Press Release 18/2026

Nine expert conferences at the VdS-FireSafety Cologne 2026

On December 2 and 3, 2026, nine high-quality conferences will be held at Koelnmesse as part of the VdS-FireSafety Cologne – perfectly complemented by the large international trade show with its diverse program.

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Cologne, August 2026. At the VdS-FireSafety Cologne on December 2 and 3, 2026, visitors can enjoy the popular combination of a large, international trade show, numerous live demonstrations, special exhibition areas, a supporting program on the exhibition stage, and nine specialized expert conferences that can be booked separately. This makes it easy to combine attending a conference with experiencing the latest fire protection technology firsthand and networking extensively.

This year, the conference program will be expanded to include two special events: For the first time, the well-established VdS conference “Fire Protection in Electrical Systems” (“Brandschutz in elektrischen Anlagen”) will be held as part of the VdS-FireSafety Cologne. Another new development is that Euralarm, the European trade association for the fire protection, fire detection, and security industries, is organizing an international, English-language symposium on this topic: the “European Fire Detection Forum 2026.”

Further details on this year's conferences and a selection of their topics:

VdS expert conference Professional Development Seminar for Fire Protection Officers (Fortbildungsseminar für Brandschutzbeauftragte), 02./03.12.2026

The VdS conference, which has been popular for 30 years, offers up-to-date, well-founded knowledge and a wealth of practical expertise, as well as plenty of opportunities to exchange ideas with other fire protection officers. It is recognized as continuing education for fire protection officers in accordance with German regulations (vfdb,

DGUV, and VdS) and comprises 16 instructional units. Topics this time include, among others:

- The Company Fire Protection Officer from a Legal Perspective – Clarifications to Dispel Unfounded Fears of Liability
- Psychological Factors in Evacuation and Clearance
- Photovoltaic Systems and Storage; Typical Problems in Practice
- Safe Operation of Hand-Held Devices with Lithium-Ion Batteries

VdS expert conference Fire Extinguishing Systems (Feuerlöschanlagen), 02.12.2026

New regulations, innovative fire suppression technologies, and increasing demands on planning, operations, and incident management … This long-standing conference offers a concise overview of current developments. Topics include, among others:

- VdS CEA 4001 in Transition – What Does the 2027 Edition Bring, and Where Does DIN EN 12845-1 Stand?
- Technical Challenges in Retrofitting Existing Fire Suppression Systems with Foam Additives
- Working Hand in Hand for Operational Success: The Fire Department in Collaboration with Mechanical Fire Protection Systems
- Liability and Responsibilities in the Event of a Claim Due to Defects in Fire Suppression Systems from the Insurer's Perspective

VdS expert conference on Hydrant Systems (Hydrantenanlagen), 03.12.2026

The short conference on "hydrant systems" is intended to raise awareness of this often-underestimated type of fire suppression system. This year's agenda includes the following topics, among others:

- Planning and Design Principles
- Fire Department Operational Principles
- Expert Inspection
- Measurement of Hydrant Systems

VdS expert conference Structural Fire Protection (Baulicher Brandschutz), 02.12.2026

At this prestigious conference, experts from the fields of engineering and technical assessment, building administration, and legal consulting will provide in-depth and practical information on developments

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and innovations in the field of structural fire protection. This year's topics will include, among others:

- Modular Construction: Updates on Regulations and Applicability
- Current Legal Aspects of Fire Protection
- Engineering Justification for Alternative Fire Protection Planning – Principles of Protection-Goal-Oriented Fire Protection Planning
- New Learning Concepts in Old Schools: Recurring Inspections and Fire Protection

VdS expert conference Construction and Fire Protection in NRW (Bauen und Brandschutz in NRW), 03.12.2026

Insights into current developments in building law and fire safety in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most populous federal state. This year's program includes, among other things:

- Comprehensive Security Concepts for Resilient Buildings and Critical Infrastructure Sites
- News from the Ministry of Construction
- Building Permit Procedures: Balancing the Rule of Law and Efficiency
- The Inspection Engineer in North Rhine-Westphalia – Experiences

VdS expert conference Smoke and Heat Exhaust Ventilation Systems (Rauch- und Wärmeabzugsanlagen), 03.12.2026

The annual symposium provides up-to-date, first-hand information on the legal framework, technology, design, and inspection of smoke and heat exhaust systems. Topics include, among others:

