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CSI® LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER

Little Rock Chapter - Chartered November 1965 May 2026

In This Issue

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President's Thoughts

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

This year has been challenging in many ways. While our membership remains constant, we are gearing up for the upcoming Gulf States Region Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee as well as starting the planning process for our hosting of the 2027 Conference right here in Little Rock. All of this and we continue to work on gaining active memberships and getting younger people involved. All us age challenged members who have been actively involved for many years are going to "age out" pretty soon and we would love to turn the reins over to an active bunch of younger people, people with a vision of what LRCSI could be, where we could make a difference, and how we can help the local construction community. All that being said, I will put out there a request that anyone involved in the construction industry who would like to jump in and learn about not only the industry but about leadership and teamwork, this is the place for you.

Back in the day, when I first started my CSI Journey, the Little Rock Chapter had over 140 members and was one of the strongest chapters in the Gulf States Region, if not in CSI as a whole. Over time, however, aging, job changes, and life in general took its toll on the Chapter and we are now 37 members. The only difference between the old chapter of 140 and the new chapter of 37 is the number of people wanting to be active in the leadership of the Chapter. LRCSI has undergone a few revisions to its structure over the years, partially because of a loss of participation but mostly because the old system does not work like it used to. Younger people today are smarter, more technologically savvy, and move at a higher pace that we did at their age. They want a work/life balance and they want to learn, but using their abilities not our older system. We have to change with the times if we are going to thrive and we can only change if the younger generations take over and bring us kicking and screaming into the 21st century. That is what we are seeking.

We are not looking for people to follow, we are looking for people who what to learn how to lead and to take on the challenges head on. Us older generation people want to be there to mentor and to guide you through the process, but we don't want to hold you back or slow the progression of CSI to a modern, active, and relevant organization that meets the needs of the current generations of workers and bosses. Help us get there. Jump in and join CSI. We would love to tell you all about it, just send an email to any current officer and we will work with you to see where you fit in.

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 spot lights, 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.

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:

- **A Chairperson**. Mindy Burton has graciously volunteered to take on this role. We need a full staff of volunteers to assist her.
- **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.
- **Advertisement Team**. This team is responsible for producing the brochures, registration documents, sponsorship documents, and getting those documents into the hands of the people.
- **Registration Team**. Carrie Gray has taken on the role as Chairperson for this team, but she still needs other volunteers. 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.
- **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.
- **Sponsorship Team**. This team is perhaps one of the most important teams to the whole process. Without Sponsors, no chapter could afford to host the conference. Also, Sponsors are paramount to the industry as a whole and deserve to be in the forefront of the event.
- **Hospitality Room Host**. This person or persons will be responsible for the Hospitality room including the beverages, shacks, 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.

What's that? Gang Bus Option

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog

I was working on a presentation the other day about code questions on delayed egress locks, and I came across the term "gang bus" related to the Von Duprin Chexit. I didn't previously know what this feature was called, so I'm guessing some of you might be wondering too.

Here's how this option is described in the installation instructions:

When would this option be used? I can think of two situations…feel free to add more in the comments!

1) On a pair of doors with Chexit devices on both leaves, the gang bus could be used so that when someone tries to exit and starts the 15-second timer on one leaf of the pair, the timer on the other leaf would start simultaneously and both leaves would allow free egress after 15 seconds. The model codes do not specifically require this, but this application may be desired by the end user or the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ).

2) If there is a need for two delayed egress locks in one path of egress, things could get a little tricky depending on which model code must be followed, as well as the occupancy type. An example of this application could be a desire to have one delayed egress lock on a door entering an exit stairwell on an upper floor, and an additional delay on the stair discharge door at ground level. Things to know:

NFPA 101, Life Safety Code does not limit the number of delayed egress locks in a means of egress – except in lodging or rooming houses where there is a limit of one delay per escape path.

The International Building Code (IBC) currently limits most use groups to one delay per egress path (read on for exceptions). Prior to the 2015 edition, the limit was one door with a delayed egress lock before entering an exit (like a stairwell). In the past, the code would have permitted our stairwell example because a building occupant would encounter one delay upon entering an exit, and another delay once they were inside of the exit stairwell. Current and recent editions of the IBC would not permit that in most use groups.

