

## Life Safety Code

### 7.8 Illumination of Means of Egress.

#### 7.8.1 General.

**7.8.1.1\*** Illumination of means of egress shall be provided in accordance with Section 7.8 for every building and structure where required in Chapters 11 through 43. For the purposes of this requirement, exit access shall include only designated stairs, aisles, corridors, ramps, escalators, and passageways leading to an exit. For the purposes of this requirement, exit discharge shall include only designated stairs, aisles, corridors, ramps, escalators, walkways, and exit passageways leading to a public way.

**7.8.1.2** Illumination of means of egress shall be continuous during the time that the conditions of occupancy require that the means of egress be available for use, unless otherwise provided in 7.8.1.2.2.

**7.8.1.2.1** Artificial lighting shall be employed at such locations and for such periods of time as are necessary to maintain the illumination to the minimum criteria values herein specified.

**7.8.1.2.2** Unless prohibited by Chapters 11 through 43, automatic lighting control devices shall be permitted to temporarily turn off the illumination within the means of egress, provided that each lighting control device complies with all of the following:

- (1) In new installations, the lighting control device is listed.
- (2) The lighting control device is equipped to automatically energize the controlled lights upon loss of normal power and is evaluated for this purpose.
- (3) Illumination timers are provided and are set for a minimum 15-minute duration.
- (4) The lighting control device is activated by any occupant movement in the area served by the lighting units.
- (5) In new installations, the lighting control device is activated by activation of the building fire alarm system, if provided.
- (6) The lighting control device does not turn off any lights relied upon for activation of photoluminescent exit signs or path markers.
- (7) The lighting control device does not turn off any battery equipped emergency luminaires, unit equipment, or exit signs.

**7.8.1.2.3\*** Energy-saving sensors, switches, timers, or controllers shall be approved and shall not compromise the continuity of illumination of the means of egress required by 7.8.1.2.

**7.8.1.3\*** The floors and other walking surfaces within an exit and within the portions of the exit access and exit discharge designated in 7.8.1.1 shall be illuminated as follows:

- (1) During conditions of stair use, the minimum illumination for new stairs shall be at least 10 ft-candle (108 lux), measured at the walking surfaces.
- (2) The minimum illumination for floors and other walking surfaces, other than new stairs during conditions of stair use, shall be to values of at least 1 ft-candle (10.8 lux), measured at the floor.
- (3) In assembly occupancies, the illumination of the walking surfaces of exit access shall be at least 0.2 ft-candle (2.2 lux) during periods of performances or projections involving directed light.
- (4)\*The minimum illumination requirements shall not apply where operations or processes require low lighting levels.

**7.8.1.4\*** Required illumination shall be arranged so that the failure of any single lighting unit does not result in an illumination level of less than 0.2 ft-candle (2.2 lux) in any designated area.

**7.8.1.5** The equipment or units installed to meet the requirements of Section 7.10 also shall be permitted to serve the function of illumination of means of egress, provided that all requirements of Section 7.8 for such illumination are met.

#### 7.8.2 Sources of Illumination.

**7.8.2.1\*** Illumination of means of egress shall be from a source considered reliable by the authority having jurisdiction.

**7.8.2.2** Battery-operated electric lights and other types of portable lamps or lanterns shall not be used for primary illumination of means of egress. Battery-operated electric lights shall be permitted to be used as an emergency source to the extent permitted under Section 7.9.

#### 7.9 Emergency Lighting.

##### 7.9.1 General.

**7.9.1.1\*** Emergency lighting facilities for means of egress shall be provided in accordance with Section 7.9 for the following:

- (1) Buildings or structures where required in Chapters 11 through 43
- (2) Underground and limited access structures as addressed in Section 11.7
- (3) High-rise buildings as required by other sections of this Code
- (4) Doors equipped with delayed-egress locks
- (5) Stair shafts and vestibules of smokeproof enclosures, for which the following also apply:
  - (a) The stair shaft and vestibule shall be permitted to include a standby generator that is installed for the smokeproof enclosure mechanical ventilation equipment.
  - (b) The standby generator shall be permitted to be used for the stair shaft and vestibule emergency lighting power supply.
- (6) New access-controlled egress doors in accordance with 7.2.1.6.2.