- Smoke and heat exhaust systems and PV modules
- Smoke exhaust systems in practice: Upgrading and retrofitting smoke exhaust systems
- Questions for inspection experts
- Smoke protection at the Hofburg in Vienna and at the Berlin Palace

VdS expert conference Fire Detection and Alarm Systems (Brandmeldeanlagen), 03.12.2026

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This well-established conference provides up-to-date information on regulations, technology, and applications related to fire alarm systems, covering these and many other topics:

- Elevators and Fire Alarm Systems – Requirements and Fire Control Systems
- AI Meets Fire Safety
- Required Information on Fire Alarm Technology in Building Permits
- Can the DIN EN 54 Series Still Be Saved?

NEW: VdS expert conference Fire Protection in Electrical Systems, 02.12.2026

This conference has been held every other year for over 30 years. Its goal is to present findings from damage analyses and investigations into the causes of damage, and to derive preventive measures from them. In addition, new technical developments and changes to regulations are discussed.

This year, the popular symposium will take place for the first time as part of the VdS-FireSafety Cologne. It can be attended in person at Cologne or via livestream. (The option to participate online is available only for this conference, but not for the other expert conferences at VdS-FireSafety Cologne.) The advantage of attending in person is the opportunity to also benefit from the trade show and the extensive accompanying professional program. Conference topics include:

- Fire-Prone Facilities
- Inspection of PV Systems – Common Defects
- Working Safely with Stationary Battery Systems
- The New Lightning Protection Standards – An Overview

NEW: European Fire Detection Forum by Euralarm (in English), 02.12.2026

The European Fire Detection Forum is organized by Euralarm as part of the VdS-FireSafety Cologne and will be conducted in English. The inaugural edition will be held under the theme: “Fire safety in a changing world and the changing world of fire safety – From reaction to prediction: the next paradigm of electronic fire safety.” The event will highlight developments and technologies aimed at supporting earlier detection and reduction of nuisance alarms. A selection of the topics to be covered:

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- Advances in connectivity, artificial intelligence, sensor fusion, sustainability, and predictive maintenance
- Changes in regulations
- New construction technologies
- Emerging risks, such as those posed by lithium-ion batteries

Trade show admission included for conference attendees

Anyone who attends at least one expert conference automatically receives free admission to the exhibition hall on both days of the event. Here, they can take advantage of the large trade show and its numerous attractions: around 200 exhibitors from Germany and abroad, many live demonstrations of the latest fire protection technology, large themed special exhibition areas – including sections on structural fire protection and sprinklers – a varied supporting program, the “Meeting point Training & Career”, and a wide range of networking opportunities.

Professional programme on the fair stage

The stage in the exhibition hall offers three forums: the “Future Forum Fire Protection” with presentations on important future topics, the exhibitor forum on innovative solutions and the VdS-FireSafetyTalk. Here, experts will discuss current industry topics in 90-minute panel discussions.

This time, more than 200 exhibitors and over 5,500 visitors are expected over the two days. The event will be opened by the Mayor of Cologne, Derya Karadag.

Detailed information at **vds.de/fire-safety**

Caption (VdS-BST26_Fachtagungen.jpg)**:**

As part of the VdS-FireSafety Cologne 2026, nine expert conferences featuring high-profile speakers will be held in the halls surrounding the exhibition hall at Koelnmesse.

Caption (VdS-BST26_Messe.jpg)**:**

The major trade fair at the VdS-FireSafety Cologne on December 2 and 3, 2026, brings together fire protection professionals. Visitors can experience the latest tools and solutions up close at the exhibition booths, in the special exhibition areas, and during numerous live demonstrations.

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About VdS:

VdS is one of the world's most renowned institutions for corporate safety and security. 500 experts offer a unique range of services for fire protection, security, cybersecurity and natural hazard prevention.

Services include risk assessments, testing and certification, inspections, information systems for natural hazards and an extensive training program. In addition, the independent institute sets international safety and security standards with the publication of a comprehensive set of Guidelines.

The optimal protection of our partners is based on a worldwide unique protection concept whose reliability builds on 115 years of VdS-experience, combining all core aspects of loss prevention. Decision-makers around the world rely on VdS-approved reliability and safety.

More information at vds-global.com

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