The IBC currently includes two exceptions, where two doors with delayed egress locks would be permitted in one egress path:

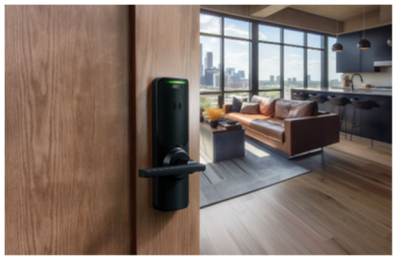
- Group I-1, Condition 2, Group I-2 or I-3 – not more than two delayed egress locks with a combined delay of 30 seconds, max.
- Group I-1, Condition 1 or Group I-4 occupancies – not more than two delayed egress locks with a combined delay of 30 seconds, max. – automatic sprinkler system required

So, how does the gang bus option factor in here? I have seen situations where the activation of one delayed egress lock simultaneously starts the timer on a delayed egress lock further down the egress route. So if someone activated the upper-level stairwell door, the gang bus option could be used to activate the lock on the stair discharge door at the same time. This option on the Von Duprin Chexit allows up to 8 Chexits to be connected.

This application is not specifically addressed in the model codes, so it is up to the AHJ whether it would be acceptable. Note that the delayed egress locks are required by the model codes to allow immediate free egress (no delay) upon activation of the fire alarm/sprinkler system and upon power failure.

Decoded: Locks on Dwelling Units and Sleeping Units

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog



Electrified locks that are readily openable from the egress side are addressed by a code section that was modified in the 2024 edition of the I-Codes.

This month's question for my Decoded column focuses on residential dwelling units and sleeping units:

Are the electromechanical locks typically used for individual residential entry doors required to be listed to UL 294 or UL 1034 in order to comply with the model codes?

Dwelling units (ex. apartments) and sleeping units (ex. hotel rooms and dormitories) are often equipped with electrified locks and access control readers. The electronic credentials used with this hardware have many advantages over traditional keys when it comes to access control and credential management. The locks typically used are electromechanical locks – either stand-alone products or networked systems, battery-operated or hard-wired.

Although these products are electrified, the model codes do not require them to be listed to UL 294 – Standard for Access Control System Units or to UL 1034 – Standard for Burglary-Resistant Electric Locking Mechanisms, as long as the doors are readily openable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort. If the doors do not meet this criteria (if they are not readily openable for egress), the hardware must comply with one of the code sections addressing special locking arrangements, but that would be very unusual for a residential unit entry door.

Over the years, there has been a lot of confusion about the code requirements for normal locking arrangements vs. special locking arrangements, but many clarifications have been made to the model codes over the past few editions. The I-Codes are the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Fire Code (IFC), and the 2024 editions include a new clarification adding doors with access control systems to the section on monitored and recorded egress:

1010.2.9 *Monitored or recorded egress, and access control systems. Where electrical systems that monitor or record egress activity are incorporated, or where the door has an access control system, the locking system on the egress side of the door shall comply with Section 1010.2.10, 1010.2.11, 1010.2.12, 1010.2.13, 1010.2.14 or 1010.2.15 or shall be readily openable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort.*

When a door with an access control system is not readily openable from the egress side, it must comply with one of the sections referenced in the paragraph above, which address the applications commonly known as the special locking arrangements:

- **1010.2.10** – Door hardware release of electrically locked egress doors – Electrified locking hardware (typically electromagnetic locks) released by a switch in the door-mounted hardware.
- **1010.2.11** – Sensor release of electrically locked egress doors – Electrified locking hardware (typically electromagnetic locks) released by a sensor to allow egress.
- **1010.2.12** – Delayed egress – Delayed egress locks that release to allow egress within 15 seconds after actuation of the release timer (or 30 seconds when approved by the AHJ).
- **1010.2.13** – Controlled egress doors in Groups I-1 and I-2 – Electrified locking of egress doors in certain types of units in a health care facility.
- **1010.2.14** – Elevator lobby exit access doors – Elevator lobby doors that unlock during a fire alarm to allow occupants of the elevator lobby to pass through a tenant space to reach an exit.
- **1010.2.15** – Locking arrangements in buildings within correctional facilities – Doors serving areas in a detention or correctional facility where movement of occupants is controlled for security reasons.

In addition to requirements related to egress, interior unit entry doors are typically fire door assemblies and are also subject to the requirements of the Fair Housing Act.

In the 2024 edition of the I-Codes, for each of these sections except 1010.2.15, one of the criteria for the installation of a compliant system is: *The electromechanical or electromagnetic locking device shall be listed in accordance with either UL 294 or UL 1034*. As this requirement is not included in the section addressing monitored or recorded egress and access control systems (1010.2.9), the listings are not required by the model codes when the access controlled door is readily openable from the egress side. This applies not only to the residential doors covered by this article, but to electrified locks in general that provide access control and free egress.

