



FIRE CODE AWARENESS IN CHILD CARE FACILITIES

This document is a list of common codes that are observed and cited in child care facilities during code enforcement inspections. In addition to the code cited, commentary is included to assist centers in gaining and maintaining compliance.

MOST COMMON VIOLATIONS

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 1030.2 RELIABILITY

Required exit accesses, exits and exit discharges shall be continuously maintained free from obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency when the building area served by the means of egress is occupied. An exit or exit passageway shall not be used for any purpose that interferes with a means of egress.

WHAT IT MEANS The path of egress is the entire path to get to an exit; this could be how someone gets to the door in a room, the hall or corridor leading to an exit, and the outside area leading to the public way. Code officials write this violation often because of obstructions placed in the means of egress. Typical examples are trash cans, props/signs, desks, chairs and furniture. These spaces were designed and built to be used as a means of egress.

SUGGESTION Cover this topic extensively in the required annual personnel meeting. All personnel should be responsible and aware that blocking an exit is a safety violation. The director or other office staff or maintenance should check weekly to ensure egress is not blocked within the building.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 1030.2.1 SECURITY DEVICES AND EGRESS LOCKS

Security devices affecting means of egress shall be approved by the fire code official. Special locking arrangements including, but not limited to access-controlled egress doors, security grills, locks and latches, and delayed egress locks shall be installed and maintained as required by this chapter.

WHAT IT MEANS Inspectors often find special child-resistant locking and latching devices in place on egress doors and the hardware serving them.

SUGGESTION All required egress doors must always be free of any item that may slow or inhibit its use. Periodically check all doors to make sure none of these devices are in use.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 1030.4 EXIT SIGNS

Exit signs shall be installed and maintained in accordance with Section 1011. Decorations, furnishings, equipment or adjacent signage that impairs the visibility of exit signs, creates confusion or prevents identification of the exit shall not be allowed.

WHAT IT MEANS Exit signs are occasionally found with artwork and teaching material obstructing their view. In addition, they are also found to have been damaged or misaligned after being struck by balls in play areas, and pointing to incorrect directions.

SUGGESTION Periodically inspect exit signs to ensure they are in clear view and not damaged. If found to be regularly damaged in play areas, install listed protective devices over them.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 1030.6 FINISHES, FURNISHINGS, AND DECORATIONS

Means of egress doors shall be maintained in such a manner as to be distinguishable from the adjacent construction and finishes such that the doors are easily recognizable as doors. Furnishings, decorations or other objects shall not be placed so as to obstruct exits, access thereto, egress therefrom, or visibility thereof. Hangings and draperies shall not be placed over exit doors or otherwise be located to conceal or obstruct an exit. Mirrors shall not be placed on exit doors. Mirrors shall not be placed in or adjacent to any exit in such a manner as to confuse the direction of exit.

WHAT IT MEANS This is cited most often because egress doors are decorated, covered by draperies, etc., and in some cases, doors no longer look like doors. Doors must always look like doors and be readily accessible to go out of in case of an emergency.

SUGGESTION Do not decorate exit doors, including classroom doors, to the extent that they are disguised. Do not place hangings or draperies over exit doors. Do not place furniture or other objects in front of exit doors.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 1008.2 GATES

Gates serving the means of egress system shall comply with the requirements of this section. Gates used as a component in a means of egress shall conform to the applicable requirements for doors.

WHAT IT MEANS Oftentimes, outdoor play areas are found surrounded with a fence in which a required egress door leads directly to this area. In many cases, gates leading out of these areas are found with non-compliant egress hardware.

SUGGESTION If your facility has required egress doors leading into an outdoor play area, have maintenance staff review the gate-latching hardware to ensure it is of an appropriate type.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 1015.6 DAY CARE MEANS OF EGRESS

Day care facilities, rooms or spaces where care is provided for more than 10 children that are 2-1/2 years of age or less, shall have access to not less than two exits or exit access doorways.

WHAT IT MEANS This often becomes a violation after a center reconfigures or adds rooms.

