

Exiting Requirements

Minneapolis Fire Department Bureau Policy #10-6

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Issue

The fire and building codes do not clearly address all of the issues that are found in existing buildings or that may come up in the design of new buildings.

Code requirements

Portions of chapter 10 of the Minnesota State Fire Code apply to exiting requirements in existing buildings and chapter 10 of the Minnesota State Building Code applies to exiting in new construction and remodeling.

Problem

The codes do not clearly or adequately address all exiting issues. The following are clarifications of code requirements for exiting.

Acceptable means of compliance

1. Stairway doors: Doors that open into the exit stairways are to be openable from both sides without the use of a key, tool or special knowledge. Exceptions:
 - a. Stairway discharge exit doors that open to the outside may be locked on exterior side provided that a labeled key is provided in the key box and there is a handle on the exterior side of the door.
 - b. Stair doors, other than exit discharge doors, may be locked on the stairway side provided that the locks fail unlocked on activation of any fire alarm in the building, fail unlocked on loss of power to the locking device and will unlock from a manually activated signal from the fire command center. The stair doors are to be maintained in the latched closed position when locked or unlocked. A telephone or other two-way communications system which is connected to a constantly attended location shall be installed at every fifth floor in each locked exit stairway.
 - c. Egress doors into stairways that serve not more than four stories are permitted to be locked from the stair side (with the exception of the door that provides exit to the exterior) provided that they are openable from the egress side.

2. Elevator lobbies: Elevator lobby doors may be locked when complying with one of the following conditions:
 - a. There is direct, unimpeded access to at least one exit.
 - b. In buildings protected throughout by a fire sprinkler or fire alarm system: The locked lobby door will provide access to at least one exit. The lock is to unlock with loss of power to the locking device, unlock on activation of any fire alarm in the building and unlock from a manually activated signal in the fire command center or other approved location. A clearly labeled emergency communications system is to be located in the locked lobby. The two-way communications system is to comply with section 2.27.1.1 of ASME Standard A17.1S "Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators" (this is the same type of system required in the elevator car, but the Minnesota Elevator Code does not allow the lobby system to be part of the same system used in the cars).

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact 311 at 612-673-3000. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. Para asistencia, llame al 311. Rau kev pab 311. Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 311.