

## *Life Safety Code Updates and Reminders*

### **Fire and Smoke Barrier Doors:**

Doors must be inspected per NFPA 80; Functional testing to ensure proper operation must be conducted annually, documented, and kept for inspection by the surveyors or other AHJs. Any deficiencies that were found need to be repaired or replaced “without delay.” This inspection includes a visualization to assess the door’s overall condition and verification of the following:

- The door can be opened fully and closed freely;
- Opening forces do not exceed maximums prescribed by the Code;
- Latching and locking mechanisms comply with the Code;
- Releasing hardware is installed between 34 in. and 48 in. above the finished floor;
- Doors installed in pairs comply with the Code’s releasing requirements;
- Door closers are properly adjusted;
- Projection of door leaf into egress path does not exceed Code maximums;
- Powered doors comply with Code requirements;
- Any required signage is intact and legible;
- Any special locking arrangements comply with Code requirements;
- Security devices that impede egress are not installed.

The above inspection requirement applies to all of the following doors:

- Smoke barrier doors;
- Doors equipped with panic hardware or fire exit hardware;
- Doors in exit enclosures;
- Electrically-controlled egress doors;
- Doors with special locking arrangements (delayed-egress locks, access-controlled egress doors, and elevator lobby door locking);
- Further, a requirement for inspection and testing of smoke door assemblies in accordance with NFPA 105 (air leakage test) was added.

**Every door listed above must be individually noted on the annual report to indicate the door type, hardware, and location; as well as other features that were important to note during the inspection.**

*\*Please note: even if the doors are not required, if they are installed, they must meet the requirements of NFPA 101, NFPA 80, NFPA 105, and any other applicable Code.*

### *Complete Fire Alarm System Testing Reports:*

All devices connected to a fire alarm system need to have evidence that each individual device was tested.

The test report must list each and every individual device, a description of where it is located, and whether it passed or failed its test.

Here is a list of the most common components of interface relays used in healthcare fire alarm systems:

- Magnetic hold-open devices;
- Air handler shutdown;
- Kitchen hood suppression system;
- Elevator recall;
- Magnetic locks;
- Fire pump;
- Smoke dampers;
- Clean agent suppression systems;
- Sprinkler dry pipe/pre-action systems;
- Overhead rolling fire doors.

If any of the above listed interface relays are within a facility, it must be individually listed on the annual fire alarm report with at least a pass/fail. A facility may have more than one of the same types of interface within the building (ie. magnetic hold-open devices). The location of each component must be noted and indicate pass/fail during testing. **Every individual device must be listed.**

### *Laundry Dryers:*

1. Whenever dryers are in use - the laundry staff must be present, staff shall be knowledgeable of who is using the dryer, and the contents within the dryer. A clothes dryer should never be left unattended while in operation.

2. Preventive maintenance should be provided to all dryers, including:

A. The temperature probe must be maintained clean and functioning properly. Some models of commercial clothes dryers have a temperature probe inside the drum or a box that controls the upper temperature cut-off switch. When the temperature probe is covered with lint, it acts as an insulator, preventing heat transfer. In this case, the dryer continues to supply heat to the load in the dryer, even to the point of ignition.

B. The thermostat control must be maintained, and staff needs to understand: what loads, require which heat setting, and over what time period.

C. Lint should not be allowed to build up in the dryer case, exhaust pipes or traps. Staff must inspect and clean all lint after each day's use of the dryers. Staff should verify daily that air is exhausted through the exhaust prior to using the dryers. If lint is accumulating on sprinkler heads, heat detectors, or anywhere outside the dryer exhaust system, there is a problem which needs to be checked by a mechanical contractor. Lint should not accumulate on the building exterior (roof, wall, or ground).

3. Dryers shall only be used by knowledgeable staff, understanding the following:

A. Never dry rubberized material, or material which may contain cleaning solvents, such as, mop heads or rags. (The most common cause of dryer fires) Dryers should not handle clothing, rags, or mop heads previously cleaned or soaked in flammable or combustible materials such as gasoline, degreasers, or flammable chemicals such as floor wax. Cooking oils and greases are other culprits to keep out of a dryer because of the threat of combustion.

B. Know what time and temperature setting is needed for different materials, such as, cotton, wool, or synthetic, etc.

C. Know that preventive maintenance has been provided (have a log), and the equipment is safe. Report any problem to maintenance for repair. State surveyors and/or CMS surveyors may ask for this log. This log may be separate or part of the general maintenance logs.

D. Know the manufacturer's safety precautions.

E. Hot, dry material shall be removed from the dryer into a cart and processed quickly, so that the heat does not build-up in the cart. (This is another common reasons facilities have fires in their laundry rooms).

F. Know how to use laundry safety equipment, the fire plan, and practice fire drills.

4. Gas fueled dryers must have the proper amount of combustion air (intake grills shall be maintained clean and clear). This prevents incomplete combustion, which produces carbon monoxide gas. The laundry and adjacent spaces should be equipped with carbon monoxide detectors.

During a fire event, ensure staff follow the fire plan, initiate fire suppression protocols, sound the fire alarm, start zone evacuations, and call DHSS/State Fire Marshal's Office with a fire report. A fire, for this definition, can be just smoke and does not need to be a visible flame.