SUGGESTION Consult with your licensing agency prior to making any changes to the configuration of your facility.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 404.3.1 FIRE EVACUATION PLANS

Fire evacuation plans shall include the following:

1. Emergency egress or escape routes and whether evacuation of the building is to be complete or, where *approved*, by selected floors or areas only.
2. Procedures for employees who must remain in the building to operate critical equipment before evacuating.
3. Procedures for assisted rescue for persons unable to use the general *means of egress* unassisted.
4. Procedures for accounting for employees and occupants after evacuation has been completed.
5. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for rescue or emergency medical aid.
6. The preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency.

7. The preferred and any alternative means of reporting fires and other emergencies to the fire department or designated emergency response organization.
8. Identification and assignment of personnel who can be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.
9. A description of the emergency voice/alarm communication system alert tone and preprogrammed voice messages, where provided

WHAT IT MEANS Fire evacuation plans are required to be written specifically for the building in which it is being written. Many times, the plan is not available, or the plan does not include all the requirements listed above. This is a written plan.

SUGGESTION Annually review the fire evacuation plan with all staff. Assign personnel to be responsible to write the evacuation plan and ensure it meets all the requirements of the specific list in 404.3.1. Assign a designated place for this document to be located and accessed.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 404.3.2 FIRE SAFETY PLANS

Fire safety plans shall include the following:

1. The procedure for reporting a fire or other emergency.
2. The life safety strategy and procedures for notifying, relocating or evacuating occupants, including occupants who need assistance.
3. Site plans indicating the following:
 - 3.1. The occupancy assembly point.
 - 3.2. The locations of fire hydrants.
 - 3.3. The normal routes of fire department vehicle access.
4. Floor plans identifying the locations of the following:
 - 4.1. Exits.
 - 4.2. Primary evacuation routes.
 - 4.3. Secondary evacuation routes.
 - 4.4. Accessible egress routes.
 - 4.5. Areas of refuge.
 - 4.6. Exterior areas for assisted rescue.
 - 4.7. Manual fire alarm boxes.
 - 4.8. Portable fire extinguishers.
 - 4.9. Occupant-use hose stations.
 - 4.10. Fire alarm annunciators and controls.

5. A list of major fire hazards associated with the normal use and occupancy of the premises, including maintenance and housekeeping procedures.
6. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance of systems and equipment installed to prevent or control fires.
7. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance, housekeeping and controlling fuel hazard sources.

WHAT IT MEANS Fire safety plans are required to be created specifically for the building in which it is being created for and not an overall process for a generic building plan. Many times, the plan is not available, or the plan does not include all the requirements in the list above. This is meant to be a diagram.

SUGGESTION A child care center should designate a fire safety personnel who maintains and trains on this document. Each caregiver should have this plan affixed to a clipboard or easily obtainable file folder within their classroom and should *always* know the fire evacuation and safety plans. Work with your local fire department in preparing this plan.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 406.2 TRAINING

Employees shall receive training in the contents of fire safety and evacuation plans and their duties as part of new employee orientation and at least annually thereafter. Records shall be kept and made available to the *fire code official* upon request.

WHAT IT MEANS Records of employee training are not usually provided or not able to be found. A second problem encountered is that only teachers are being trained. All staff are required to be trained; this includes lunchroom staff, janitorial, administrative staff, etc. This also includes new staff hired after the annual training has been conducted.

SUGGESTION As indicated previously, someone within the **building** should be designated as the fire safety personnel who assists in maintaining these important documents and tracks each meeting. It should be kept in a master file available for fire code officials when they inspect the **facility**. Ensure staff hired throughout the year become trained as part of their orientation and that they sign and date the training documentation in the master file.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 505.1 ADDRESS IDENTIFICATION

New and existing buildings shall have approved address numbers, building numbers or approved building identification placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. These numbers shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be provided in

additional approved locations to facilitate emergency response. Address numbers shall be Arabic numbers or alphabetical letters. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches (101.6 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inch (12.7 mm). Where access is by means of a private road and the building cannot be viewed from the public way, a monument, pole or other sign or means shall be used to identify the structure. Address numbers shall be maintained.

WHAT IT MEANS Building address signage needs to be maintained to ensure local emergency services can promptly locate your facility in the case of an emergency.

