

SPECWORK



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President's Thoughts

By: Billy J. Mathis, FCSI, CDT, Little Rock Chapter President



Your Chapter needs your help. As you read this article, we are fast approaching the time when the Chapter needs to begin preparations for hosting the 2027 Gulf States Region Conference. This event requires the involvement of multiple people from the Chapter in various roles. We need the following:

1. A Chairperson. Someone to lead the way and coordinate the activities of each of the volunteer teams.
2. Executive Team. This team will be responsible for coordinating with the Hotel for rooms, parking, meals, snacks, etc. The chair of this team will be the primary point of contact with the Hotel for all matters.
3. Advertisement Team. This team is responsible for producing the brochures, registration documents, sponsorship documents, and getting those documents into the hands of the people.
4. Registration Team. These people have the responsibility to coordinate and manage the registration process from the time we open registration to after the last day of the Conference. This includes manning the registration table during the conference.
5. Itinerary Team. This team will coordinate all speakers, all training sessions, and the Key Not Speaker. They are responsible for making sure that the rooms are setup appropriately with the AV equipment needed and that the sessions all go according to schedule.
6. Hospitality Room Host. This person or persons will be responsible for the Hospitality room including the beverages, snacks, open and closing times, managing the activities in the room and making sure that we have no issues.

As you can see, we need a group of people, all dedicated to pulling this off. Our goal is to have a Conference that fulfills all the requirements as set forth from the Region Board, to be fiscally responsible to both the people attending and the Chapter. Our goal is to break even at the end of the conference and when all bills are settled. If this sound like something you might like to help with, please contact myself (Billy J. Mathis, FCSI, CDT at bjmathis@taggarch.com or Mindy Burton, CSI, CDT at mburton@cromwell.com).



One of the best benefits of CSI membership is the opportunity to lead — and our Little Rock Chapter is looking for a few members ready to bring fresh ideas and energy to our Board of Directors. These roles are very manageable (often handled over lunch hours) and are great for emerging professionals and seasoned members looking to give back.

We're currently looking to fill the following positions:

Treasurer - Much simpler than it sounds. With only a few recurring expenses and a streamlined credit card system in place, this role focuses on maintaining clear records and providing a brief monthly financial update. Low time commitment, high impact.

Director of Programs - Help bring CSI to life by coordinating monthly programs. This includes reaching out to speakers, organizations, or product reps to host lunch-and-learns, tours, or occasional evening events. Perfect for someone outgoing who enjoys networking and planning ahead.

Director of Communications - This behind-the-scenes role keeps our chapter connected and informed and includes:

Website Manager – Help maintain and grow our chapter website into a go-to resource for the local construction community.

Newsletter Editor – Pull together a monthly newsletter highlighting chapter news, upcoming events, member spotlights, and industry content.

If you've ever thought about getting more involved but weren't sure how — this is your sign. A small time commitment can make a big difference for our chapter. Interested? Let us know — we'd love to talk with you! We're hoping to have these roles filled by March 15, 2026.

Fixed-It Friday: Iron Pull

Posted by [Lori Greene](#), March 20th, 2026

I took today's [Fixed-it Friday](#) photo of my neighbor's door, where they have repurposed an old iron and also modified the masonry for the lock. I love the functional creativity!



Wordless Wednesday: Deadbolt Backup

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog

Colin Watson of Allegion sent me today's Wordless Wednesday photo of an application that he and Eddie Dobbins ran across in a public library...mag-locks with deadbolts as the mechanical back-up. YIKES!



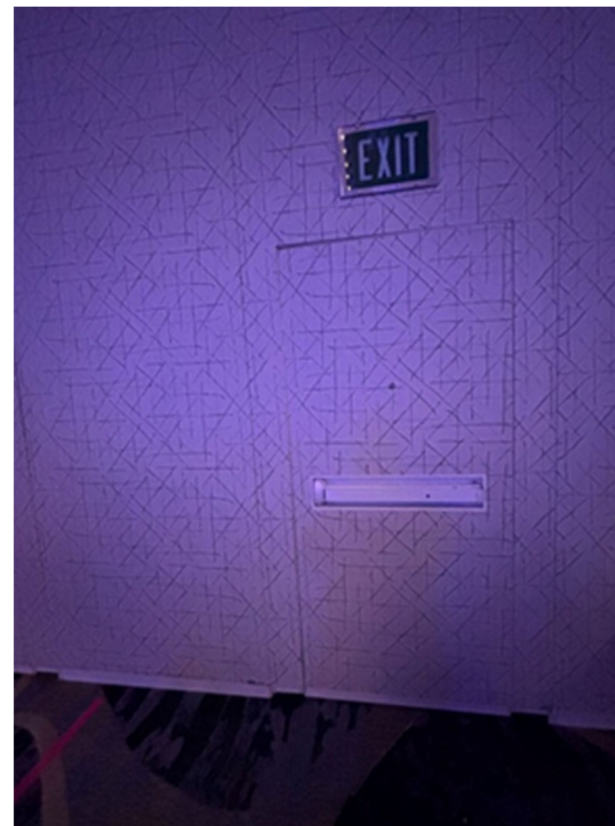
Wordless Wednesday: Readily Distinguishable?

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog

The model codes state: Doors in the means of egress shall be readily distinguishable from the adjacent construction and finishes such that the doors are easily recognizable as doors.

I'm guessing this is how this folding partition and door were manufactured – unlike many door issues that happen in the field. What do you think? Is the door distinguishable enough to be code-compliant?

Thank you to Andy Olson of Hall Aluminum for today's Wordless Wednesday photos!



Decoded: Door Swing

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog



As part of an ongoing project, I'm updating my Decoded articles – the previous version of this one was first written in 2012! Originally addressing two topics (door swing and encroachment), I'm separating this into two articles. Part 2 will follow shortly!

What determines the direction in which a door must swing?

According to the International Building Code (IBC)*, if a door is a required egress door, it generally needs to be a swinging door that is hung on hinges or pivots. A clarification was added in the 2021 edition addressing balanced doors. There are several exceptions to this

requirement, which would allow a different type of door to be used in certain applications:

- Private garages, office areas, factory and storage areas with an occupant load of 10 or less.
- Group I-3 occupancies used as a place of detention.
- Critical or intensive care patient rooms within suites of health care facilities.
- Doors within or serving a single dwelling unit in Groups R-2 and R-3.
- In other than Group H occupancies, revolving doors complying with the applicable sections of the IBC.
- In other than Group H occupancies, horizontal sliding doors complying with the applicable sections of the IBC.
- Power-operated doors in accordance with the applicable sections of the IBC.
- Doors serving a bathroom within an individual sleeping unit in Group R-1.
- In other than Group H occupancies, manually operated horizontal sliding doors are permitted in a means of egress from spaces with an occupant load of 10 or less.