**7.9.1.2** For the purposes of 7.9.1.1, exit access shall include only designated stairs, aisles, corridors, ramps, escalators, and passageways leading to an exit. For the purposes of 7.9.1.1, exit discharge shall include only designated stairs, ramps, aisles, walkways, and escalators leading to a public way.

**7.9.1.3** Where maintenance of illumination depends on changing from one energy source to another, a delay of not more than 10 seconds shall be permitted.

##### 7.9.2 Performance of System.

**7.9.2.1** Emergency illumination shall be provided for a minimum of 1-1/2 hours in the event of failure of normal lighting.

**7.9.2.1.1** Emergency lighting facilities shall be arranged to provide initial illumination that is not less than an average of 1 ft-candle (10.8 lux) and, at any point, not less than 0.1 ft-candle (1.1 lux), measured along the path of egress at floor level.

**7.9.2.1.2** Illumination levels shall be permitted to decline to not less than an average of 0.6 ft-candle (6.5 lux) and, at any point, not less than 0.06 ft-candle (0.65 lux) at the end of 1-1/2 hours.

**7.9.2.1.3** The maximum-to-minimum illumination shall not exceed a ratio of 40 to 1.

**7.9.2.2** New emergency power systems for emergency lighting shall be at least Type 10, Class 1.5, Level 1, in accordance with NFPA110, Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems.

**7.9.2.3\*** The emergency lighting system shall be arranged to provide the required illumination automatically in the event of any interruption of normal lighting due to any of the following:

- (1) Failure of a public utility or other outside electrical power supply
- (2) Opening of a circuit breaker or fuse
- (3) Manual act(s), including accidental opening of a switch controlling normal lighting facilities

**7.9.2.4 Emergency generators** providing power to emergency lighting systems shall be installed, tested, and maintained in accordance with NFPA 110, Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems. Stored electrical energy systems, where required in this Code, other than battery systems for emergency luminaires in accordance with 7.9.2.5, shall be installed and tested in accordance with NFPA 111, Standard on Stored Electrical Energy Emergency and Standby Power Systems.

**7.9.2.5 Unit equipment and battery systems** for emergency luminaires shall be listed to ANSI/UL 924, Standard for Emergency Lighting and Power Equipment.

**7.9.2.6\* Existing battery-operated emergency lights** shall use only reliable types of rechargeable batteries provided with suitable facilities for maintaining them in properly charged condition. Batteries used in such lights or units shall be approved for their intended use and shall comply with NFPA 70, National Electrical Code.

**7.9.2.7 The emergency lighting system** shall be either continuously in operation or shall be capable of repeated automatic operation without manual intervention.

### **7.9.3 Periodic Testing of Emergency Lighting Equipment.**

**7.9.3.1 Required emergency lighting** systems shall be tested in accordance with one of the three options offered by 7.9.3.1.1, 7.9.3.1.2, or 7.9.3.1.3.

**7.9.3.1.1 Testing of required emergency lighting** systems shall be permitted to be conducted as follows:

- (1) Functional testing shall be conducted monthly, with a minimum of 3 weeks and a maximum of 5 weeks between tests, for not less than 30 seconds, except as otherwise permitted by 7.9.3.1.1(2).
- (2)\* The test interval shall be permitted to be extended beyond 30 days with the approval of the authority having jurisdiction.
- (3) Functional testing shall be conducted annually for a minimum of 11/2 hours if the emergency lighting system is battery powered.
- (4) The emergency lighting equipment shall be fully operational for the duration of the tests required by 7.9.3.1.1(1) and (3).
- (5) Written records of visual inspections and tests shall be kept by the owner for inspection by the authority having jurisdiction.