Other Considerations

Egress – In most locations within a building, the unlatching of any door for egress must require no more than one releasing motion. There is an exception to this requirement that applies to individual dwelling unit and sleeping unit entry doors in Group R (residential) occupancies, and allows a second releasing motion for a night latch, dead bolt, or security chain as long as the device is openable from the inside without a key or tool. The 2027 edition of the I-Codes will include a change addressing sleeping rooms, such as bedrooms

within a dormitory suite. In certain occupancies, these rooms will be allowed to have hardware requiring a second releasing motion, as long as the main entry door serving the dwelling unit/suite can be unlatched with one motion.

Fire Protection – There are other requirements to consider in conjunction with entry doors for dwelling units and sleeping units. First, when these doors are interior doors entering the unit from a corridor, they are typically fire door assemblies designed to deter the passage of smoke and flames for 20 minutes. As such, they must close and latch automatically if a fire occurs, without intervention from the resident of the dwelling unit or sleeping unit. The model codes and referenced standards include other requirements for fire doors, and the annual inspections of these assemblies required by code are crucial to ensure the protection provided by the passive fire protection system.

Accessibility – Almost all residential units are required to comply with the Fair Housing Act, which addresses accessibility. Depending on the type of unit, these requirements may apply only to the common areas and the unit entry doors, or may apply to the door openings within the unit as well. Some of the mandates of the Fair Housing Act include minimum clear opening width and maneuvering clearances, limitations on opening force, closing speed, and threshold height and slope. The guidelines also require operable hardware that is "easy to grasp with one hand and does not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist to operate," and is 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 accessibility standard is used.

State and local codes may differ from the requirements of the I-Codes, so it's important to consult the adopted codes and standards for a project's jurisdiction. The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) is responsible for official interpretations and decisions related to code-compliance.

Dwelling units, sleeping units, and sleeping rooms – what's the difference? According to the IBC:

- *A dwelling unit provides independent living facilities for one or more residents, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.*
- *A sleeping unit includes permanent provisions for sleeping, and may include provisions for living, eating, and either sanitation or kitchen facilities, but not both. If these rooms are part of a dwelling unit, they are not considered sleeping units.*
- *A sleeping room is not a defined term within the IBC, but the 2027 change mentioned in the article will apply to individual sleeping rooms (i.e. bedrooms) within sleeping units of congregate living facilities of Group R-2 and R-3 occupancies, and to individual sleeping rooms within dwelling units of Group R-2 college or university residence halls.*

Decoded: Projections into the Clear Opening Height of Doors

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog

For most locations, the International Building Code (IBC) requires the ceiling height along a means of egress to be a minimum of 7 feet 6 inches above the finished floor. Exceptions include egress components that are specifically addressed in other sections of the code, such as sloped ceilings, stairs, and ramps. Door height is one of the listed exceptions and is addressed in Section 1010.1.1 of recent editions of the IBC.

Section 1010.1.1 – Size of Doors, establishes the clear opening height for doors at 80 inches minimum, with some exceptions that apply to door openings serving dwelling and sleeping units. The IBC Commentary clarifies that the 80-inch minimum height applies to doors in the means of egress, as well as doors that are provided for egress purposes, including additional doors over and above the number of means of egress required by the code.

Protrusions into the headroom / required clear opening height are addressed in sections 1003.3.1 – Headroom, and 1010.1.1.1 – Projections into clear opening. A minimum headroom of 80 inches is required above any circulation paths, including walks, corridors, aisles, and passageways, and not more than 50 percent of the ceiling area of a means of egress may be reduced in height by protruding objects. Prior to the 2021 edition of the I-Codes, both of the referenced sections allowed door closers and stops to reduce the headroom from 80 inches to 78 inches, stating:

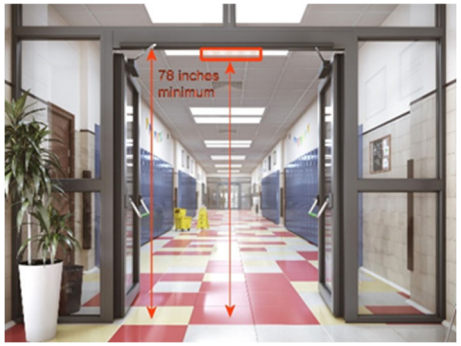
"Door closers and door stops shall be permitted to be 78 inches (1980 mm) minimum above the floor."

With this language, there were questions about the meaning of the term "door stops"...was this referring to the stop on the frame, an overhead stop, or something else? A change was made to the 2021 edition of the IBC, which modified the previous language to clarify the question of the stops, and added some additional types of hardware that are permitted to project into the clear opening height. The 2024 edition was modified slightly and states:

"Door closers, overhead doorstops, frame stops, power door operators, and electromagnetic door locks shall project into the door opening height not lower than 78 inches (1980 mm) above the floor."

