

Office of Facilities Planning Newsletter #64 – June 2005

Building Condition Survey:

The Building Condition Survey is now available online with instructions. Please conduct your surveys in a timeframe that enables the report to be filed by January 15, 2006.

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/BldgCondSurv.htm>

Hot Weather vs. Temperatures of School Buildings:

Wow, we have had a lot of hot and humid weather the past couple of weeks. The weather was cool, we all complained, now the weather is hot, go figure.

We are receiving a record number of phone calls requesting to know the maximum temperature allowed in school buildings. By law, code, or regulation there is no maximum temperature specified. Ventilation requirements only require fresh air, not cool air-conditioning. Air-conditioning is a local school district decision. Each school district decides for themselves if this is an issue that requires attention. More often than not it may be an issue weighted between finances, maintenance, and the number of days air-conditioning is needed each school year. The laws, codes, and regulations do not set a standard for a maximum temperature because it may be too great a financial burden to place on many school districts considering the number of days air-conditioning is used. Meanwhile, we have an early hot and muggy period, the result is we receive many questions for this two or three week period. Here is an interesting article.

<http://www.thejournalnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050615/NEWS03/506150369/1024/NEWS08>

Structural Design:

Are your school buildings being used as emergency shelters? The building code has additional requirements for buildings that are used in this manner and this would apply to a school.

Please see page 5 of 9 on the Facilities Planning Code Compliance Checklist – Structural Design Checklist. The very first Question states "Prior to structural design, the District / BOCES has been consulted to determine if this facility is currently or will be considered for use as an emergency shelter facility." Our intent was if the structural designer indicated "yes" then the district is planning to use the building as a shelter. We will be changing this question in the near future within a revised Code Compliance Checklist.

The answer to this question may open a "Pandora's box" when the district opens their building up as a shelter in an emergency. Please consider the following two items when addressing this question.

1) Building Code Table 1604.5 bumps up the importance factor for emergency shelters to Category III, which is greater than schools in Category II. This will increase the structural framing requirements.

2) The Commissioner of Education's regulation, 155.17(c), requires school buildings to be relinquished to the appropriate State or county agencies in accordance with county emergency preparedness plans. This should be incorporated in the school district's emergency management plan. If it is not presently a consideration the district needs to be aware of the requirement.

Please also be aware that SED encourages school districts to set up emergency sheltering agreements with the American Red Cross.

Short-Term Worker Asbestos Notification Reminder:

The federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires public and nonpublic schools to inform all non-school employees who perform short-term work in a school building, such as electricians, plumbers, and telephone repair workers of the locations of any known or assumed asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM) in the building (§763.84(d)). The school's asbestos designee is responsible for ensuring that short-term workers, prior to commencing any work, are informed and shown where known or assumed ACBM is located in the building. A policy should be developed whereby the asbestos designee meets with short-term workers upon their arrival. If the procedure is not followed, a situation may transpire where a short-term worker performs work in an area containing ACBM, thereby creating an asbestos fiber release episode. This incident may inadvertently expose students, staff, and the worker who caused the incident to asbestos fibers.

The notification requirement is best accomplished by showing the short-term worker a floor plan of the school, with the locations of all known and assumed ACBM highlighted, as well as providing clear instructions detailing where work should and should not be performed. This notification process should be documented in the school's AHERA management plan.

The following links provide detailed information on the AHERA requirements:

<http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/aherarequirements.pdf>

http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/asbestos_in_schools.html#AHERA

Additional questions on AHERA compliance may be directed to Laura Sahr (

lsahr@mail.nysed.gov

or 518-474-3906) or your local BOCES Health and Safety Office.

Security Badges:

A quick reminder for people visiting Facilities Planning. SED has a new policy regarding the issuance of security badges upon entering the building. The security desk will issue only three badges for three people. If you have four people or more in your group you could be delayed reaching your destination. The security desk will call your destination within SED and request the security badges. Therefore, if you have four people or more in your group visiting Facilities Planning, call our office in advance to request security badges printed up prior to your arrival and we will prepare them. In this manner your badges will be waiting for you with security at the Hawk Street entrance when you arrive. If you do not call in advance we will automatically assume you have three or less people visiting the office.

An Index of our Newsletters is available on our web site at

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/NewsLetters.htm>

If you would like to have this Newsletter sent directly to you by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to Joe Levy at

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