



New York State Education Department

Elementary, Secondary, and Continuing Education
School Operations and Management Services
Facilities Planning

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Protocol for Addressing PCB's in Caulk:

We have completed work on a protocol for schools to follow when renovation or maintenance activities disturb caulking materials that may contain PCB's. This protocol was developed in consultation with the State Department of Health and represents the most current guidance for schools to follow to properly survey and if necessary, remediate caulking materials found to be contaminated. The protocol also addresses potential soil contamination below areas where contaminated caulk is discovered. Please review these guidelines and plan renovation and maintenance activities accordingly when these materials are discovered. Facilities planning will be looking for appropriate treatment of caulking materials when capital projects are reviewed for building permits. Please see the protocol on our website at:

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/HealthSafety/PCBinCaulkProtocol-070615.html>

Tying Down Shipping Containers:

In Newsletter #50 of April 2004 we provided parameters for which Shipping Containers are allowed to be placed on school district sites as Storage Facilities. This can also be found on our web site at: https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/articles/shipping_containers_for_storage.html.

Since we require the Shipping Containers to be installed in compliance with code requirements we are letting everyone know that these containers may need to be evaluated in accordance with the wind load requirements that are consistent with your area of the state.

If you have existing Shipping Containers installed on your site please evaluate the need for tie-down devices to prevent the container from being dislodged during a storm. This could save the district from causing property damage on the school district grounds or a neighboring property.

Magnetic Door Hold Open Devices and Smoke Detectors:

Magnetic door hold open devices are used to hold normally closed fire and smoke doors in an open position. The intended use of these devices is to allow ease of traffic flow, but still maintain required fire/smoke separations. The door hold open devices release, allowing the doors to close, upon receiving a signal from either: local smoke detectors, listed and labeled for the application; or the fire alarm system when the areas on both sides of the door have area smoke detection.

Magnetic door hold open devices are one component of the “automatic door release service”, also known as “door release service” in “NFPA 72-99”. Smoke detector coverage is another component of the automatic door release service.

The “Manual of Planning Standards” (MPS) requires magnetic door hold open devices on certain doors (stair enclosure doors, corridor doors and doors from places of assembly which are in smoke barriers). Please see paragraph S109-4c in the MPS. Paragraph S807-3c in the MPS states that magnetic door hold open devices must be interlocked with the fire alarm system, and smoke detectors must be provided that are interlocked with the fire alarm system. This is one of the reasons we look for area smoke detector coverage in stairs, corridors and assembly spaces. This is consistent with the requirements of NFPA-72.

Smoke detector coverage is a critical part of the automatic door release service. At a minimum, smoke detector coverage for automatic door release service must comply with NFPA 72. The intent behind the smoke detector coverage is to ensure those portions of the egress path with a need for greater protection are protected from areas with a lesser need. Corridors are protected from assembly spaces. Corridors are protected from other sections of corridors in separate smoke zones. Enclosed stairs are protected from corridors. Area smoke detector coverage on both sides of the doors provides that protection.

Every now and then we receive a design or a change order that adds magnetic door hold open devices to additional non-required doors. Many times it makes a certain amount of sense to add magnetic door hold open devices to certain doors for ease of traffic flow, such as the door from the main office to the corridor. We don’t have a problem with adding magnetic door hold devices to non-required doors. However, we can not approve a design that does not provide the required, additional, smoke detector coverage. In the situation of the main office, there must be a smoke detector in the main office space, located to detect and react to smoke, prior to the smoke entering the corridor. In addition, there must be smoke detectors in the corridor. Smoke detectors in the corridor by themselves are not sufficient to provide the required protection. If there is a fire in the main office, the doors must close prior to smoke entering the corridor.

When we see a design that includes magnetic door hold open devices, we must see all required smoke detectors, or receive sufficient information to determine all required smoke detectors are already installed.

If there are any buildings out there with magnetic door hold open devices that do not have the required smoke detector coverage, the magnetic door hold open devices must be made inoperable until such time as all smoke detectors are installed to create a complete system. Systems without proper smoke detector coverage do not provide sufficient smoke protection, and are unsafe.

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 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.