This means that the specified types of hardware are permitted to project down into the required clear opening height as long as there is a clear height of at least 78 inches, measured from the floor to the lowest part of the hardware. The IBC Commentary includes a paragraph clarifying the intent of this section of the code. According to the Commentary, the allowance must be made for these items because their design and function necessitates placement within the door opening.

The Commentary goes on to say that the allowable 2-inch projection is reasonable because this hardware is normally mounted away from the center of the door opening, minimizing the potential for contact when a person moves through the opening. With that said, the language in the code does not specify where the hardware is located within the door opening.



This means that an electromagnetic lock – including one mounted in the center of the opening for a pair of doors, or an automatic operator that spans a large portion of the opening, is allowed by the 2021/2024 IBC to project into the clear opening as long as the minimum clear height is 78 inches. Another consideration with this change is that by specifically referencing overhead stops, the stop on the frame is not addressed. On a 6 foot 8 inch door, the frame stop would project approximately 5/8-inch into the required clear opening height. Although many code officials consider the 80-inch clear height to be a nominal dimension, this is not specifically stated in the IBC.

Other Codes and Standards

The requirements of the codes and standards vary regarding protrusions into the clear opening height, and the amount of clarity provided by each publication. State or local codes may include different limitations and clarifications, so it's important to refer to the applicable requirements for the project in question.

NFPA 101 – Life Safety Code: Headroom is generally required to be at least 7 feet 6 inches, however, projections are allowed as long as a minimum of 6 feet 8 inches of headroom is provided at these projections. The code states that the measurement is taken from the finished floor and allows a tolerance of -3/4-inch. Annex A states that these projections may include devices such as lighting equipment, emergency signaling equipment, environmental controls and equipment, security devices, signs, and decorations that are typically limited in area. The NFPA 101 Handbook clarifies that the -3/4-inch tolerance is intended to recognize the clearance provided by a standard 6 foot 8 inch door frame, where the frame stop encroaches on the opening height. NFPA 101 does not currently include an exception for door closers or other hardware that would protrude below 6 feet 7 ¼ inches above the finished floor.

ADA Standards for Accessible Design: The required vertical clearance is established in paragraph 307.4 of the ADA Standards as 80 inches high, minimum. This section includes an exception which is also repeated in Section 404.2.3, which allows the clearance at door closers and door stops to be 78 inches, minimum, above the finish floor or ground. No further clarification is given in the US Access Board's Guide to the ADA Standards.

ICC A117.1 – Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities: The requirements of A117.1 regarding clear opening height are consistent with those of the ADA Standards, and are found in the same sections. The A117.1 Commentary underscores the importance of the 80-inch height limitations (with the 78-inch exception for door closers and door stops), stating that one of the more common injuries for people with sight impairments is striking their heads on overhanging objects. The Commentary also clarifies that the intent of the limitations on protruding objects is not only for the protection of people with vision impairments but to protect all people from unintended contact and potential injury.

With the slight variations between the recent editions of the IBC and the previous editions, NFPA 101 and the accessibility standards, there could be conflicting requirements where one project is required to comply with more than one code or standard. State and local codes and standards could also affect the required clear opening height and allowable protrusions. The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) can help to determine the requirements for a particular location.

Wordless Wednesday: Fire Door vs. HVAC

Posted by Lori Greene, April 22nd, 2026

I received today's Wordless Wednesday photos from Ruth Neeman – they were taken in a public building in Massachusetts. Since when does HVAC take priority over fire protection??

Yes – Auto operators are required.

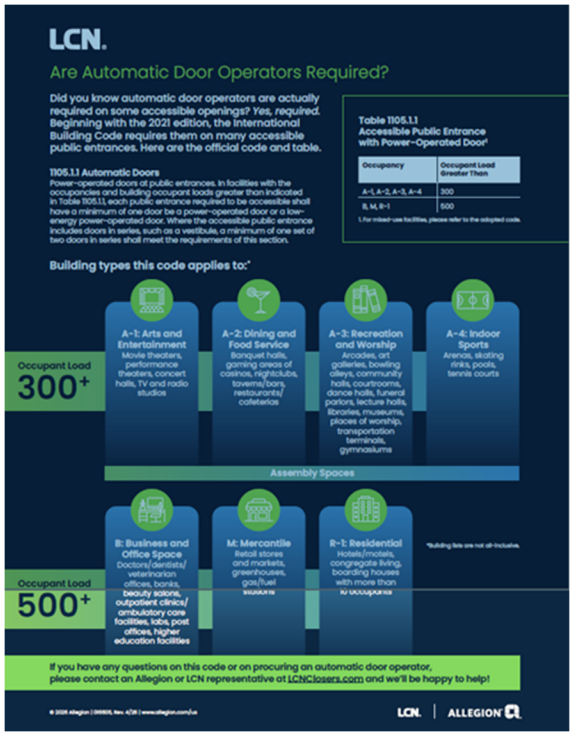
By: Adam Fisk , I Dig Hardware Blog

Today's guest post from Adam Fisk of Allegion shares a helpful resource for understanding and applying the code requirements for auto operators on certain buildings. Thanks Adam!

