

FILE NO. CAN 2-1003.2.9

DATE: March 1, 2001

CODE APPLICATION NOTICE

CODE SECTION: 1003.2.9 Means of Egress Illumination, ~~1998~~ 2001 California Building Code

1003.2.9 Means of egress illumination.

1003.2.9.1 General. Any time a building [for SFM] or portion of a building is occupied, the means of egress serving the occupied portion shall be illuminated at an intensity of not less than 1 footcandle (10.76 lx) at the floor level.

EXCEPTIONS: 1. In Group R, Divisions 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.3.1, 6.1.1, 6.2.1 and 3 Occupancies and within individual units of Group R, Division 1 Occupancies.

2. In auditoriums, theaters, concert or opera halls, and similar assembly uses, the illumination at the floor level may be reduced during performances to not less than 0.2 footcandle (2.15 lx), provided that the required illumination be automatically restored upon activation of a premise's fire alarm system when such system is provided.

3. [for SFM] Sleeping rooms in Group I Occupancies, and sleeping rooms in Group R, Divisions 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 6.1 and 6.2 Occupancies.

1003.2.9.2 Power Supply. The power supply for means of egress illumination shall normally be provided by the premises' electrical supply. In the event of its failure, illumination shall be automatically provided from an emergency system for Group I, Divisions 1.1 and 1.2, [*for SFM*] occupancies in rooms or areas requiring two or more exits or exit access doorways, or a combination thereof, and Group R, Divisions 2.1 and 2.2 Occupancies and for all other occupancies where the means of egress system serves an occupant load of 100 or more. Such emergency systems shall be installed in accordance with the Electrical Code.

For high-rise buildings, see Section 403.

INTERPRETATION:

In accordance with ~~1998~~ 2001 CBC, Section 104.2.8, the Office will accept designs for approval which conform to the illumination requirements as stated below as an alternate design conforming to the code.

- A. In office areas and similar spaces that are occupied only during specific hours of operation, egress lighting may be may be switched in those portions of the building which are separate and occupied only during "business hours."

Emergency power on the life safety branch is required for egress illumination in these areas only when the egress system serves an occupant load of 100 or more.

- B. For hospitals, where task lighting is provided in accordance with the requirements of the California Electrical Code, task lighting on the critical branch of the emergency system may be accepted as an alternate to egress illumination.

Item B does not apply to skilled nursing facilities, which must comply with the egress illumination requirements of the ~~1998~~ 2001 CBC and the ~~1998~~ 2001 California Electrical Code (CEC) for areas other than those addressed in items A and C.

- C. In hospitals and skilled nursing facilities, OSHPD will continue to allow the omission of egress illumination in sleeping rooms, similar to the requirements of the 1995 CBC Section 1012.1.

REASON:

Section 1003.2.9 of the ~~1998~~ 2001 California Building Code (CBC) requires the means of egress to be illuminated any time the building is occupied. The CBC and the California Electrical Code (CEC) sections 517-32 and 517-42 also requires power for egress lighting in Group I, Division 1.1 and 1.2 Occupancies to be provided by the life safety branch of an emergency system. This would require virtually all areas of hospitals and skilled nursing facilities, including offices, treatment rooms and patient sleeping rooms, to be illuminated 24 hours a day, and that this lighting be powered by the emergency generator. This level of egress lighting is frequently not necessary in hospitals and skilled nursing facilities for the following reasons.

Portions of these facilities, such as administrative office areas or outpatient clinic areas, are occupied only during certain times of day. Egress illumination is not needed for portions of the building that are not occupied. The 1998 *Handbook to the Uniform Building Code* makes it clear that “the code intends that illumination be provided for those portions of the egress system that serve the parts of the building that are, in fact, occupied.” Illumination may be switched in those portions of the building which are separate and occupied only during “business hours.”

The Electrical Code section 517-33(a) requires task lighting powered by the emergency system in many areas of hospitals, making the requirement for egress illumination powered by the emergency system redundant. This is not true for skilled nursing facilities, since the emergency system that powers task lighting in skilled nursing facilities does not meet the minimum requirements for egress lighting (CEC Sections 517-41(d), 517-42, 517-43).

It is inappropriate to require unswitched egress illumination in sleeping rooms. The 1998 *Handbook to the Uniform Building Code* indicates that the change to the wording of 1997 UBC Section 1003.2 was not intended to require lights that cannot be turned off, in sleeping rooms, such as patient sleeping rooms in hospitals, jail cells or dormitory-type rooms. The handbook states that while “the 1997 UBC does not specifically address these types of sleeping rooms, it would not seem reasonable to prohibit the lights from being turned off in a location where people are trying to sleep.” This is consistent with the 1995 *California Building Code* and the 2000 *International Building Code*.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

8/25/04

Kurt A. Schaefer

Date