



Office of Facilities Planning Newsletter #32 – October 2002

Get to Know us Better:

Let us introduce you to one of the two new project managers in our office, Debbie Johnson. Debbie joined the staff of Facilities Planning as a Project Manager five months ago. She was previously employed by the New York State Education Department's Program Services Reimbursement Unit (better known as Rate Setting). She received her BA from the University of Vermont and an MS in business from the State University of New York at Albany with a concentration in tax. Licensed as a CPA she was employed in the public accounting field prior to joining state service.

Debbie resides in Clifton Park with her husband. They have two adult sons. The eldest is employed by Ernst and Young Corporate Finance in Atlanta and the youngest is pursuing a doctoral degree at Penn State (how many years does it take?)

Building Access Control Devices, 9/24/02 (Electromagnetic Locking Devices)

The issue of controlling access to school buildings has resulted in some schools sacrificing emergency egress for perceived security. **We can not stress highly enough the importance of safe and unimpeded egress.** Many schools have proposed or installed electromagnetic locking devices on exit doors. In the past Facilities Planning has taken exception to the installation of this type of device on exit doors. An official interpretation of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code by the Secretary of State and our review of the new Building Code of New York State have led us to re-examine our position.

The New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code Section 1162.2(b), which sets standards for free escape from buildings, references NFPA 101 Section 5-2.1.6 which references Section 9-2.2.2.5 which states "Doors shall not be locked from the egress side when the assembly occupancy is occupied". Occupied meaning anytime the building is open to or accessible to anyone, other than staff, or at any time the building is occupied by more than 10 persons. We contacted the technical assistance department of NFPA for an interpretation of this statement and were advised that an electromagnetic locking system must be deactivated at any time the building is occupied.

The new Building Code of New York State Section 1003.3.1.3.4(6) states "Entrance doors in buildings with an occupancy in Group A, B, E or M shall not be secured from the egress side during periods that the building is open to the general public". We also contacted the interpretation section of the ICBO for an interpretation of that statement and received the same advice as we received from NFPA.

We therefore conclude that electromagnetic locking devices are not appropriate for school buildings. We hereby advise all districts which may already have such systems installed that they must be deactivated at all times that the building is occupied as defined above. **Facilities Planning will not approve such systems as of this date.**

We believe that the use of an electrically operated strike system, with panic bars to assure proven exiting performance, meets the intent of both codes and provides controlled entry.

Ban on the use of CCA Pressure-Treated Lumber:

Senate Bill #S7167-A was signed by the Governor on September 17, 2002. This bill prohibits the use of chromated copper arsenate (CCA) pressure-treated lumber in the construction of any structure in a public playground and it requires such existing structures to be maintained in a manner to minimize leaching of chromated copper arsenate. It also directs the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation to publish information that includes:

- the dangers of chromated copper arsenate pressure-treated lumber;
- a list of alternative materials which may be used instead of pressure-treated lumber; and
- methods and materials to be used to maintain structures constructed from such pressure-treated lumber to minimize leaching of chromated copper arsenate.

It is now a violation of state law to use this material in new school playground construction.

Using the International Building Code:

The use and occupancy classification of a school is easily determined in the Building Code of New York State as Educational Group E in section 305. We are already receiving calls regarding incidental and accessory use areas and how they apply within a school. First and foremost, apply and design utilizing the code requirements, but remember that the Manual of Planning Standards (MPS) may be more restrictive and must still be met.

Section 302.1 discusses Incidental use areas that require fire protective ratings from other spaces within buildings. Fire ratings are provided for laboratories (science labs), vocational shops, storage rooms over 100 square feet, and other rooms. The fire ratings for boiler rooms, stages, and a few other spaces are required to be 2-hours in S203 of the MPS and will over-ride the code requirement.

Section 302.2 discusses Accessory use areas. It will require a fire barrier if an accessory use is greater than 10 percent of the area of any floor in the building. According to Section 303 it will be necessary to classify the assembly spaces within the buildings as accessories. Examples of these spaces are the auditorium, gymnasium, swimming pool, lecture hall, library, skating rink, and cafeteria. The next Newsletter will discuss the exiting requirements.

If you would like to have this Update sent directly to you by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov

Please continue to send in your comments and requests. If you have a subject you would like addressed, feedback on the material you read, input or general comments we are happy to hear from you.