Codes are hard. That's no hot take – it's a fact. They're very specific, there are books full of them, and, sometimes, they change on you! It's why we all love Lori – our ever-present knowledge base of all things code. (Not to mention the source of a good laugh with some truly remarkable DIY installs!)

I am no Lori Greene – nor will I ever be – but I am a self-proclaimed door control enthusiast with a special interest in automatic operators. That's why I've collaborated with Lori on this latest auto operator code resource – an attempt at making this code easier to understand.

Lori's written in detail on this one (find those resources below), but for a quick, visual overview on when automatic door operators are required at accessible public entrances, please enjoy the following resource!



Related Links:

Auto Operators in Mixed-Use Facilities, 2024 (https://idighardware.com/2024/04/decoded-automatic-operators-in-mixed-use-facilities/)

Automatic Operators Required by Code, 2023 (https://idighardware.com/2023/11/automatic-operators-required-by-code/)

Automatic Operators on Accessible Public Entrances, 2021 (https://idighardware.com/2021/09/decoded-automatic-operators-on-accessible-public-entrances/)

Unveiling Sustainable Advantage: How EPDs Empower Informed Choices

Aaron Ownes, Allegion

Unveiling Sustainable Advantage: How EPDs Empower Informed Choices

Transparency Meets Sustainability:

In today's era of heightened environmental awareness, architects, engineers, and builders increasingly seek transparency and quantifiable data to guide their sustainable building practices. Enter Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), invaluable tools empowering informed product selection and bolstering sustainable practices, ultimately driving sales for environmentally conscious companies.

Demystifying the Data:

Think of EPDs as detailed environmental report cards for individual products. At their core lies a comprehensive Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), akin to a financial audit for environmental impact. LCAs meticulously analyze each stage of a product's lifecycle, from raw material extraction and processing to manufacturing, transportation, use, and end-of-life disposal or recycling. They quantify resource consumption, emissions, and other environmental burdens at each stage, providing the foundation for creating accurate and meaningful EPDs.

Industry Standardization: The BHMA PCR's Role:

Developing consistent and comparable EPDs across the building hardware industry is crucial. The Building Hardware Manufacturers Association (BHMA) Product Category Rule (PCR) serves as a standardized roadmap by following ISO 21930 requirements and establishing clear guidelines on:

- **System boundaries**: Defining which lifecycle stages are included in the assessment.
- **Data quality**: Specifying data sources and ensuring their accuracy and consistency.
- **Calculation methods**: Determining how environmental impacts are quantified and aggregated.
- **Reporting format**: Ensuring EPDs are presented in a clear, standardized format for easy comparison.

By adhering to the BHMA PCR, manufacturers guarantee their EPDs are not only credible but also readily comparable to others within the industry. This empowers architects, engineers, and builders to confidently evaluate the environmental performance of different products and make informed decisions aligned with their sustainability goals.

Building the EPD:

Understanding the process behind EPD creation fosters trust and transparency. Here's a simplified breakdown:

1. **Conduct a comprehensive LCA**: Analyze the product's lifecycle impact using established methodologies.
2. **Apply the BHMA PCR**: Ensure adherence to industry standards for EPD development.
3. **Compile and analyze data**: Gather and interpret data from various sources, including internal records, industry databases, and LCA software.
4. **Calculate environmental indicators**: Quantify the product's impact on categories like climate change, resource depletion, and water usage.
5. **Verify and certify the EPD**: Partner with a third-party program operator like UL Environment or EPD North America to certify the accuracy and transparency.
6. **Publish and communicate**: Make the EPD readily available to customers and stakeholders.

Leveraging EPDs for Sustainable Specifications:

As sustainability requirements continue to shape the building industry, EPDs are becoming essential tools for architects, specifiers, and project teams. When evaluating door hardware for green building projects, consider these practical applications:

- **LEED Certification**: EPDs contribute to Material and Resources (MR) credits, particularly MR Credit: Building Product Disclosure and Optimization – Environmental Product Declarations.
- **Transparent Comparisons**: EPDs allow specifiers to objectively compare the environmental performance of similar products from different manufacturers.
- **Client Requirements**: Many building owners and developers now require sustainability documentation, making EPDs valuable assets in specification decisions.

