

Covered Bridges

How Protectowire can protect historical structures.

In the 19th century, there were as many as 15,000 covered bridges in the United States. Today, less than 1,000 remain. The conservation of these structures a priority for those who consider them to be important cultural and historic landmarks. Covered bridges, which were often built to cross streams, have covers in order to protect the structures from the elements, preserving them for far longer than uncovered bridges. Though the covers have protected the bridges for many years, they now face more threats in addition to the natural elements.

According to the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, "over the past five decades, at least 148 covered bridges have been lost to arson in the United States and Canada," making arson one of the largest threats to the conservation of covered bridges.

In the early 2000s, Knecht's Covered Bridge in Springfield, Pa was subject to 2 failed arson attempts. Knecht's, much like other covered bridges in the United States, is viewed as a staple in the community and a reminder of the history of the area. When a Quakertown, PA resident who was a key player in providing protection for Knecht's was asked why it was so important, he replied that installing a method of fire protection was "Not about personal attribution but about doing what's right for the bridge."

In order to combat threats to the beloved bridge, there were several suggestions including smoke alarms and video surveillance cameras, however, it was decided that a linear heat detection system was the best solution for several reasons.

Protectowire is the perfect solution for this type of application because it may be installed in areas along the bridge which are not visible to the public, preserving the historical and cultural value of the structures. Type EPC, which was installed along the ridge line and under the deck of the bridge is designed to include low moisture absorption, resistance to many common chemicals and excellent flexibility at low temperatures making it ideal for the elements covered bridges are often exposed to. Linear heat detection is also a cost-effective way to protect covered bridges, as the cost to rebuild or repair is significantly higher than the cost to install the system. The look and ease of installation in addition to the cost and reliability of Protectowire linear heat detection is why it's used to protect a number of uncommon applications, such as covered bridges.

Questions?

If you have further questions please visit protectowire.com or call 781-826-3878.