Several of these exceptions address horizontal sliding doors – including the sliding office doors that have become more common due to the high cost of square footage and the amount of floor space a typical swinging door requires. Sliding doors to individual bathrooms are also being used more often due to space constraints. The exceptions for power-operated doors, horizontal sliding doors, and revolving doors refer to additional requirements that include provisions for egress through these doors – revolving doors must “collapse”, sliders must be able to be opened with a force perpendicular to the door – commonly referred to as “breakout” or “breakaway”, and there are maximum force limitations for these operations.

This section of the IBC also addresses the direction of door swing. In high hazard (Group H) occupancies, all doors must swing in the direction of egress travel, regardless of the occupant load. In other occupancy types, the door must swing in the direction of egress travel when the door is serving a calculated occupant load of 50 or more occupants.

“Doors shall swing in the direction of egress travel where serving an occupant load of 50 or more persons or a Group H occupancy.”

NFPA 101 – The Life Safety Code also requires doors to swing in the direction of egress travel when serving an area of high hazard contents of any occupant load, or other occupancy types with an occupant load of 50 or more (with limited exceptions for horizontal sliding doors and smoke barrier doors in existing health care occupancies). In addition, NFPA 101 requires doors leading to an exit enclosure to swing in the direction of egress travel, except when the door serves an individual living unit that opens directly into the exit enclosure.

Depending on the code being enforced, other locations where doors are required to swing in the direction of egress travel may include refrigeration machinery rooms (IBC), certain electric rooms (NFPA 70 – National Electric Code, and the IBC), some stair doors in mercantile occupancies (NFPA 101), and doors in aircraft loading walkways (NFPA 101 and NFPA 415). Consult the applicable code or standard for more information on these requirements.

In Summary

- Doors must typically swing in the direction of egress travel when serving:
- A high-hazard occupancy of any occupant load.
- Any occupancy type with a calculated occupant load of 50 or more occupants (consult the codes for exceptions).
- Exit enclosure doors except when serving one living unit (NFPA 101).

Additional locations as specified in the codes, such as electrical rooms and refrigeration machinery rooms. Codes may vary depending on the edition adopted as well as local requirements. Consult the applicable codes for more information. The Authority Having Jurisdiction makes the final determination on matters related to code compliance.

** For more information about these requirements, refer to the following sections in the IBC: 2024-2015: 1010.1.2, 2012 and 2009: 1008.1.2.*

Decoded: Encroachment Into the Egress Path

By: [Lori Greene](#), I Dig Hardware Blog

This is Part 2 of an updated Decoded article covering door swing and encroachment, along with some new photos illustrating how a door might encroach into an egress path. (Part 1 is here.)

When a door swings in the direction of egress travel it may swing into a corridor that is part of an egress path, where a certain egress width must be maintained. The term “encroachment” refers to how far a door projects into the required egress width, and it is measured with the door in two different positions – with the door in its fully-open position, and with the door in the position where it encroaches upon the egress width to the greatest extent (often 90 degrees).

These photos illustrate doors swinging into the egress corridor, with the fully-open position being 90 degrees:



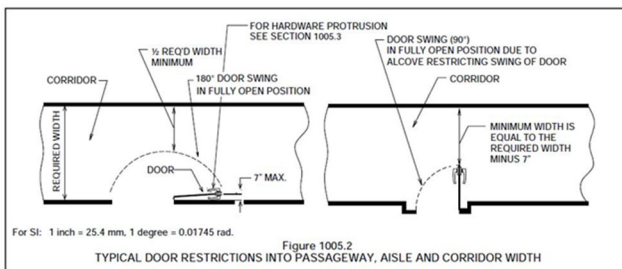
Egress width is determined by one of two methods – either the width prescribed by a model code such as the International Building Code (IBC), or a calculation based on the number of occupants and a width factor (the greater of the two prevails). The minimum egress width allowed by the IBC is 44 inches, unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- For access to and utilization of electrical, mechanical, or plumbing systems or equipment – 24 inches
- When the required occupant capacity of less than 50 people – 36 inches
- Within a dwelling unit – 36 inches
- In Group E with a corridor having a required capacity of 100 or more – 72 inches
- In corridors and areas serving stretcher traffic in ambulatory care facilities – 72 inches
- In Group I-2 in areas used for the movement of beds – 96 inches

To serve the occupant load of an area, a wider egress corridor may be required – based on the calculation. The IBC uses a factor of 0.2 inches per occupant for egress components other than stairways (0.3 inches per occupant for stairways). If a corridor is serving as a required means of egress for 300 occupants, the required egress width is 5 feet (300 occupants x 0.2 inches per occupant = 60 inches). This required egress width is greater than the minimum corridor width of 44 inches prescribed by the IBC.

When a door swings into the required egress width, the encroachment of the door into the required width must be considered. According to the IBC, a door may not reduce the required egress width by more than one-half at any point during the door's swing. For example, if a corridor is 5 feet wide and the required egress width is 5 feet, a 3-foot door swinging into that corridor would encroach too far into the required egress width, because at 90 degrees the door will obstruct more than half of the required egress width. These restrictions do not apply to doors within individual dwelling units or sleeping units of R-2 and R-3 occupancies, which would include apartments, hotels, dormitories, and child/adult care facilities.

The IBC also states that when doors are fully open they may not reduce the required means of egress width by more than 7 inches. According to the IBC, the "surface-mounted latch release hardware" mounted on the corridor side of the open door is exempt from inclusion in the 7-inch projection when it is mounted between 34 inches and 48 inches above the finished floor. NFPA 101 contains very similar requirements.



Graphic: *International Building Code Commentary*

One piece of hardware to consider with regard to encroachment is the door closer, because it may limit the fully-open position of the door. For example, a closer with a built-in stop (or a separate overhead stop) may have a maximum degree of opening of 110 degrees. The corridor must be wide enough to provide the required egress width with the door in this position – the door is only allowed to project 7 inches into the required width when it is fully open, 110 degrees in this case.

