



BUREAU OF CONSTRUCTION CODES
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WILLIAM G. MILLIKEN, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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William Long, Director

MEMORANDUM

July 8, 1981

TO: Members of the Construction Code Commission
 FROM: *Henry H. Green*
 Henry H. Green, Chief, Building Division
 SUBJECT: Interpretation of Section 624.4 of the Michigan Building Code,
 Emergency Lighting System

Recently, the attached request for interpretation was received by this office from Mr. Indulis Liepins of Wah Yee Associates, Southfield, Michigan.

The first question raised by Mr. Liepins is as follows: "How much of the sales area of a supermarket or a department store, for instance, would be considered "means of egress"?"

Staff Notes:

The definition for means of egress is contained within Section 201.3 of the code and reads as follows:

"A continuous and unobstructed path of travel from any point in a building or structure to a public way and consists of three (3) separate and distinct parts: (a) the exitway access, (b) the exitway and (c) the exitway discharge; a means of egress comprises the vertical and horizontal means of travel and shall include intervening room spaces, doors, hallways, corridors, passageways, balconies, ramps, stairs, enclosures, lobbies, escalators, horizontal exits, courts, and yards."

Therefore, it would be the recommendation of staff that the means of egress be defined within such a facility and provided with the appropriate illumination level within the designated means of egress.

It should also be noted that each aisle within a supermarket or department store should not be designated as a means of egress, but, rather, those lines of passage from any point within the structure to the exitway discharge.

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The second question raised by Mr. Liepins is: "At what level should one measure the required intensity - eye level or floor?"

Staff Notes:

Section 504.0, "Artificial Light and Ventilation", of the code references several standards listed in Appendix B. Of these standards, the "Lighting Handbook" - IES-72, provides that the lighting level measurement of room illumination should be taken at floor level.

Therefore, it would be the recommendation of staff that this measurement be taken at floor level.

HLG/bf



Wah Yee Associates Architects/Planners

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June 22, 1981

Michigan Dept. of Labor
Mr. Henry Green, Chief of Building Division
Bureau of Construction
P.O. Box 30015
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Mr. Green:

Per our telephone conversation, I am requesting an official interpretation of the 1978 BOCA "Means of egress lighting for mercantile buildings.

The basic question I have is in regard to intensity of lighting for "means of egress". The code seems to indicate the general artificial lighting level at means of egress should not be less than 3 foot candles, but section 624.4 does not spell out the level of illumination for emergency lighting systems. (Life safety code calls for one foot candle.)

How much of the sales area of a supermarket or a department store for instance, would be considered "means of egress"?

At what level should one measure the required intensity - eye level or floor?

Thanking you in advance,

Sincerely,

Indulis Liepins

Indulis Liepins

Wah Yee Associates

cc: Joel Gershenson
IL/mlf