SUGGESTION Perform an annual walk-around of your facility to look for any items that may need general maintenance and ensure the address signage has not been damaged. Seek recommendations on signage placement where the front of a building does not face the serving street.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 604.5.2 POWER TEST

For battery-powered emergency lighting, a power test of the emergency lighting equipment shall be completed annually. The power test shall operate the emergency lighting for a minimum of 90 minutes and shall remain sufficiently illuminated for the duration of the test.

WHAT IT MEANS This is one of the most common violations found. Emergency lighting with backup batteries is required to be tested annually, by an operational test, for 90 minutes; documentation of the outcome of the testing or any maintenance/repairs that had to be made to the lights must be documented. Emergency lighting is very important when there is power loss during an emergency; testing helps to ensure lights function as they should when needed.

SUGGESTION Assign designated personnel to be responsible for ensuring the testing is completed at least annually and documented, and that records are kept in an accessible location. The location of the documentation should be known by multiple people (i.e., director, office staff, maintenance, janitorial staff, etc.).

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 901.6.2 RECORDS

Records of all system inspections, tests and maintenance required by the referenced standards shall be maintained on the premises or made readily available for a minimum of two (2) years from the date of the last inspection, except that original acceptance test reports shall be maintained for the life of the system.

WHAT IT MEANS Code officials are continuously writing this violation because records of tests are not available, cannot be found, no one knows where they are, etc. Buildings with fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems, kitchen fire suppression, rolling fire doors, etc., must have all systems tested at specified intervals. Those test records must be made available to the code official to review. If your inspecting contractor does not provide a copy prior to leaving your site, follow up with them if the report is not provided within a few days.

SUGGESTION Someone at each facility should be designated to be responsible for these reports, or a book/binder should be created to help cut down on this violation being written so often. Have a master file where all office personnel know its location and the contents within. Refer to the “Fire Marshal Folder” list to ensure all applicable items are available. Review all system inspection reports upon receipt from the inspecting contractor to ensure you are aware of all deficiencies if found, and ensure corrective measures are taken to address found deficiencies.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 405.2 FREQUENCY

Required emergency evacuation drills shall be held at the intervals specified in Table 405.2 or more frequently where necessary to familiarize all occupants with the drill procedure.

WHAT IT MEANS Fire drills are to be performed every month that the facility is in session. In instances where the daycare is located within a school, the daycare shall still perform a drill in the months that the school performs an alternative drill.

SUGGESTION Periodically review drill records to ensure they are being performed on a monthly basis. Occasionally reach out to your local fire department to request it takes part in a drill, and request its feedback in the results of the drill.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 405.4 TIME

Drills shall be held at unexpected times and under varying conditions to simulate the unusual conditions that occur in case of fire.

WHAT IT MEANS Fire drills are not always found to be conducted at unexpected times or under varying conditions.

SUGGESTION Within the master file, have a document that shows the date and time of drill and the conditions. Ensure varying conditions apply, thusly that the times of fire drills are done during a variety of conditions.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 405.5 RECORD KEEPING

Records shall be maintained of required emergency evacuation drills and include the following information:

1. Identity of the person conducting the drill.
2. Date and time of the drill.
3. Notification method used.
4. Staff members on duty and participating.
5. Number of occupants evacuated.
6. Special conditions simulated.
7. Problems encountered.
8. Weather conditions when occupants were evacuated.
9. Time required to accomplish complete evacuation.

WHAT IT MEANS These are the requirements for fire drill records; very rarely do the records provided to code officials have all the required information in them. Requirement #5 is generally filled out to be the total enrolled and not the actual count during a drill. Actual counts are required here to determine if everyone in the building is accounted for.

SUGGESTION Assign personnel to be responsible for fire drills and record keeping. Personnel should ensure the requirements of the specific list in 405.5 are met. Assign a designated place for the document to be located and accessed when needed. Refer to “IDHS Drill Log” to ensure all applicable items are included in records. Ideas for Requirement #6 (Special conditions simulated) are to place a sign, flashing light, picture of a fire or red-colored cloth in the area of simulated fire origin, or hand a note to a staff person outlining a fire scenario they’ve just discovered.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 405.7 INITIATION

Where a fire alarm system is provided, emergency evacuation drills shall be initiated by activation the fire alarm system.

WHAT IT MEANS All too often, code officials find that fire drills are being initiated by staff shouting or the use of whistles/bells where the facility has a building fire alarm, which must be used to initiate the drill.