When selecting building hardware, don't hesitate to ask manufacturers for their EPDs. Products with third-party verified EPDs demonstrate a manufacturer's commitment to transparency and environmental accountability. As more manufacturers develop EPDs following the BHMA PCR, specifiers will have greater ability to make data-driven decisions that support sustainable building goals.

By incorporating EPD considerations into your specification process, you contribute to industry-wide progress toward more sustainable building practices—one project at a time.

Sallyport, Interlock, Secure Entry Vestibule—What's the Big Difference?

By: Devin Bowman, TGP

In today's guest post from Devin Bowman of TGP, he discusses the difference between three applications that are somewhat similar in purpose, but very different when it comes to egress.

Bringing together best-practice building design concepts with best-practice safety and security protocols for schools remains a complex task. One reason is that building design and safety and security protocols are each complex topics already. That said, they're both incredibly important to our schools and communities today – and they should work together.

Keep in mind, safer school design incorporates several disciplines to be the most effective and code compliant. This is especially true of openings along means of egress routes, such as entry vestibules. These points must accommodate mass exit to meet requirements for fire and life safety, but they should also resist unauthorized ingress to meet safer school design best practices.

In these applications, there are several specialized terms that describe slightly different vestibule configurations. All these terms refer to a series of doors with an intermediate space between them. But the operation and locking configurations of these doors significantly impact a design's ability to meet free egress requirements.

For this part of the built environment, having all project teams in alignment can support more efficient and effective safer school design.

Key safer school design terminology

The first step in aligning project teams for safer school design is using precise terminology. Doing so helps ensure security professionals recommend code-compliant options and specifiers can efficiently incorporate these recommendations. There are three important terms to differentiate: sallyports, interlocks (also known as control vestibules), and secure entry vestibules.

According to Lori Greene, Manager, Codes and Resources for Allegion, an interlock is "a space with two or more doors in series, arranged so that when one door is open the other door or doors cannot be opened." An interlock can be further specified into security interlock or safety interlock, depending on the default lock status of the doors.

To date, the International Building Code (IBC) has not included specific requirements for interlocks, but a change has been approved for the 2027 edition of the code. The term “control vestibule” will be used in place of interlock, and there will be several conditions mandated for this application. These include limitations on the types of facilities and occupant loads where they are permitted, as well as emergency overrides for egress. While local codes may differ, interlocks will not be code compliant with the IBC in an educational occupancy (Group E) or as a main exit.

Further, control vestibules should not be confused for sallyports. The IBC defines sallyports as “a security vestibule with two or more doors or gates where the intended purpose is to prevent continuous and unobstructed passage by allowing the release of only one door or gate at a time.” The IBC also limits this configuration to I-3 occupancies, such as correctional facilities, provided there are provisions for egress during emergencies.

Visually similar to control vestibules and sallyports, secure entry vestibules include a set of two or more doors. The locking hardware of these doors is not connected, so occupants need not close one door to open the next. As such, this configuration is allowed in Group E occupancies, given its components meet all requirements for use along a means of egress path.

What’s wrong with sallyports?

Understanding why sallyports may not be code compliant in educational facilities and as main exits can help project teams work together to enhance school security while meeting code-driven requirements for fire and life safety. The main reason sallyports (and control vestibules) are usually not allowed in this occupancy type has to do with the flow of egress during emergencies.

Because these configurations limit the speed and ease of which occupants can evacuate a building, they can present a sizeable risk to life safety in emergencies where every moment counts. For sallyports specifically, there must be provisions for continuous and unobstructed emergency egress. But even with these provisions, their use is limited to Group I-3 occupancies due to the need for increased security and the corresponding safety measures and oversight in a correctional facility. As a result, recommending them for an educational setting is not compliant with the IBC.

When security professionals recommend a sallyport (or another control vestibule type), it is that these terms may not have the precise meanings they do in the design and construction world. In these cases, the confusion often arises from project teams having a different vocabulary. Creating a shared vernacular can help these professionals avoid missteps and streamline the specification process when a school building seeks enhanced security measures.

The solution: secure entry vestibules

Secure entry vestibules offer a code-compliant option for hardening main points of egress without obstructing the ability for occupants to leave en masse during an emergency. A best practice recommendation from the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS), this configuration bolsters the ability for front desk staff to assess visitors safely and places a barrier between violent threats and occupants.