**7.9.3.1.2 Testing of required emergency lighting** systems shall be permitted to be conducted as follows:

- (1) Self-testing/self-diagnostic battery-operated emergency lighting equipment shall be provided.
- (2) Not less than once every 30 days, self-testing/self-diagnostic battery-operated emergency lighting equipment shall automatically perform a test with a duration of a minimum of 30 seconds and a diagnostic routine.
- (3) Self-testing/self-diagnostic battery-operated emergency lighting equipment shall indicate failures by a status indicator.
- (4) A visual inspection shall be performed at intervals not exceeding 30 days.
- (5) Functional testing shall be conducted annually for a minimum of 1-1/2 hours.
- (6) Self-testing/self-diagnostic battery-operated emergency lighting equipment shall be fully operational for the duration of the 11/2-hour test.
- (7) Written records of visual inspections and tests shall be kept by the owner for inspection by the authority having jurisdiction.

**7.9.3.1.3 Testing of required emergency lighting systems** shall be permitted to be conducted as follows:

- (1) Computer-based, self-testing/self-diagnostic battery-operated emergency lighting equipment shall be provided.
- (2) Not less than once every 30 days, emergency lighting equipment shall automatically perform a test with a duration of a minimum of 30 seconds and a diagnostic routine.
- (3) The emergency lighting equipment shall automatically perform annually a test for a minimum of 11/2 hours.
- (4) The emergency lighting equipment shall be fully operational for the duration of the tests required by 7.9.3.1.3(2) and (3).
- (5) The computer-based system shall be capable of providing a report of the history of tests and failures at all times.

### **7.10 Marking of Means of Egress.**

#### **7.10.1 General.**

**7.10.1.1 Where Required.** Means of egress shall be marked in accordance with Section 7.10 where required in Chapters 11 through 43.

#### **7.10.1.2 Exits.**

**7.10.1.2.1\* Exits**, other than main exterior exit doors that obviously and clearly are identifiable as exits, shall be marked by an approved sign that is readily visible from any direction of exit access.

#### **7.10.1.2.2\***

Horizontal components of the egress path within an exit enclosure shall be marked by approved exit or directional exit signs where the continuation of the egress path is not obvious.

**7.10.1.3 Exit Door Tactile Signage.** Tactile signage shall be provided to meet all of the following criteria, unless otherwise provided in 7.10.1.4:

- (1) Tactile signage shall be located at each exit door requiring an exit sign.
- (2) Tactile signage shall read as follows: EXIT.
- (3) Tactile signage shall comply with ICC/ANSI A117.1, American National Standard for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities.

**7.10.1.4 Existing Exemption.** The requirements of 7.10.1.3 shall not apply to existing buildings, provided that the occupancy classification does not change.

#### **7.10.1.5 Exit Access.**

**7.10.1.5.1** Access to exits shall be marked by approved, readily visible signs in all cases where the exit or way to reach the exit is not readily apparent to the occupants.

**7.10.1.5.2\*** New sign placement shall be such that no point in an exit access corridor is in excess of the rated viewing distance or 100 ft (30 m), whichever is less, from the nearest sign.

**7.10.1.6\* Floor Proximity Exit Signs.** Where floor proximity exit signs are required in Chapters 11 through 43, such signs shall comply with 7.10.3, 7.10.4, 7.10.5, and 7.10.6 for externally illuminated signs and 7.10.7 for internally illuminated signs. Such signs shall be located near the floor level in addition to those signs required for doors or corridors. The bottom of the sign shall be not less than 6 in. (150 mm), but not more than 18 in. (455 mm), above the floor. For exit doors, the sign shall be mounted on the door or adjacent to the door, with the nearest edge of the sign within 4 in. (100 mm) of the door frame.

**7.10.1.7\* Floor Proximity Egress Path Marking.** Where floor proximity egress path marking is required in Chapters 11 through 43, an approved floor proximity egress path marking system that is internally illuminated shall be installed within 18 in. (455 mm) of the floor. Floor proximity egress path marking systems shall be listed in accordance with ANSI/UL 1994, Standard for Luminous Egress Path Marking Systems. The system shall provide a visible delineation of the path of travel along the designated exit access and shall be

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essentially continuous, except as interrupted by doorways, hallways, corridors, or other such architectural features. The system shall operate continuously or at any time the building fire alarm system is activated. The activation, duration, and continuity of operation of the system shall be in accordance with 7.9.2. The system shall be maintained in accordance with the product manufacturing listing.