SUGGESTION Work with your fire alarm contractor to ensure you are familiar with the function of your system and how to place it in test mode to perform the drill.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 315.3 STORAGE IN BUILDINGS

Storage of materials in buildings shall be orderly and stacks shall be stable. Storage of combustible materials shall be separated from heaters or heating devices by distance or shielding so that ignition cannot occur.

WHAT IT MEANS Code officials typically find disorderly storage in drama and art departments. Combustible material is often found near wall heaters, space heaters and kilns. Combustible materials such as paper, plastic, wood, trash, rags, etc., should never be placed close to these areas.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. All personnel should be responsible for being aware of storage requirements and made to correct violations when noticed at any time.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 605.3 WORKING SPACE AND CLEARANCE

A working space of not less than 30 inches (762 mm) in width, 36 inches (914 mm) in depth and 78 inches (1,981 mm) in height shall be provided in front of electrical service equipment. Where the electrical service equipment is wider than 30 inches (762 mm), the working space shall be not less than the width of the equipment. No storage of any materials shall be located within the designated working space.

WHAT IT MEANS This violation is written because staff will place items and storage in front of electrical panels. This code was written specifically so that electrical panels may be accessed immediately in case of an emergency without having to move items out of the way to get to the panel.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. All personnel should be responsible for being aware of storage requirements and made to correct violations when noticed at any time.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 315.3.3 EQUIPMENT ROOMS

Combustible material shall not be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms or electrical equipment rooms.

WHAT IT MEANS This violation is written because of storage found in boiler, mechanical and electrical rooms. Combustible material should never be stored in these areas, as they are considered high hazard areas.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. All personnel should be responsible for being aware of storage requirements

and made to correct violations when noticed at any time. Another suggestion might be to add a sign on these doors stating not to store combustible material there.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 605.4 MULTI PLUG ADAPTERS

Multi plug adapters, such as cube adapters, unfused plug strips or any other device not complying with NFPA 70 shall be prohibited.

WHAT IT MEANS Multi plug adapters are typically used in classrooms, breakrooms or utilized by janitorial staff. They are prohibited to be used; however, power strips are an acceptable alternative so long as they are not “daisy-chained” (power strip plugged into another power strip or another source) and are plugged directly into a permanent receptacle.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. All personnel should be responsible for being aware of electrical requirements and made to correct violations when noticed at any time. Power strips, with overcurrent protection, are an acceptable alternative to multi plug adapters.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 605.4.2 POWER SUPPLY

Relocatable power taps shall be directly connected to a permanently installed receptacle.

WHAT IT MEANS Power strips, with overcurrent protection, are often found plugged into other power strips or extension cords (“daisy-chained”) because older classrooms are not equipped with multiple outlets for electronics. Power strips are acceptable so long as they are plugged directly into a permanent receptacle.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. All personnel should be responsible for being aware of electrical requirements and made to correct violations when noticed at any time.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 605.4.3 INSTALLATION

Relocatable power tap cords shall not extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or floor coverings, or be subject to environmental or physical damage.

WHAT IT MEANS Power strips are often found run under floor coverings, through drop ceilings, etc., to hide the cords. Fire code does not allow this.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. All personnel should be responsible for being aware of electrical requirements and made to correct violations when noticed at any time.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 605.5 EXTENSION CORDS

Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances.

WHAT IT MEANS Extension cords may be used for one portable appliance at a time, and temporarily only, such as a portable fan for a short period of time.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. All personnel should be responsible for being aware of electrical requirements and made to correct violations when noticed at any time. Power strips are an acceptable alternative to using extension cords for permanent power.

INDIANA FIRE CODE – 605.9 TEMPORARY WIRING

Temporary wiring for electrical power and lighting installations is allowed for a period not to exceed 90 days. Temporary wiring methods shall meet the applicable provisions of NFPA 70.

WHAT IT MEANS Lighting such as Christmas lights, which are specifically labeled for temporary 90-day use, are found permanently installed for therapeutic purposes and are prohibited.