In Summary

Two measurements must be taken into account with regard to encroachment:

- The door may not extend more than halfway into the required egress width at any point in the door's swing.
- The door may not extend more than 7 inches into the required egress width when in the fully-open position.

According to the model codes, latching hardware on the corridor side of the open door is not taken into account if it is mounted between 34 inches and 48 inches above the finished floor.

Codes may vary depending on the edition adopted as well as local requirements. Consult the applicable codes for more information. The Authority Having Jurisdiction makes the final determination on matters related to code compliance.

Decoded: Fair Housing Act

By: [Lori Greene](#), I Dig Hardware Blog

I've received some questions lately regarding accessibility requirements for multifamily buildings, so here's an updated Decoded article on the topic.

A common misconception is that the Fair Housing Act applies only to federally-funded housing projects, but according to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development,

"The Fair Housing Act requires all 'covered multifamily dwellings' designed and constructed for first occupancy after March 13, 1991 to be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. Covered multifamily dwellings are all dwelling units in buildings containing four or more units with one or more elevators, and all ground floor units in buildings containing four or more units, without an elevator."

The Fair Housing Act was first adopted in 1968 and was amended in 1988. The law is enforced by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and requires all covered multifamily dwellings ready for first occupancy after March 13, 1991 to be accessible and usable by people with disabilities. Covered multifamily dwellings include dwelling units in buildings containing four or more units if the building has an elevator, or all ground floor units if the building does not have an elevator.

The Fair Housing Act covers many issues affecting discrimination in housing, but this article will focus on the door-related aspects of the law. There are seven basic access requirements of the Fair Housing Act:

1. An accessible building entrance on an accessible route.
2. Accessible common and public use areas.
3. Usable doors (usable by a person in a wheelchair).
4. Accessible route into and through the dwelling unit.
5. Light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats and other environmental controls in accessible locations.
6. Reinforced walls in bathrooms for later installation of grab bars.
7. Usable kitchens and bathrooms.

There are 10 "safe harbors" or sets of guidelines which can be used to design and build multi-family housing that meets the Fair Housing Act requirements – including various editions of the International Building Code (IBC), ICC A117.1 – Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities, the Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines published by HUD, and others. The requirements may vary slightly depending on which set of guidelines is used.

All residential occupancies covered by the Fair Housing Act are required to have public areas that are accessible to people with disabilities, and all dwelling units must have an accessible route into and through the unit. If a building with four or more units has no elevator, these requirements would apply only to ground floor units.

According to the HUD guidelines, accessible doors are doors in public and common use areas, as well as the public side of dwelling unit entrance doors. Accessible doors must meet the accessibility standards for doors on an accessible route, including:

- A clear opening width of at least 32 inches, measured between the face of the door open to 90 degrees and the stop on the strike jamb.
- A threshold that is limited in height and slope (refer to the design guidelines for specifics).
- The required amount of maneuvering clearance depending on the direction of approach.
- A maximum of 5 pounds of force to open an interior non-fire-rated door (8.5 pounds maximum for exterior doors if the 1986 edition of A117.1 is used, no specific limit for exterior doors if other standards are used).
- A minimum closing speed of 5 seconds for the door to move from 90 degrees to 12 degrees if equipped with a closer (doors with spring hinges are allowed to close more quickly).
- Sliding doors must provide at least 32 inches of clear width, and hardware must be exposed and usable from both sides of the door.
- Operable hardware that is “easy to grasp with one hand and does not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist to operate,” mounted within the allowable range – either less than 48 inches above the floor, or between 34 inches and 48 inches above the floor depending on which standard is used.

Usable doors are doors within the interior of the dwelling unit, as well as secondary exterior doors to decks, patios, or balconies. These doors are subject to less stringent requirements, but must provide at least 32 inches (nominal) clear opening width and have a low threshold or no threshold. Hardware for sliding doors should be exposed and usable from both sides of the door.



The International Building Code reflects the Fair Housing Act requirements, by stating in Chapter 11 that some units must be Accessible or Type A units (quantity varies by occupancy type), and most of the other units must be Type B units. With regard to the dwelling unit entrance door hardware, the requirements for Accessible, Type A, and Type B units are the same – they must be operable with no tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. The IBC references ICC A117.1 for the detailed requirements that apply to these units.

According to ICC A117.1 – Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities (2009 and 2017 editions):

- Accessible (fully accessible) and Type A (easily adaptable) units are required to have doors and hardware that meet the requirements of Section 404, at the primary entrance door and other doors intended for user passage (refer to the standard for exceptions).
- Type B (partially adaptable) units are required to have doors and hardware that meet the requirements of section 404 on the primary entrance door. Other doors intended for user passage must have a clear opening width of at least 31 3/4 inches, and thresholds must comply with Section 303.
- Type C (visitable) units are not required to have an entrance door that meets A117.1 section 404, but ICC A117.1 requires doorways to have a clear opening width of 31 3/4 inches, minimum, and requires thresholds to comply with Section 303. However, there is no reference to Type C units in the 2021 edition of the IBC (or any prior edition), so currently most units would have to be Type B at minimum (some units would be Accessible and Type A units).

More resources on the Fair Housing Act are available at [HUD.gov](https://www.hud.gov) (search Fair Housing Act). In addition to the requirements of the referenced standards, the guidelines include many recommendations for elements that will make housing accessible and usable for all occupants, so refer to the HUD documents for detailed information.

Decoded: Separate Deadbolts on Classroom Doors

By: [Lori Greene](#), I Dig Hardware Blog

Note that the I-Codes include exceptions that allow Items 1-4 to be omitted from the system requirements for doors serving areas where patients require restraint or containment as a function of a psychiatric or cognitive treatment area. Items 1-4 may also be omitted in areas where a listed egress control system is used to reduce the risk of child abduction from nursery and obstetric areas of a Group I-2 hospital.



In this month's Decoded article for the School Security and Safety issue of Door Security + Safety, I've answered a question that comes up often with regard to classroom security:

Is it acceptable by code to install a separate dead bolt along with a lockset or latchset on a classroom door?

The answer to this question depends on which code has been adopted in the project's jurisdiction. The International Building Code (IBC) and International Fire Code (IFC) require egress doors in almost all locations – including classrooms – to unlatch with one releasing motion. For jurisdictions where the I-Codes have been adopted without a modification to the requirements for classroom doors, a separate deadbolt would not be permitted on a door with other latching hardware, as it would require two releasing motions to unlatch the door.

While NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, also requires one releasing motion for most egress doors, a change was made in the 2018 edition of the code that was carried forward in subsequent editions. The original change was found in Chapter 15, Existing Educational Occupancies and has been added to Chapter 17, Existing Day-Care Occupancies. The section was originally called: Classroom Door Locking to Prevent Unwanted Entry. The current section title in Chapter 15 is: Locking of Classroom Doors and Other Instructional Spaces. In this sections, Item 3 states:

Two releasing motions shall be permitted where approved by the authority having jurisdiction provided that releasing does not require simultaneous operations, and provided the door is not equipped with panic hardware or fire exit hardware.

With approval from the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), this section of NFPA 101 would allow a separate deadbolt on an existing classroom door in an educational occupancy or day care center as long as the releasing motions did not have to be performed simultaneously. The deadbolt would not be permitted if the door was equipped with panic hardware instead of a lockset or latchset.

In addition, this section of the Life Safety Code includes many other criteria for the locking and latching hardware. For example, the door must be able to be locked from the inside without opening the door and must be able to be unlocked from the outside with a key or credential. Unlocking/unlatching the door from the egress side must be done without the use of a key, tool, special knowledge or effort, and the releasing mechanism(s) must be located between 34 inches and 48 inches above the floor. The emergency action plan must address the use of the locks, and emergency egress drills must train school staff on the engagement and release of the locking methods.

It's important to note that sections addressing classroom doors also appear in the chapters for New Educational Occupancies (Chapter 14) and New Day-Care Occupancies (Chapter 16), but these chapters require classroom doors to unlatch with one motion. A separate deadbolt with other latching hardware would not be permitted by these chapters. Similar sections also appear in the chapters for New and Existing Business Occupancies (Chapters 38 and 39). Some college classrooms are required to comply with these chapters, but the sections related to classrooms for both new and existing college and university buildings mandate hardware that will unlatch the door with one releasing motion.

Annex A of NFPA 101 clarifies that new hardware (ex. dead bolt) may be installed on an existing door in an existing educational occupancy. However, the annex states that a new door in an existing school would have to comply with Chapter 14. Because this chapter's section on classroom door hardware requires hardware that can be unlatched with one releasing motion, a separate deadbolt can not be used on a new door if there is other locking or latching hardware on the door. To comply with this section and with the requirements of the I-Codes, a mortise lock with an integral deadbolt could be installed; turning the lever for egress must retract both the deadbolt and latchbolt simultaneously.

A change has been approved for the 2027 edition of the International Building Code (IBC), which will impact the locking hardware used on exterior doors and classroom doors in schools, day care centers, colleges and universities. Where current codes permit classroom doors to be lockable to prevent unauthorized entry, the 2027 edition of the IBC will require classroom doors (as well as offices and other occupied rooms) to be lockable from the inside without opening the door. A separate deadbolt would not be compliant with the 2027 IBC, as the code will continue to require the door to unlatch with one releasing motion.

There are several lock functions available that would meet the requirements of the current and future I-Codes, including:

- Classroom security function – inserting a key in a cylinder on the egress side will lock the outside lever to prevent access, the interior lever always allows free egress.
- Entrance/office function – a push button or thumbturn on the egress side will lock the outside lever to prevent access, the interior lever always allows free egress.
- Storeroom function – the outside lever is always locked, so closing the door will effectively lock the door to prevent access, the interior lever always allows free egress.

- Storeroom function – the outside lever is always locked, so closing the door will effectively lock the door to prevent access, the interior lever always allows free egress.

These mechanical functions could be combined with a dead bolt if desired.

Locked/unlocked indicators can display the locked status of the outside lever, which can be very helpful during a lockdown condition. Electrified locks are also available which can facilitate remote, facility-wide lockdown as well as local lockdown and free egress. For classrooms with an occupant load of 50 or more (I-Codes) or 100 or more (NFPA codes), panic hardware is typically required if the door is equipped with a lock or latch. All of these hardware options must permit authorized access from the outside using a key or credential, allowing school staff and emergency responders immediate access to the locked room.

Once very commonly used on classroom doors, the traditional classroom function lockset and classroom function lever trim for panic hardware are no longer recommended for this application. These locks have a key cylinder in the outside lever and no means to lock the door from the inside. To lock the door and prevent access, the door must be opened and the key inserted in the outside lever. This could potentially expose the teacher or other staff member to danger in the corridor.

The 2027 IBC requirement for the door to be lockable from the inside will also apply to exterior doors serving educational occupancies. Exterior doors serving schools must be lockable from the egress side of the door to prevent access – it will not be compliant to open the door to lock or unlock the outside lever. In addition, at least one door on each building face must be able to be unlocked from the outside with a key or other approved means, to allow authorized access.

Based on current codes, the use of separate dead bolts on doors with other latching hardware in educational facilities is very limited. These locks would only be permitted on existing doors in existing schools where NFPA 101 or the state code allows a second releasing motion. And while it may be tempting to add temporary locking devices (AKA classroom barricade devices) to classroom doors, many of these products do not comply with the code requirements for egress, fire protection, and accessibility.

It is important to verify that any security product complies with the adopted codes and accessibility standards, and that any modifications to fire doors comply with NFPA 80, Standard for Fire Doors and Other Opening Protectives. ANSI/BHMA Grade 1 locksets have provided the necessary level of security in past active shooter incidents in schools, while meeting the requirements of the model codes and accessibility standards.

Wordless Wednesday: Still Scratching My Head

By: Loiri Greene, IDigHardware Blog

I saw today's Wordless Wednesday photo on the Crap Locksmithing Facebook page, and I'm still wondering what is happening here. Any ideas?

Thank you to Andrew Hamilton for permission to share the photo!



Fixed-It Friday: Card Readers Coming Soon

By: [Lori Greene](#), I Dig Hardware Blog

Today's Fixed-it Friday photos remind me of a problem that I had on a university project many years ago. The plans indicated that the doors would have credential readers, so I specified Von Duprin QEL (quiet electric latch retraction) panic hardware. The problem was that the access control system was planned to be installed at a future date TBD, and the hardware I specified had no means of being left unlocked while the building was open during the day. If I had known, I would have specified the "SD" special dogging feature, which goes on the center case assembly of the panic hardware to avoid conflicting with the QEL components in the mechanism case.

It's a good question to ask during a project meeting...when will the access control system go live?



