

## Dave Melton - Firetrace

[Previous](#) | [Next](#)  
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Despite leaving school at 15 and lacking any formal training Dave seems to have a natural ability to overcome complex engineering problems with simple logical explanations. Even as a lad and often to the annoyance of his older brothers Dave would always find an easier way to do a job. Unaware that he was a budding inventor he and his wife Christine started a small company installing fire protection systems which has now with the assistance of their two sons flourished into an international company manufacturing their unique range of patented automatic fire extinguishers.

**Firetrace** Firetrace is a revolutionary fire extinguisher system which will automatically detect and extinguish a fire at source. Its elegance is its simplicity there are no moving parts and it requires no external power to both rapidly detect and extinguish fire with pinpoint accuracy.

Detection is achieved via a small lineal detection tube manufactured from a specially formulated thermoplastic material, which ruptures at a predetermined temperature releasing extinguishant agent into the heart of the fire.

**The Idea** Typically automatic fire extinguisher systems are expensive complex and unreliable. Making a living using conventional equipment was not easy so Dave thought hard and long about why this was and the answer seemed to be that all relied on electronics. There were chips with everything. It was time for a major rethink so he began to experiment with pneumatics. A self-contained power source was the answer. No electronics meant no dependence on electricity. Simplicity meant economy and reliability. All that was needed was a tube that would rupture at the hottest place and release the extinguishant into the fire. After much experimentation a thermoplastic material called Firetrace was born.

**The Problems** New products have no proven track record, which is especially important with safety equipment. Customers and insurance companies quite naturally require some form of approval but British