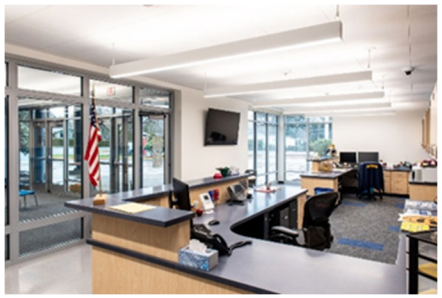
Further, when a secure entry vestibule incorporates glass, it can unite multiple layers of safer school design. According to PASS, a multilayer approach to improved security is most effective. The organization's best-practice guidelines break down typical school campuses into four layers: district wide, digital infrastructure, campus exterior and classroom interior. The last two are the most relevant for secure entry vestibule design. Glass connects these layers and allows the real-time surveillance of parking lots and main hallways.

That said, typical architectural glazing can create a weak point in vestibule design as it often is not tested to security standards and so may break if subjected to these situations. Safer school design resources recommend using glazing that is either ballistic- or forced-entry resistant depending on project goals. It is also important to understand that some secure entry vestibule designs may need fire-rated materials. In these instances, both security- and fire-rated components should be compatible to ensure one form of protection is not compromised for the other.

Project teams can streamline the process of designing code-compliant vestibules by specifying full glazing systems that are either tested as a system to multiple standards (often ASTM F3561 for forced entry, UL 752 for ballistic resistance, UL 263 for fire-resistive-rated glass and UL 9 and UL 10C for fire-protective-rated glass) or built from components known to be compatible. Known as multifunctional, fire-rated glazing systems, these assemblies contribute to enhanced security while meeting requirements for fire and life safety.

Using multifunctional, fire-rated doors in more than vestibules

Multifunctional, fire-rated glass doors can be specified as fire door assemblies throughout the built environment. Traditionally, fire doors are used for compartmentation strategies to limit the spread of fire and smoke as well as maintaining free egress routes. According to a white paper from PASS, these types of doors can also create additional time barriers within the classroom interior layer when they include appropriate materials and hardware.



Using full-lite doors certified to both fire and security rating standards allows design teams to meet code requirements and enhanced security goals in one system, provided the doors are fitted with code-compliant locking hardware. These multifunctional, fire-rated assemblies also visually connect adjacent spaces. On the one hand, this prioritizes an intuitively navigable space. On the other, it contributes to efforts to reduce locations where students can be bullied out of sight.

A group of high schoolers explained how open sightlines can be instrumental in anti-bullying efforts during a 2018 American Institute of Architects (AIA) summit. Considering bullying is both the most common type of violence students encounter and connected to other types of violence on campus, minimizing its occurrence is integral to safer school design.

Aligning all project teams to safer school design best practices

Security professionals, code officials, architects, school administrators and even product manufacturers are encouraged to work together to ensure building hardening efforts provide as much protection as possible while also meeting code requirements. Although maintaining free egress has been the focus of this article, achieving code compliance for education occupancies also entails designing for accessibility. This can include how locking hardware operates to the force needed to open a door to maneuvering clearances required for the operation of manual doors

All these considerations and more significantly impact how secure entry vestibules are discussed, planned and built. They also influence the specification and ongoing upkeep of doors throughout the built environment. While this certainly includes all the components specified at the time of a design, it also includes aftermarket products like barricade devices. PASS guidelines recommend avoiding them as they can cause unintentional hazards and make door operation inaccessible to some. This is in line with findings from the final report from Sandy Hook Advisory Commission that there has never been an instance in which an active shooter breached a locked door through the lock.

A collaborative approach to safer school design can ease the difficulty that this nuanced approached to building design entails, which not only supports all project stakeholders but often leads to more effective outcomes.

Devin Bowman *is General Manager of Technical Glass Products (TGP) and AD Systems. With over 20 years of industry experience, Bowman is actively involved in advancing fire- and life-safety codes and sits on the Glazing Industry Code Committee (GICC). Email: Devin.Bowman@allegion.com. Contact him at (800) 426-0279.*

PASS: NEW Digital School Safety and Security Checklist

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog

As part of a collective effort to improve their safety and security guidelines, the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS) has launched the highly anticipated digitized security checklist. These interactive tools enable school leaders and safety teams to assess and implement security recommendations at their own pace, tailored to their individual needs and areas of focus.

The security checklists from PASS comprehensively cover the entirety of a facility's recommended security focus, from district-wide recommendations to the interior of buildings and classrooms. These checklists also provide a full evaluation of your digital infrastructure layer.

The PASS School Safety and Security Guidelines provide the narrative which describes each of the best practices found in the Checklist tool.