Quick Question/What Would You Do?: Closet Doors

By: Loiri Greene, IDigHardware Blog



I recently received this Quick Question from one of our Allegion specwriters:

I'm working on a multifamily project and the architect has asked for a roller latch on the closet doors with a dummy lever only on the outside/push side (nothing on the inside/pull side). I think this is a cost-saving measure but it seems like a problem to me. Is there something in the International Building Code (IBC) that will help?

There is actually a short paragraph in the IBC that specifically addresses closet doors:

1010.2.5 Closet doors. Closet doors that latch in the closed position shall be openable from inside the closet.

The Commentary goes into a little more detail:

This provision is intended to address possible entrapment concerns in closets. If a closet door has a door latch, the closet door must be openable from both inside and outside. This will ensure that someone cannot get stuck inside a closet by accident. If a closet does not latch, no interior hardware is required.

If the door has latching hardware – a lockset or latchset – the code is clear. The closet door needs hardware on the inside (and outside) to retract the latch. It's a little less clear when the door has a roller latch, as this is not typically considered latching hardware. Another section of the IBC Commentary related to health care corridor doors states: *Roller latches are not permitted on these doors, as they are not regarded as providing positive latching that will allow the door to act as a reliable smoke protective.*

This seems like a good time for a reminder that the codes are a minimum. Also – this closet door section is kind of redundant, as the IBC requires egress doors to be readily openable from the egress side, with no key, special knowledge or effort. If I'm in a closet, the closet door is my egress door and I need to have a way out. I'm guessing that the closet door section was originally added because of a problem that was happening in the field.

So...if a closet door has a roller latch (no actual latching hardware), could it have no dummy trim or pull handle on the inside? In my opinion, it would require special knowledge to open and beyond that, it wouldn't be very functional – especially if it was inswinging.

Quick Question/What Would You Do?: Institutional Function Lockset

By: Loiri Greene, IDigHardware Blog



I received this partial plan from Kankshini Kiran Gondhali of Allegion, along with a really good question. The school has asked for the door between two single toilets (707.2) to be locked/lockable from both sides.

The Quick Question:

Would an institutional function lockset (always locked on both sides) be permitted on a door between two single restrooms?

Here are my thoughts:

An institutional function lockset has key cylinders on both levers, and a key is required to unlock the door from either side. In almost all locations, the model codes require doors in a means of egress to be able to be opened from the egress side without a key, tool, special knowledge or effort. This requirement applies to doors that are required for egress and also to *doors that are provided for egress purposes*.

So...is door 707.2 required for egress? Considering the low occupant load and the presence of another door in each restroom, the answer is no.

Is the door provided for egress purposes? In my opinion, the answer to this would also be no. Maybe it provides access for the school nurse? I'm not positive. (If you know, leave a comment!)

The final decision will be up to the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), but this seems like one of the rare situations where an institutional function lockset could be used.

Decoded: Smoke Door Requirements of the International Building Code

By: [Lori Greene](#), I Dig Hardware Blog

By request, I have updated this article on smoke doors to include the requirements of the 2024 IBC. I know it's very long, but you don't have to read and digest the whole thing. When you have a question about a smoke door, just decide which type of smoke door it is (based on the 5 types below) and then refer to the section for that type. And when you need to find this information again, it will be on the Articles page.

It's hard to believe that my monthly Decoded column has been ongoing since 2010! One of my most frequently-referenced articles was on the smoke door requirements of the 2009 International Building Code (IBC). The IBC has been revised several times since then and I continue to receive questions about smoke doors, so it's time for an update (I have now updated the article to reflect the 2024 edition of the IBC).

As with previous editions of the code, the reason it's difficult to determine the requirements for smoke doors is because there are several different sets of provisions that may apply depending on the use group and the wall type where the assemblies will be installed. I used the 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2024 editions of the IBC to answer basic questions about each type of smoke door – where they are typically found, and whether the doors require a fire rating, a closer, a latch, and gasketing. The types of smoke doors I identified are:

- Type 1 – Doors required to provide an effective barrier to limit the transfer of smoke
- Type 2 – Doors in smoke partitions
- Type 3 – Doors in smoke barriers
- Type 4 – Fire door assemblies in corridors and smoke barriers
- Type 5 – Doors in exit enclosures and exit passageways

To read about the requirements for a particular smoke door, first determine which of the 5 types applies to the door in question and refer to that section below. Keep in mind that other codes may have different requirements for these doors, so refer to the code and edition that applies to your project's jurisdiction.

UL 1784 – Air Leakage Tests of Door Assemblies

Gasketing is typically required when a door assembly must limit air infiltration to a maximum value stated in the code when tested in accordance with UL 1784 – Air Leakage Tests of Door Assemblies.

First, a few words on gasketing...Some smoke doors are required to limit air/smoke infiltration to a certain level when tested in accordance with UL 1784 – Air Leakage Tests of Door Assemblies. The maximum amount of air flow allowed by the IBC is 3.0 cubic feet per minute per square foot [0.015424 m³/(s m²)] of door opening at 0.10 inch (24.9 Pa) of water for both the ambient temperature test and the elevated temperature exposure test.

When door assemblies are required to meet this limit, it is difficult or impossible to achieve these values without gasketing at the head, jambs, and meeting stiles. For most doors, a seal at the bottom is not mandated, unless the door is required to meet the stated limits without the artificial bottom seal installed during the test (those locations are shown in this blog post). If the door must be tested without the artificial bottom seal it would typically require a sweep or automatic door bottom – both during the test and on the final assembly installed in the field.

For the purpose of this analysis, doors that have to meet these limits are noted with a requirement for gasketing. These doors will typically have an “S Label” which states that the assembly meets the requirement when classified gasketing is installed. Gasketing manufacturers’ catalogs indicate which products are listed for this purpose. The requirement for testing in accordance with UL 1784 (and the same allowable maximum) is also included in NFPA 105 – Standard for Smoke Door Assemblies and Other Opening Protectives.

Type 1: Doors required to provide an effective barrier to limit the transfer of smoke

Typical Location: These requirements apply to smoke partition corridor doors in Use Group I-2 (foster care facilities, detoxification facilities, hospitals, nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals). The IBC Commentary states: “this provision is primarily intended to apply to care recipient sleeping room corridor doors,” but it could also apply to other corridor doors that are not part of a vertical opening/exit (stair or shaft), and which do not require a fire rating per Section 509.4 – Separation and Protection for incidental uses.