**7.10.1.8\* Visibility.** Every sign required in Section 7.10 shall be located and of such size, distinctive color, and design that it is readily visible and shall provide contrast with decorations, interior finish, or other signs. No decorations, furnishings, or equipment that impairs visibility of a sign shall be permitted. No brightly illuminated sign (for other than exit purposes), display, or object in or near the line of vision of the required exit sign that could detract attention from the exit sign shall be permitted.

**7.10.1.9 Mounting Location.** The bottom of new egress markings shall be located at a vertical distance of not more than 6 ft 8 in. (2030 mm) above the top edge of the egress opening intended for designation by that marking. Egress markings shall be located at a horizontal distance of not more than the required width of the egress opening, as measured from the edge of the egress opening intended for designation by that marking to the nearest edge of the marking.

### 7.10.2 Directional Signs.

**7.10.2.1\*** A sign complying with 7.10.3, with a directional indicator showing the direction of travel, shall be placed in every location where the direction of travel to reach the nearest exit is not apparent.

**7.10.2.2 Directional exit signs** shall be provided within horizontal components of the egress path within exit enclosures as required by **7.10.1.2.2**.

### 7.10.3\* Sign Legend.

**7.10.3.1** Signs required by 7.10.1 and 7.10.2 shall read as follows in plainly legible letters, or other appropriate wording shall be used: EXIT

**7.10.3.2\*** Where approved by the authority having jurisdiction, pictograms in compliance with NFPA 170, Standard for Fire Safety and Emergency Symbols, shall be permitted.

**7.10.4\*** Power Source. Where emergency lighting facilities are required by the applicable provisions of Chapters 11 through 43 for individual occupancies, the signs, other than approved self-luminous signs and listed photoluminescent signs in accordance with 7.10.7.2, shall be illuminated by the emergency lighting facilities. The level of illumination of the signs shall be in accordance with 7.10.6.3 or 7.10.7 for the required emergency lighting duration as specified in 7.9.2.1. However, the level of illumination shall be permitted to decline to 60 percent at the end of the emergency lighting duration.

### 7.10.5 Illumination of Signs.

**7.10.5.1\* General.** Every sign required by 7.10.1.2, 7.10.1.5, or 7.10.8.1, other than where operations or processes require low lighting levels, shall be suitably illuminated by a reliable light source. Externally and internally illuminated signs shall be legible in both the normal and emergency lighting mode.

### 7.10.5.2\* Continuous Illumination.

**7.10.5.2.1** Every sign required to be illuminated by 7.10.6.3, 7.10.7, and 7.10.8.1 shall be continuously illuminated as required under the provisions of Section 7.8, unless otherwise provided in 7.10.5.2.2.

**7.10.5.2.2\* Illumination** for signs shall be permitted to flash on and off upon activation of the fire alarm system.

### 7.10.6 Externally Illuminated Signs.

#### 7.10.6.1\* Size of Signs.

- 7.10.6.1.1** Externally illuminated signs required by 7.10.1 and 7.10.2, other than approved existing signs, unless otherwise provided in 7.10.6.1.2, shall read EXIT or shall use other appropriate wording in plainly legible letters sized as follows:
- (1) For new signs, the letters shall be not less than 6 in. (150 mm) high, with the principal strokes of letters not less than 3/4 in. (19 mm) wide.
  - (2) For existing signs, the required wording shall be permitted to be in plainly legible letters not less than 4 in. (100 mm) high.
  - (3) The word EXIT shall be in letters of a width not less than 2 in. (51 mm), except the letter I, and the minimum spacing between letters shall be not less than 3/8 in. (9.5 mm).
  - (4) Sign legend elements larger than the minimum established in 7.10.6.1.1(1) through (3) shall use letter widths, strokes, and spacing in proportion to their height.

