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**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Speech intelligibility in the fire alarm test and inspection space**

NEPTUNE (February 21, 2020)— Voice evacuation systems have become an increasingly common feature in fire alarm systems in modern public buildings, primarily in places of assembly. Voice evacuation or mass notification systems allow for the swift broadcast of specific information during a fire or other emergency and can effectively direct the evacuation of people in affected areas of the building.

“Evidence has shown that building occupants will often ignore audible or visual alarms but will typically obey voice commands,” said Rick Heffernan, President of SDi, the world’s leading provider of fire alarm test and inspection equipment. “An emergency voice evacuation system is not only more likely to be acknowledged but is also capable of delivering a range of highly-specific and potentially life-saving information.”

For a voice alarm system to be effective, however, its voice must be audible and intelligible.

NFPA 72, the National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code that governs the use of voice alarm communications, specifies a set of requirements emergency voice alarm systems must meet for compliance. The code establishes standards for intelligibility combined with audibility to ensure the voice is easily heard as well as understood throughout the life of the system. Regular testing is necessary, though, to ensure the system is broadcasting within the specified frequency range and that intelligibility remains sufficient.

“Voice Evac systems require specific testing tools to ensure the voice is clear and easily understood,” said Heffernan. “SDi proudly offers Bedrock speech intelligibility testing solutions for use with voice alarm systems.”

According to Heffernan, the Bedrock SM50 STIPA Meter is a fully compliant class 2 sound level meter and real-time analyzer that uses quantitative methods to quickly and accurately measure the Speech Transmission Index, or STI, and Speech Transmission Index for Public Address Systems, or STIPA, of a given area, taking into account the quality of the speakers, signal interference, room acoustics, and more.

Used with the BTB65TalkBox, a calibrated acoustic signal source, technicians can efficiently and accurately complete the required intelligibility testing of any voice alarm system.

“Fire safety should never be taken for granted,” added Heffernan. “Having an effective, accurate, and reliable fire alarm system is only the first step toward minimizing risk and protecting lives. It’s necessary to perform consistent system maintenance and conduct regular testing to ensure the system remains fully compliant and continues to function properly.”

### **About SDi**

SDi is the world’s leading provider of specialized test and inspection equipment for the fire protection and security industries. Through strategic partnerships with detector manufacturers and key industry affiliations, SDi has gained unique insight into the latest fire protection technologies and standards, ensuring SDi products are reliably compatible, code compliant, and align with all industry standards. SDi can be trusted to consistently deliver exceptional products, unparalleled service, and innovative solutions to the fire and security industries. [www.sdifire.com](http://www.sdifire.com)

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