Some typical examples of doors in health care facilities which are required by Section 509.4 to be fire rated are Group I-2 laboratories, patient rooms equipped with padded surfaces, physical plant maintenance shops, waste and linen collection rooms with large containers, laundry rooms and storage rooms over 100 square feet, and non-sprinklered boiler and furnace rooms which meet certain criteria. These doors and others which require a fire rating must meet a different set of requirements than those addressed in this section – they would typically be either Type 4 or Type 5 below.

For corridor doors required to provide an effective barrier to limit the transfer of smoke:

Fire Rating Required? No. Section 407.3.1 states that corridor doors that are not in a wall that is required to be rated (per Section 509.4 or for the enclosure of a vertical opening or exit) are not required to have a fire protection rating.

Closer Required? No. Section 407.3.1 states that these non-fire-rated corridor doors are not required to be equipped with self-closing or automatic-closing devices.

Latch Required? Yes. Section 407.3.1 states that these doors must have positive latching and that roller latches are not permitted.

Gasketing Required? No. There is no requirement in the IBC for these doors to be tested in accordance with UL 1784 or to limit smoke infiltration to a specific limit. In past editions of the IBC Commentary there was a reference that created some confusion about whether these doors were required to be tested in accordance with UL 1784, but that reference was removed as of the 2015 Commentary.

Note: The 2021 edition of the IBC added language requiring these doors to be solid doors with close-fitting operational tolerances, and head and jamb stops on the frames. Dutch doors in health care corridor walls must have an astragal, rabbet, or bevel at the meeting edges of the upper and lower sections of the door, with hardware that connects the upper and lower sections to allow them to function as a single door leaf. Both leaves are required to have latching hardware – for egress purposes, the latch on the top leaf typically latches into the bottom leaf and the bottom leaf latches into the frame. This new section of the code also addresses locations where makeup air for exhaust systems is provided in accordance with Section 1020.6, Exception 1, allowing louvers or a clearance of up to 2/3-inch at the bottom of the door (I think the 2/3-inch is a typo because it also states 19 mm, which equals 3/4-inch).

Type 2: Doors in smoke partitions



The requirement for positive-latching hardware is dependent upon the location of the smoke door. Some types of smoke doors require an active latchbolt; some types do not.

Typical Location: Section 710 outlines the requirements for smoke partitions including the door openings therein, but there are limited locations within the IBC that currently refer to this section:

- Section 404.6 addresses atrium enclosures, and allows a glass wall forming a smoke partition with automatic sprinklers on both sides of the glass in lieu of a 1-hour fire barrier if certain criteria are met. This section does not refer to section 710, instead it includes the requirements for openings within section 404.6. There is no reference to a requirement for smoke resistance for these doors, even though they are located in a smoke partition.

- Section 407.3 permits corridor walls in Group I-2 to have no fire-resistance rating, but it does require that they be constructed as smoke partitions. The door openings in these walls are covered above, as “Type 1 – Doors required to provide an effective barrier to limit the transfer of smoke,” and will not be addressed again in this section.
- Section 407.4.4.2 requires I-2 care suites to be separated from other portions of the building by smoke partitions complying with section 710.
- Section 3006.3 (2) allows the use of smoke partitions to form the elevator lobby in a sprinklered building, and requires compliance with Section 710. This elevator lobby requirement was found in Chapter 7 in past editions of the IBC.

Fire Rating Required? **No.** Section 710.3 states that unless required elsewhere in the code, smoke partitions are not required to have a fire-resistance rating. The sections that currently refer to Section 710 do not mandate a fire-resistance rating.

- Closer Required? **Yes and No.** Section 710.5.2.3 in the 2018/2021/2024 IBC states that “*Where required elsewhere in the code, doors in smoke partitions shall be self- or automatic-closing by smoke detection in accordance with Section 716.2.6.6.*” (the 2015 edition refers to Section 716.5.9.3).

Although Section 404.6 for atrium enclosures does not reference section 710, Section 404.6 does require glass doors within the atrium enclosure wall to be self-closing or automatic-closing.

- Section 407.4.4.2 for I-2 care suites does not include a requirement for self-closing or automatic-closing doors, but additional conditions may apply if the doors are part of a smoke barrier (refer to Type 3).
- Section 710.5.2.3 is specifically referenced in Section 3006.3 (2) for elevator lobbies, therefore, it is “required elsewhere in the code” and elevator lobby doors must be self-closing or automatic-closing.

Latch Required? **Yes and No.**

- Section 404.6 for atrium enclosures does not reference a requirement for positive latching, although latching hardware may be required to prevent the doors from being pulled open by a smoke evacuation system.
- Section 407.4.4.2 for I-2 care suites does not mention positive latching, although a code official may require these doors to latch because of section 407.3.1 which mandates latches on corridor doors (refer to Type 1).
- Section 3006.3 (2) for elevator lobbies requires compliance with Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6.1 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions), which mandate latching hardware.

Gasketing Required? Yes and No.

- There is no stated requirement for air infiltration limits for atrium enclosures or I-2 care suites.
- For elevator lobby doors, Section 3006.3 (2) requires compliance with section 710.5.2.2. This section references UL 1784 and states the limitation on air infiltration which prompts the need for gasketing. This section also requires the installation of smoke doors to be in accordance with NFPA 105 – Standard for the Installation of Smoke Door Assemblies and Other Opening Protectives and states that louvers are not allowed in doors in smoke partitions except where permitted in accordance with Section 407.3.1.1.



Some smoke doors may be either self-closing or automatic-closing, while some locations require automatic-closing doors and others do not require closers at all.

Type 3: Doors in smoke barriers

The following locations addressed in the 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2024 editions of the IBC require smoke barriers:

- Sections 405.4.2 and 405.4.3 for Underground Buildings
- Section 407.5 for Group I-2 occupancies
- Section 408.6 for Group I-3 occupancies
- Section 420.6 for Group I-1, Condition 2 (Section 420.4 in the 2015 edition)
- Section 422.3 for Ambulatory Care Facilities
- Section 1009.6.4 for Areas of Refuge in Accessible Means of Egress
- Section 3007.6.2 for Fire Service Access Elevator Lobby Enclosures
- Section 3008.6.2 for Occupant Evacuation Elevator Lobby Enclosures (Section 3008.6.3 for 2015-2021 editions)

Note: The IBC includes exceptions for areas of refuge located within an enclosure for an interior exit stairway and in outdoor facilities where the exit access is essentially open to the outside. Other areas of refuge must be separated from the remainder of the story by a smoke barrier or horizontal exit.