SUGGESTION Assign a qualified individual to inspect all lighting devices that are brought in by staff to ensure they are of a listed type and do not state for temporary use.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 605.10 PORTABLE, ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS

Where not prohibited by other sections of this code, portable, electric space heaters shall be permitted to be used in all occupancies other than Group I-2 and in accordance with Sections 605.10.1 through 605.10.4.

- 605.10.1 Listed and labeled
- 605.10.2 Power supply
- 605.10.3 Extension cords
- 605.10.4 Prohibited areas

WHAT IT MEANS In many cases, electric space heaters are found being used or powered incorrectly. Electric space heaters plugged into power strips and extension cords are a leading cause of electrical fires.

SUGGESTION Assign designated personnel to approve the installation of space heaters to ensure they meet all fire code requirements. Ensure they are listed, plugged directly into permanent receptacles and being provided with a three-foot clearance from all combustibles.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 807.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

In occupancies in Groups A, E, I and R-1, and dormitories in Group R-2, curtains, draperies, hangings and other decorative materials suspended from walls or ceilings shall meet the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701 in accordance with Section 807.2 or be noncombustible.

WHAT IT MEANS Decorative materials, draperies, etc., may not be placed on the walls or hung from the ceiling unless the material is tagged to meet NFPA 701, or has been sprayed with flame retardant meeting the NFPA 701 criteria. This must be documented and made available to be reviewed by the code official, and the spray bottle itself that was used must be on site. This is specific to decorative material; artwork and teaching material is exempt from the requirement and may be on walls or hung from ceilings. Decorative material is considered to be anything decorative that is not used as teaching material or artwork. Recessed fabric light covers also fall under this requirement and must be treated, or documentation showing they are factory-treated must be provided.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. Ensure any decorative material brought in to decorate rooms or other center areas meets this requirement. Designate personnel to ensure this is happening and to answer questions for caregiver/staff who want to bring items in. Require personnel to fill out documentation for each item brought into the center, and keep the records in an accessible location that multiple people are aware of said location.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 807.4.3.2 ARTWORK

Artwork and teaching materials shall be limited on the walls of *corridors* to not more than 20 percent of the wall area.

WHAT IT MEANS Artwork and teaching materials are unlimited in classrooms; however, they are limited to 20 percent of wall areas in corridors. This violation is often written where excessive artwork is displayed.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. Assign personnel to ensure this requirement is met.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 806.2 ARTIFICIAL VEGETATION

Artificial decorative vegetation shall meet the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701. Meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of NFPA 701 shall be documented and certified by the manufacturer in an *approved* manner. Alternatively, the artificial decorative vegetation item shall be tested in accordance with NFPA 289, using the 20 kW ignition source, and shall have a maximum heat release rate of 100 kW.

WHAT IT MEANS Artificial vegetation such as flowers, plants, etc., may not be placed in schools and childcare facilities unless the item is tagged to meet NFPA 701, or has been sprayed with flame retardant meeting the NFPA701 criteria. This must be documented and made available to be reviewed by the code official, and the spray bottle itself that was used must be on site.

SUGGESTION Cover the topic extensively in the already-required annual personnel training. Ensure any artificial vegetation brought in to decorate classrooms or other center areas meets this requirement. Designate personnel to ensure this is happening and to answer questions for teachers/staff who want to bring items in. Require personnel to fill out documentation for each item brought into the school or facility, and keep the records in an accessible location that multiple people are aware of.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 703.2 OPENING PROTECTIVES

Opening protectives shall be maintained in accordance with the rules of the commission. Where allowed by the *fire code official*, the application of field-applied labels associated with the maintenance of opening protectives shall follow the requirements of the *approved* third-on organization accredited for *listing* the opening protective. Fire doors and *smoke barrier* doors shall not be blocked or obstructed, or otherwise made inoperable. Fusible links shall be replaced promptly whenever fused or damaged. Fire door assemblies shall not be modified.

WHAT IT MEANS This code states that fire doors or smoke barrier doors must be maintained in working condition and cannot be propped open by door stops, chocks, wedges, etc. Rated doors must also latch, which means that magnets are not allowed to be used to keep doors from latching in the closed position.

SUGGESTION Assign designated personnel to be responsible for ensuring opening protectives are being maintained, doors are not propped open, rated doors latch, etc. Correct violations as they are discovered.

