

INDUSTRY BULLETIN

for Florida's Elevator Industry



SUBJECT: **ASME & ADA Use of Emergency Communications**

Number: 2007-04

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This bulletin is provided to aid in compliance with Florida law, and is not intended as legal advice. While care has been taken to ensure its accuracy, in the event of any conflict the actual statute or administrative rule will prevail.

ASME Use of Handsets in Elevators

Recently, the Bureau of Elevator Safety has received numerous inquiries about letters mailed by outside sources regarding code changes and emergency communications. The code change mentioned does not impact emergency communication devices in *existing elevators* that were not issued Permits to Alter. The reference to strict code enforcement solely applies to *new construction or recently altered equipment* that conforms to ASME A17.1 (2004) or later code. The 2004 version became effective December 8, 2006 and applies only to elevators installed after that date. The following code references apply:

ASME A17.1 (2000-2004) for *new construction only*, requires two-way communication in varying configurations and does not require activation via a handset.

ASME Section 2.27 prior to 2004, requires two way communication between the elevator (car) and a readily accessible point outside the hoistway (building location), and that elevators shall be provided with a means within the car for communicating with or signaling to authorized personnel or a service which is capable of taking appropriate action.

Additionally, effective in 2002 for new construction, **ASME A17.1a, section 2.27.1.1.2** applies. When the two-way communications location in the building is not staffed 24 hours a day by authorized personnel who can take appropriate action, the means of two-way communications shall automatically be directed within 30 seconds to an additional on-site or off-site location, staffed by authorized personnel, where an appropriate response can be taken. (*This is enforced, also.*)

ASME A17.3 (1996) is the currently adopted code for existing elevators and does reference a means of two-way communication from the interior of the car, but it is not specific. *Existing elevator installations* may use the emergency communication equipment that was installed when the unit was originally permitted provided an alteration has *not* occurred, which means it must then comply with the latest code in effect at the time an alteration permit was issued.

Summary: The language clearly allows use of signals or handsets within existing elevators. Newly installed and recently altered elevators must continue to meet the 2004 A17.1 Elevator Safety Code and Florida Building Code which requires hands-free communication.

ADA Use of Handsets in Elevators

Chapter 11, of the 2004 Florida Building Code addresses two-way communication from within elevators, as follows:

11-4.10.14 Emergency communications.

If provided, emergency two-way communication systems between the elevator and a point outside the hoist way shall comply with ASME A17.1-1990. The highest operable part of a two-way communication system shall be a maximum of 48 inches (1219 mm) from the floor of the car. It shall be identified by a raised symbol and lettering complying with s. 11-4.30 and located adjacent to the device. If the system uses a handset then the length of the cord from the panel to the handset shall be at least 29 inches (735 mm). If the system is located in a closed compartment the compartment door hardware shall conform to Section 11-4.27 Controls and Operating Mechanisms. The emergency intercommunication system shall not require voice communication.

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