All of these sections require compliance with the provisions of Section 709, with the exception of those related to elevator lobbies (Chapter 30). Section 709.5 requires openings in smoke barriers to be protected in accordance with Section 716, which includes requirements typical of a fire door assembly.

There is an exception for cross-corridor double egress pairs in some health care facilities, and the requirements for these doors are shown in section 709.5. There are essentially three sets of requirements for doors in smoke barriers because of the extensive exception for health care facilities and elevator lobbies, so I will summarize the requirements separately.

Type 3a: Doors in smoke barriers – Underground Buildings, I-3 Occupancies, and Areas of Refuge

Typical Location: These requirements apply to Underground Buildings and Use Group I-3 (detention/correctional centers), and well as areas of refuge that are required to be separated with smoke barriers. The requirements for cross-corridor double-egress pairs in health care facilities are summarized in the next section (3b) and the requirements for certain types of elevator lobbies are covered as Type 3c.

Fire Rating Required? **Yes.** According to Section 709.5, “openings in a smoke barrier shall be protected in accordance with Section 716,” which includes a fire protection rating as indicated in Table 716.5 (2015 edition) / 716.1(2) (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions).

Closer Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) state that the doors must be self-closing or automatic-closing.

Latch Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) require an active latch bolt that will secure the door when it is closed.

Gasketing Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.3.1 (2015 edition) / 716.2.2.1.1 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) state that fire door assemblies in corridors and smoke barriers shall meet the requirements for a smoke and draft control assembly tested in accordance with UL 1784, with the maximum air leakage stated above. Section 716.5.3.1 of the 2015 edition also requires the installation of smoke doors to be in accordance with NFPA 105 – Standard for the Installation of Smoke Door Assemblies and Other Opening Protectives, and states that louvers are prohibited. In the 2018 and 2021 editions, this information is found in Sections 716.2.2.1.1 and 716.2.10 (refer to Section 716.2.10 in the 2024 edition).

Type 3b: Doors in smoke barriers – Group I-1 Condition 2, Group I-2, and Ambulatory Care Facilities

Typical Location: Cross-corridor double-egress pairs in health care facilities that are classified as one of these use groups.

Fire Rating Required? **No.** New language was included in the 2015 edition of the IBC which clarifies that these doors are not required to be fire rated, and the subsequent editions include this clarification as well. Section 709.5.1 does require doors in I-2 occupancies and ambulatory care facilities to have vision panels with fire-protection-rated glazing materials in fire-protection-rated frames, although a complete fire door assembly is not required. The 2018 edition includes a further clarification that protective plates on these doors are not required to be labeled, and this is also included in the 2021 edition.

Closer Required? **Yes.** In the 2015 edition, section 709.5.1 requires doors in I-2 occupancies and ambulatory care facilities to be automatic-closing by smoke detection. Note that this exception in the 2015 edition does not specifically permit self-closing doors to be used in this application. The section does not reference Use Group I-1 Condition 2, so doors in those occupancies may be either self-closing or automatic-closing per Section 716.5.9. A change was made in the 2018 IBC and carried forward in the subsequent editions, which specifies that these doors must be automatic-closing in accordance with Section 716.2.6.6, IF they are equipped with hold-open devices.

Latch Required? **No.** In the 2006 and prior editions of the IBC, positive latches were not required for these doors because the exception included the specific language: “Positive-latching devices are not required.” This sentence was removed in the 2009 edition of the IBC, and replaced with, “Where permitted by the door manufacturer’s listing, positive-latching devices are not required.” This language is also included in the 2012 through 2021 editions, but now that the IBC has clarified that these doors are not fire-rated, there are no manufacturers’ listings to comply with that would mandate positive-latching hardware. In the 2024 edition, Section 709.5, Exception 1, once again includes the text, “Positive latching devices are not required.”

Gasketing Required? **No.** There is no reference in Section 709.5 to UL 1784, but Exception 1 requires astragals or rabbets at the meeting edges, and the doors must be close-fitting within operational tolerances. The maximum allowable undercut is 3/4-inch, and the doors must not have louvers or grilles. Frame stops are required at the head and jambs.

Type 3c: Doors in Smoke Barriers – Elevator Lobbies for Fire Service Access Elevators and Occupant Evacuation Elevators

Typical Location: Lobby enclosures for fire service access elevators and occupant evacuation elevators (except at the level of exit discharge).

Fire Rating Required? **Yes.** Sections 3007.6.3 and 3008.6.3 require the elevator lobby doorways (except doors to the hoistway, elevator control room, or elevator control space) to have a fire rating of 45 minutes and to comply with Section 716. This includes a fire protection rating as indicated in Table 716.5 (2015 edition) / 716.1(2) (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions).

Latch Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) require an active latch bolt that will secure the door when it is closed.

Closer Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) state that the doors must be self-closing or automatic-closing. Section 3008.6.3 specifies that doors serving elevator lobbies for occupant evacuation elevators must have fire doors that are automatic-closing upon receipt of any fire alarm signal from the emergency voice/alarm communication system serving the building (not required by Section 3007.6.3 for elevator lobbies serving fire service access elevators).

Gasketing Required? **Yes.** Sections 3007.6.3 and 3008.6.3 require fire door assemblies which comply with the smoke and draft control requirements. Sections 716.5.3.1 (2015 edition) / 716.2.2.1.1 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) state that fire door assemblies in corridors and smoke barriers shall meet the requirements for a smoke and draft control assembly tested in accordance with UL 1784, with the maximum air leakage stated above. Section 716.5.3.1 of the 2015 edition also requires the installation of smoke doors to be in accordance with NFPA 105 – Standard for the Installation of Smoke Door Assemblies and Other Opening Protectives, and states that louvers are prohibited. In the 2018 and 2021 editions, this information is found in Sections 716.2.2.1.1 and 716.2.10 (refer to Section 716.2.10 in the 2024 edition). In addition, Sections 3007.6.3 and 3008.6.3 require these doors to be tested in accordance with UL 1784 without an artificial bottom seal. This means that doors in these locations will need door sweeps or door bottoms which are listed for this purpose, and the frames are not allowed to have terminated stops.

Note: Section 3008.6.3 requires each fire door serving an elevator lobby for occupant evacuation elevators to have a vision panel consisting of fire-protection-rated glazing. The vision panel must comply with the requirements of Section 716 and be located to furnish clear vision of the occupant evacuation elevator lobby.



