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## **LUMINOUS CEILINGS APPROVED FOR USE BENEATH FIRE SPRINKLERS**

GRATON, CALIFORNIA – Light fixtures and fire sprinklers can now be located above ceilings. This seemingly topsy-turvy arrangement minimizes visual clutter on a ceiling and reduces construction cost, yet allows for effective illumination and fire protection. The breakthrough is due to recent approval of ceiling panels by IAPMO Uniform Evaluation Service and other building product evaluation services. IAPMO report ER-0310 has been issued to Ceilume, the leading manufacturer of thermoformed ceilings. Ceilume's panels are made of translucent thermoplastic material that, when exposed to heat from a fire, softens, sags, and drops out of standard ceiling suspension grids. "Drop-out ceilings" comply with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13 - *Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems*.

According to Ed Davis, president of Ceilume, "Luminous ceilings are increasingly used with LEDs to create an overhead surface that transmits colored light. They are also used beneath fluorescent lamps and daylight sources to create and diffuse, glare-free illumination. The molded, bas-relief panels catch light to create highlights and shadows that add depth to and animate ceilings."

Installing sprinklers above luminous ceilings eliminates shadows cast by penetrating sprinklers. Sprinklers are also protected against abuse and tampering, and construction costs are reduced. Ceilume commissioned a construction cost study and found that drop-out ceilings reduce costs by up to three dollars a square foot. Davis explains, "Sprinkler layout can be optimized, trade coordination is simplified, and non-appearance grade sprinklers can be used." Additional savings are achieved by using economical strip light fixtures above a ceiling instead of costly luminaires.

Ceilume's panels are lightweight, acoustical, and solve many architectural challenges. Davis adds, "Thermoformed panels are not affected by water. This means panels can be installed before humidity has stabilized in a building, and dirty panels can be washed instead of replaced. They are compliant with FDA rules for use over culinary areas. Our products are Greenguard Gold Certified for low-VOC emission, do not support mold or mildew, and do not release fibers when handled." The panels are recyclable and can be specified with 40 percent recycled content.

Panels are Class A rated for surface burning characteristics and can be used in sprinklered and non-sprinklered buildings. Ceilume offers a white paper, *Drop-Out Ceiling Panels - A Discussion On Their Use With Fire Sprinklers*, to help designers and code officials understand



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how to use drop-out panels. Ceilume offers forty styles of 24 x 24 inch and 24 x 48 inch panels. In addition to translucent panels, they are also available in opaque colors and decorative faux finishes.

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### **ABOUT CEILUME**

Ceilume is the leading manufacturer of thermoformed ceiling tiles and panels. The company's predecessor dates from the early 20th Century and was a pioneer in the invention of the modern suspended ceiling. The family-owned business is located in Graton, CA in the heart of California's wine country, and occupies a historic apple-packing warehouse. With an eye on the future, Ceilume has invested in advanced manufacturing equipment, including 5-axis milling machines to make its own tooling, and has an active research and development program to create improved ceiling systems to meet changing environmental, performance, and aesthetic expectations.

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