



Office of Facilities Planning Newsletter Update #6 – August 2000

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. Our purpose is to provide information, which will help all Consultants and Facilities Planning provide a quick concise review of all projects. This will help the schools get their construction projects out to bid in a timely manner.

Fire Alarms:

All public education buildings must have a working fire alarm system. Please see section 774.2 (e) of the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. This requirement includes all Manufactured Buildings (also known as Modular or Relocatable Classrooms). If a building is a stand-alone structure, the fire alarm system may be a stand-alone system. If the building is connected by an enclosed link to another building, activation of the fire alarm system in any one building must activate notification devices (bell/horn/strobe units) in all buildings. In addition, the new building must also include a fire and smoke detection system if the connected building has a fire and smoke detection system.

Areas of Public Assembly:

We have received several questions involving the language in Article 6, which outlines the requirements for Areas of Public Assembly. All schools are Assembly Occupancies, C5.5, and rooms within the school are designated as Areas of Public Assembly if more than 50 people can occupy that room. The confusion arises from requirements regarding rooms used exclusively for instruction of pre-kindergarten through grade 12 because they specifically are not considered Areas of Public Assembly.

Areas of Public Assembly are required to have a Fire and Smoke Detecting System installed within the space, and in the corridors and exits from the space, to the exterior exit doors. These areas must also be posted for their maximum occupancy as a result of fire safety requirements in Building Code Section 1164.2, this is also required as part of a construction project.

Finally, Areas of Public Assembly must be enclosed with 2-hour rated fire separation walls. The 2-hour rated walls can be reduced if the entire Fire Area that the Area of Public Assembly is located within has been provided with a Fire and Smoke Detecting System providing total coverage in all accessible spaces. Emergency lighting, HVAC emergency switches and duct smoke detection at all HVAC systems are also required throughout the entire fire area.

Incomplete Projects:

Facilities Planning has started to return documents submitted for review that are definitely incomplete or lack significant code compliance information. When documents are returned, a letter will be sent to the firm explaining why the documents are rejected with a copy sent to the school district. When they are resubmitted they will be assigned a new review number. Also, we will hold-up review of any other submittals from the firm until they have reported that their other projects have been reviewed at their office and are 100% complete. Therefore we strongly encourage you to review your documents for completeness and correctness before sending them to Facilities Planning for approval.

This action is necessary to speed up the review process since we are starting to see the submissions increase already for next year's construction season. Reviewing incomplete projects once, twice, and even three times, is the most time-consuming problem that has not been resolved since the March 29th Workshop. Please help us by giving your documents a thorough review prior to submitting them. Remember to complete your door schedule and hardware, and provide the "NYSED" pages of the Code Review Checklist with your submissions to Facilities Planning.

Asbestos Designer:

Please be sure to look closely at your asbestos designer's qualifications and check that the Department of Labor Certificate has a current the date on it. Also, be sure to provide the asbestos designer's R.A. or P.E. seal on the specification.

Workshop:

There has been discussion about having another Workshop or series of smaller workshops here at SED. Please let us know if you would like another workshop and the topics you would like to see addressed.

We are happy to hear from you. If you have a subject you would like addressed, feedback on the material you read, input or general comments, please send them to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov.

We plan to address subject matter as discussed at our March 29, 2000 Workshop, common errors holding up reviews, solutions to repeat problems and any subject which will help the schools and consultants quickly and efficiently receive their project approvals.