Type 4: Fire door assemblies in corridors and smoke barriers

Typical Location: Corridors and smoke barriers with a fire-resistance rating, that require fire-rated doors.

Fire Rating Required? **Yes.** Section 716 references the fire protection ratings indicated in Table 716.5 (2015 edition) / 716.1(2) (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions). Fire door frames with transom lights, sidelights or both shall be permitted in accordance with Section 716.5.6 (2015 edition) / 716.2.5.4 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions). Fire door assemblies and shutters shall be installed in accordance with

There are several different types of doors that could be described as “smoke doors,” such as doors in smoke partitions and smoke barriers, corridor doors in health care facilities, smoke and draft control doors, and doors in exit enclosures. Some of these doors are required to be fire door assemblies, others do not require a fire door label.

the provisions of this section and NFPA 80.

Note: The 2021 and 2024 editions prohibit fire-protection-rated glazing in fire door frames with transom lights or sidelights in fire barriers required by Section 1207 of the International Fire Code to enclose energy storage systems. Fire -resistance-rated glazing is permitted for these areas (see Table 716.1(2) footnote h).

Closer Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) state that fire doors must be self-closing or automatic-closing, with the exception of communicating doors between dwelling units and sleeping units in Group R-1 as well as certain elevator hoistway doors with regard to elevator recall operations. The 2024 edition includes a new exception stating, “Fire doors required solely for compliance with ICC 500 shall not be required to be self-closing or automatic-closing.”

Latch Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) require an active latch bolt that will secure the door when it is closed.

Gasketing Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.3.1 (2015 edition) / 716.2.2.1.1 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) state that fire door assemblies in corridors and smoke barriers shall meet the requirements for a smoke and draft control assembly tested in accordance with UL 1784, with the maximum air leakage stated above. The IBC also requires the installation of smoke doors to be in accordance with NFPA 105 – Standard for the Installation of Smoke Door Assemblies and Other Opening Protectives, and states that louvers are prohibited.

Type 5: Doors in exit enclosures and exit passageways

Typical Location: Stair doors required to be fire-rated, and doors within the exit passageway connecting the stair to the exit discharge.

Fire Rating Required? **Yes.** Section 716 references the fire protection ratings indicated in Table 716.5 (2015 edition) / Table 716.1(2) (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions). Fire door frames with transom lights, sidelights or both shall be permitted in accordance with Sections 716.5.6 (2015 edition) / 716.2.5.4 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions). Fire door assemblies and shutters shall be installed in accordance with the provisions of this section and NFPA 80. Sections 716.5.5 (2015 edition) / 716.2.2.3 (2018 and 2021 editions) include a requirement for temperature rise doors, but the exception exempts buildings that are equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system.

Note: The 2021 and 2024 editions prohibit fire-protection-rated glazing in fire door frames with transom lights or sidelights in fire barriers required by Section 1207 of the International Fire Code to enclose energy storage systems. Fire -resistance-rated glazing is permitted for these areas (see Table 716.1(2) footnote h).

Closer Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) state that fire doors must be self-closing or automatic-closing.

Latch Required? **Yes.** Sections 716.5.9 (2015 edition) / 716.2.6 (2018, 2021, and 2024 editions) require an active latch bolt that will secure the door when it is closed.

Gasketing Required? **Maybe?** In the 2015 IBC, Section 716.5.5 does not include a reference to UL 1784, but gasketing and a door bottom/sweep may be necessary in order to maintain stair pressurization. In the 2018, 2021, and 2024 editions, Section 716.2.1.4 states that fire door assemblies serving as smoke and draft control assemblies must be tested in accordance with UL 1784. Some code officials are interpreting the IBC to mean that stairwell doors must meet the requirements for exit enclosure doors AND for doors in a corridor, which brings in the limited airflow per UL 1784, which would require gasketing at the head and jambs. However, the International Code Council published an interpretation in 2014 that states otherwise. Check this blog post for more information.

I hope this summary helps clear up some of the questions about smoke door requirements, and explains the intent of the grey areas. The summary included above is a result of my research on the 2015-2024 editions of the International Building Code; the actual code publications should be consulted when comprehensive data is required and to ensure compliance with the applicable codes. The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) is responsible for interpretation of the codes and always has the final say

Lessons Learned: “Erasers are cheaper than bulldozers!”

By: Loiri Greene, IDigHardware Blog

A while back I shared a photo of a borrowed light frame with a 4-inch head, installed sideways in a masonry wall. I had the idea of sharing mistakes we’ve made, to help others avoid similar problems, and several people suggested that the series be called “Lessons Learned (LL). Larry Gallagher immediately sent me one of his lessons from The School of Hard Knocks, which I am sharing in today’s post. If you have a lesson to share, feel free to send me an email!



From Larry:

The borrowed lite frame brought back an old memory about an after-hours life safety inspection I was doing many years ago on a hospital emergency room expansion and remodel project when I was still a little wet behind the ears myself.

During the walk-through I came across an experienced carpenter (who was decades older than I) working alone, on overtime, and just starting to install a new single door frame in a corridor wall opening. That door was intended to

serve as the entrance to a new exit discharge corridor that would lead to an exterior grade level exit door. As part of the means of egress, that door should open in the direction of exiting traffic but the frame was being installed to open against the flow of traffic.

I double checked the blueprint and sure enough that door was drawn opening in the wrong direction and the mistake had not been caught during any of the earlier plan reviews. The door schedule was also wrong so a whole new assembly would need to be ordered.

Trying to be helpful, I approached the carpenter and started discussing the door opening direction. The carpenter immediately acknowledged it was being hung wrong and said something along the lines of, “I know it is wrong, you know it is wrong, but the white hats don’t pay me to think or question what they put on paper, just to install as shown. As long as I install as shown nobody can blame me for their mistake. So it will get installed wrong, someone will eventually figure it out, I will be called back to tear it out, and then I will have to install the correct door. This will be more guaranteed overtime for me so I’m not complaining or stopping what I’m doing. Have a good evening!”

The eye-opening lesson I learned that evening was not everyone associated with a project is necessarily working in the same direction with similar goals, objectives, or priorities nor do they expect the same outcomes or see benefits the same as others.

This experience also reminded me of an expression for poorly done plan reviews: “erasers are cheaper than bulldozers!”

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