

HEALTHCARE INTERPRETATIONS TASK FORCE

16 NOVEMBER 1999
HYATT HOTEL
NEW ORLEANS, LA

The following interpretations were discussed and voted on by the HITF during their meeting in November, 1999.

1. NFPA 101, 1985 and Subsequent Editions. Background Information: Many Authorities having Jurisdiction (AHJ's) require floor plans showing evacuation routes to be posted on each floor of a healthcare facility. The AHJ's often cite Sections 31-4.1.1 and 31-4.2.2 of the 1985 edition of NFPA 101 and similar sections in other editions of the Life Safety Code. For example, HCFA's Fire Safety Report for the 1985 Code in K48 states "A simple floor plan showing the evacuation routes is posted in prominent locations on all floors. 31-4.1.1, 31-4.2.2"; however, the referenced Code section does not specifically require these evacuation plans.

Question: Does the Life Safety Code require that floor plans showing evacuation routes be posted on all or any floors of a healthcare facility?

Answer: NO

2. NFPA 101, 1997 Edition; Sections 7-6.1.8 and 7-7.6 .Background Information:
None

Question 1 : Is it the intent that the referenced code sections require a fire watch in unoccupied areas of a healthcare occupancy under construction for the duration of the shutdown?

Answer 1: YES

Question 2 : If the answer to question 1 is yes, is the fire watch requirement applicable 24 hours a day for the duration of the shutdown?

Answer 2: YES

3. NFPA 10, 1998 Edition; Section 1-6.2 Background Information: Some AHJ's (inspectors) require signs marking the location of portable fire extinguishers to be mounted perpendicular to the wall in which the extinguisher cabinet is mounted. They also require this same type of signage when extinguishers are surface mounted on a wall.

The referenced code section requires only that “extinguishers mounted in cabinets or wall recesses...be marked conspicuously.”

Question 1: Is it the intent of NFPA10 to require signs marking the location of wall mounted portable fire extinguishers when not in cabinets or recesses?

Answer 1: NO

Question 2: Where signs are installed to meet the marking requirements of the referenced code, must they be mounted perpendicular to the wall in which the extinguisher cabinet is mounted?

Answer 2: NO

Question 3: If the answer to question 2 is no, does a conspicuous sign, including those mounted parallel to the wall, meet the intent of this section?

Answer 3: YES. NFPA 10, Section D-2-2.2 provides guidance to support this position.

4. NFPA 101, 1997 Edition; Section 13-5.4.1; NFPA 82, 1994 Edition; Section 3-2.2.4. Background: One state agency has been mandating the four foot extension on linen chutes that is required in NFPA 82, Section 3-2.2.4, be provided for existing chutes. NFPA 101, Section 13-5.4.1 requires compliance with NFPA 82 for any new chutes that may be installed in existing healthcare facilities.

Question: Is it the intent of NFPA 101, Section 13-5.4.1 to require existing chutes, that are not otherwise being altered or replaced, to comply with the four foot extension rule that is contained in NFPA 82, Section 3-2.2.4?

Answer: NO. The language of NFPA 101 is very clear that it only requires compliance with NFPA 82 (via the reference to NFPA 101, Section 7-5) for new chutes. In addition, NFPA 82, Sections 1-3.1 and 1-3.2 apply the standard to new construction and allows existing chutes to remain without be altered. NFPA 101, Sections 1-3.4, 1-3.8 and 7-5.2, exception, support this conclusion as does the general statement (specifically the last sentence) contained in NFPA 101, Section 33-1. This last statement describes the intended use of the referenced documents contained in NFPA 101.