**7.10.6.1.2** The requirements of 7.10.6.1.1 shall not apply to marking required by 7.10.1.3 and 7.10.1.7.

#### 7.10.6.2\* Size and Location of Directional Indicator.

**7.10.6.2.1 Directional indicators**, unless otherwise provided in 7.10.6.2.2, shall comply with all of the following:

- (1) The directional indicator shall be located outside of the EXIT legend, not less than 3/8 in. (9.5 mm) from any letter.
- (2) The directional indicator shall be of a chevron type, as shown in Figure 7.10.6.2.1.
- (3) The directional indicator shall be identifiable as a directional indicator at a distance of 40 ft (12 m).
- (4) A directional indicator larger than the minimum established for compliance with 7.10.6.2.1(3) shall be proportionately increased in height, width, and stroke.
- (5) The directional indicator shall be located at the end of the sign for the direction indicated.



#### 7.10.6.2.1 Chevron Type Indicator.

**7.10.6.2.2** The requirements of 7.10.6.2.1 shall not apply to approved existing signs.

**7.10.6.3\* Level of Illumination.** Externally illuminated signs shall be illuminated by not less than 5 ft-candles (54 lux) at the illuminated surface and shall have a contrast ratio of not less than 0.5.

### 7.10.7 Internally Illuminated Signs.

**7.10.7.1 Listing.** Internally illuminated signs shall be listed in accordance with ANSI/UL 924, Standard for Emergency Lighting and Power Equipment, unless they meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) They are approved existing signs.
- (2) They are existing signs having the required wording in legible letters not less than 4 in. (100 mm) high.
- (3) They are signs that are in accordance with 7.10.1.3 and 7.10.1.6.

**7.10.7.2\* Photoluminescent Signs.** The face of a photoluminescent sign shall be continually illuminated while the building is occupied. The illumination levels on the face of the photoluminescent sign shall be in accordance with its listing. The charging illumination shall be a reliable light source, as determined by the authority having jurisdiction. The charging light source, shall be of a type specified in the product markings.

**7.10.8 Special Signs.****7.10.8.1 Sign Illumination.**

**7.10.8.1.1** Where required by other provisions of this Code, special signs shall be illuminated in accordance with 7.10.5, 7.10.6.3, and 7.10.7.

**7.10.8.1.2** Where emergency lighting facilities are required by the applicable provisions of Chapters 11 through 43, the required illumination of special signs shall additionally be provided under emergency lighting conditions.

**7.10.8.2 Characters.** Special signs, where required by other provisions of this Code, shall comply with the visual character requirements of ICC/ANSI A117.1, American National Standard for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities.

**7.10.8.3\* No Exit.**

**7.10.8.3.1** Any door, passage, or stairway that is neither an exit nor a way of exit access and that is located or arranged so that it is likely to be mistaken for an exit shall be identified by a sign that reads as follows:

# NO EXIT

**7.10.8.3.2** The NO EXIT sign shall have the word NO in letters 2 in. (51 mm) high, with a stroke width of 3/8 in. (9.5 mm), and the word EXIT in letters 1 in. (25 mm) high, with the word EXIT below the word NO, unless such sign is an approved existing sign.

**7.10.8.4 Elevator Signs.** Elevators that are a part of a means of egress (see 7.2.13.1) shall have both of the following signs with a minimum letter height of 5/8 in. (16 mm) posted in every elevator lobby:

- (1) \*Signs that indicate that the elevator can be used for egress, including any restrictions on use
- (2) \*Signs that indicate the operational status of elevators

**7.10.8.5\* Evacuation Diagram.** Where a posted floor evacuation diagram is required in Chapters 11 through 43, floor evacuation diagrams reflecting the actual floor arrangement and exit locations shall be posted and oriented in a location and manner acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction.

**7.10.9 Testing and Maintenance.**

**7.10.9.1 Inspection.** Exit signs shall be visually inspected for operation of the illumination sources at intervals not to exceed 30 days or shall be periodically monitored in accordance with 7.9.3.1.3.

**7.10.9.2 Testing.** Exit signs connected to, or provided with, a battery-operated emergency illumination source, where required in 7.10.4, shall be tested and maintained in accordance with 7.9.3. NFPA 101® Life Safety Code® 2015 Edition

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