Follow this link to access the Checklist:

https://passk12.org/guidelines-resources/school-security-checklist/?utm_source=School+Security+Guidelines&utm_campaign=7fdcf98415-2026_town_hall_announcement_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-2806d17843-156777885

Quick Question/What Would You Do? Delayed Egress on Electrical Rooms

By: Lori Greene, I Dig Hardware Blog

I was just saying to someone the other day that after graduating with an architectural degree, I went into a related industry because I did not like the subjective nature of working as an architect. I like yes/no, right/wrong, which is why codes are such a great fit for me. If there are grey areas, my mission is to get rid of them.

The other day someone asked a question that turned out to be a grey area (as far as I can tell), and immediately went on my code development wish list:

Are delayed egress locks permitted on doors serving electrical rooms where panic hardware is required?

This might seem like a strange question…I mean, why would someone want to delay egress from an electrical room? But with the rise in data center projects which typically have higher security than other types of facilities, delayed egress is being requested in locations that might have high voltage or high amperage equipment.

The I-Codes sections on delayed egress locks state the use groups where delayed egress locks are permitted, and in NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, this information is found in the occupancy chapters. I don't see anything that would prohibit delayed egress locks, except in assembly, educational, and high hazard occupancies.

I checked the I-Codes section that addresses panic hardware on rooms with electrical equipment, which has been revised to more closely align with NFPA 70, National Electrical Code:

1010.2.8.2 Rooms with electrical equipment. Exit or exit access doors serving transformer vaults, rooms designated for batteries or energy storage systems, or modular data centers shall be equipped with panic hardware or fire exit hardware. Rooms containing electrical equipment rated 800 amperes or more that contain overcurrent devices, switching devices or control devices and where the exit or exit access door is less than 25 feet (7620 mm) from the equipment working space as required by NFPA 70, such doors shall not be provided with a latch or lock other than panic hardware or fire exit hardware. The doors shall swing in the direction of egress travel.

If the delayed egress lock was delayed egress panic hardware it seems like technically it would meet this requirement, but it seems like a terrible idea to me. Although the delayed egress lock is required to permit immediate egress (no delay) upon fire alarm and power failure, the time between an explosion or other incident in an electrical room and the release of the delay could be crucial. I would prefer to see an exit alarm with no delay for this type of room.

SUPERINTENDENTS DON'T JUST REVIEW THE PLANS...

THEY INTERROGATE THEM.

A REVIEW CAN STAY PASSIVE.

- ✗ Did I look at the sheet?

AN INTERROGATION FORCES THE DRAWINGS TO ANSWER REAL FIELD QUESTIONS.

- ☑ Does this actually work?
- ☑ Does it match the sequence?
- ☑ Does it match field conditions?
- ☑ Did anyone think through access, clearance, tolerances, transitions, procurement, inspections, and handoff to the next trade?
- ☑ What is missing?
- ☑ What is assumed?
- ☑ What is going to break the flow later?

A SUPERINTENDENT WHO ONLY REVIEWS PLANS MAY CATCH WHAT IS DRAWN.
A SUPERINTENDENT WHO INTERROGATES PLANS CATCHES WHAT THE PROJECT IS ABOUT TO SUFFER FROM.

THIS IS WHERE MOST JOBS GET IN TROUBLE.

- ✗ People flip pages.
- ✗ They hold a meeting.
- ✗ They say the plans were reviewed.
- ✗ Then the field finds the conflict.
- ✗ The trade gets stacked.
- ✗ Work gets forced.
- ✗ The schedule starts drifting.
- ✗ And everybody acts surprised like the problem just appeared.

THE PROBLEM DIDN'T APPEAR. IT WAS SITTING IN THE DRAWINGS THE WHOLE TIME WAITING FOR SOMEBODY TO ASK HARDER QUESTIONS.

By the time the jobsite discovers a bad detail, it is no longer a design issue. It is now a production problem. And production problems are **ALWAYS MORE EXPENSIVE.**

BUILT, NOT FORCED

means we don't accept drawings at face value just because they were issued.

We study them until they answer to sequence, constructability, coordination, and reality.

That is not negativity. That is leadership.

INTERROGATE THE PLANS BEFORE THE FIELD HAS TO.

BUILT, NOT FORCED.

#BuiltNotForced #SuperintendentLife #ConstructionManagement #ConstructionLeadership

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Education / Certification	Open

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Chapter Website: https://csilittlerock.org

Chapter Newsletter: https://csilittlerock.org and Click on the Current Newsletter Tab

Chapter Meeting Day and Time: As Determined by the Chapter Board of Directors and based on availability of the presenters.

Chapter Board Meeting Day and Time: As determined by the Chapter President

For Membership Information: https://www.csiresources.org/communities/membership/individual-membership

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