sprinklers."

Throughout his career, Steve completed hundreds of projects. Some required over 1,500 hours of work, while others were memorable for their technical complexity or the relationships formed during them. Notable projects include Cleveland Market Square, Grand Bohemian Lodge, the Progressive headquarters, and an assisted living facility near Washington, DC, featuring eight specialized fire protection systems.

### ***When asked about potential regrets, Steve's response was telling:***

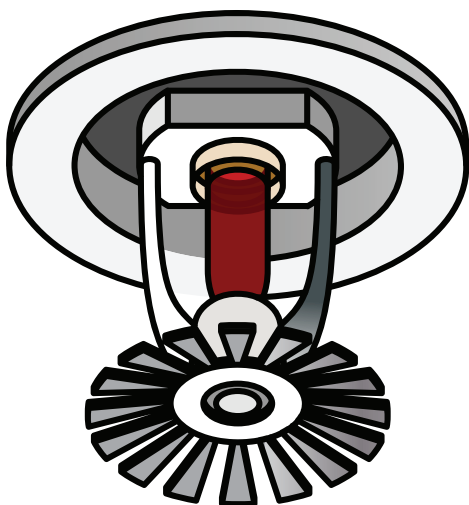
“ My biggest regret is not joining S.A. Comunale sooner. Despite receiving over 50 job offers from other companies during my tenure here, the culture at S.A. Comunale kept me loyal. In conference rooms with general contractors, building owners, architects, and engineers, I was respected as the sprinkler design expert. **My opinion was valued, I felt like the 'big guy', I felt important.**

**The family atmosphere was unmatched**—someone was always willing to lend a hand when needed. I couldn't have dreamed of working anywhere else and enjoying it as much as I did here. ”

For those considering or just beginning a career in the sprinkler industry, **Steve offers this wisdom:**

“Stick with it. This specialized skill takes time to master—you’ll need to learn various codes, terminology, and tools—but it’s important work that can support your family well. There will be moments when you question if you’ll ever fully grasp it all, especially with changing codes and multiple terms for everything. But one day, it will click, and that knowledge stays with you.”

“I know of at least ten fires my sprinkler systems have extinguished, saving lives and property. I’m confident there has been even more than that. I take pride in knowing my work made a difference, and I hope younger generations recognize the impact they can have if they persevere through the learning process.”



**On professional development, Steve emphasized:** “Even after decades in the industry, I never stopped learning. S.A. Comunale was my greatest ally in that journey, with leadership that encouraged continuous education. Having worked elsewhere and spoken with countless industry peers, ***I can confidently say S.A. Comunale excels at keeping its team trained and informed. You can feel and touch the products you’re designing, connecting your work to real-world applications.*** Their industry connections and reputation make them accessible experts. S.A. Comunale operates as a well-oiled machine, and they excel in every aspect of the sprinkler industry.”

While Steve will miss the camaraderie of his colleagues, he’s looking forward to spending more time at Walt Disney World with his three children and eight grandchildren. Having already enjoyed over 550 days at Disney parks, **he’s eagerly planning for 550 more.**

***Congratulations on your retirement, Steve, and an immense thank you for your contributions to our organization. Your impact on both the industry and S.A. Comunale will be remembered for years to come.***