NFPA 10, 2010 EDITION - 7.2.1.2

Fire extinguishers shall be inspected either manually or by means of an electronic monitoring device/system at a minimum of 30-day intervals.

WHAT IT MEANS Extinguishers are supposed to be inspected on a monthly basis. This is a visual inspection by facility personnel, and not the fire extinguisher company. The inspection should include ensuring the extinguisher is on an appropriate bracket and not blocked, checking the pressure gauge for proper pressure, and making sure that there is no physical damage to the cylinder, handle or hose.

SUGGESTION Assign designated personnel to be responsible for ensuring that fire extinguishers are checked monthly and that the tag provided on the fire extinguisher is signed and dated.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 906.7 HANGERS AND BRACKETS

Hand-held portable fire extinguishers, not housed in cabinets, shall be installed on the hangers or brackets supplied. Hangers or brackets shall be securely anchored to the mounting surface in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions.

WHAT IT MEANS Fire extinguishers are frequently found resting on floors and counters, which subjects them to being damaged if knocked over.

SUGGESTION While performing monthly extinguisher inspections, ensure damaged or missing hangers are brought to the attention of maintenance personnel.

NFPA 10, 2010 EDITION - 7.2.4.3

Where at least monthly manual inspections are conducted, the date the manual inspection was performed and the initials of the person performing the inspection shall be recorded.

WHAT IT MEANS Monthly visual inspections must be documented, typically done on the tag on the fire extinguisher. This is rarely being completed and is written as a code violation often.

SUGGESTION Assign designated personnel to be responsible for ensuring that fire extinguishers are checked monthly and that the tag provided on the fire extinguisher is signed and dated.

NFPA 17A, 2002 EDITION - 7.2.2 OWNER'S INSPECTIONS

Inspections shall include verification of the following:

1. The extinguishing system is in its proper location.
2. The manual actuators are unobstructed.
3. The tamper indicators and seals are intact.
4. The maintenance tag or certificate is in place.
5. No obvious physical damage or condition exists that might prevent operation.
6. The pressure gauge(s), if provided, is in operable range.
7. The nozzle blowoff caps are intact and undamaged.
8. The hood, duct, and protected cooking appliances have not been replaced, modified, or relocated.

WHAT IT MEANS Where hood suppression systems are in place, monthly owner's inspections are found not being documented or performed at all.

SUGGESTION Assign designated personnel to be responsible for ensuring that hood suppression systems are checked monthly and that the tag provided on the system is signed and dated. This is often the responsibility of kitchen staff or the individual who is performing monthly extinguisher inspections.

INDIANA FIRE CODE - 907.4.2.6 UNOBSTRUCTED AND UNOBSCURED

Manual fire alarm boxes shall be accessible, unobstructed, unobscured and visible at all times.

WHAT IT MEANS Fire alarm pull stations are many times found to be obstructed by artificial vegetation, furniture, etc.

SUGGESTION Do not obstruct or obscure fire boxes (pull stations).

INDIANA IC CODE - 12-17.2-6-5(c)(1) REGISTERED MINISTRY FIRE ALARM

A registered child care ministry with an occupant load of at least fifty (50) shall do either of the following:

- (A) Install and maintain a fire alarm system in compliance with the rules of the fire prevention and building safety commission.
- (B) Provide a notice on a form prescribed by the department of homeland security to the parents of each child who attends the ministry stating that

the ministry does not have the same level of fire safety protection as a licensed child care center.

WHAT IT MEANS Registered ministries that have not provided the required fire alarm or smoke detection must have completed opt-out letters that are completed and signed annually for each child.

SUGGESTION Assign designated personnel to be responsible for ensuring that opt-out letters are obtained at the beginning of each year, and that all personnel are aware of their location.

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED VIOLATIONS

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE RULES - 675 IAC 12-6-3 DESIGN RELEASE; REQUIREMENT

Sec. 3. (a) No construction shall be done on a Class 1 structure until a design release has been issued by the division unless the construction is of a type specifically exempted from the design release requirements by section 4 of this rule. Design releases may be issued by the division.

WHAT IT MEANS This section of the General Administrative Rules states that a “construction design release” must be obtained from State Plan Review in Indianapolis prior to any construction that is not exempt from being filed. A construction design release is similar to a permit for construction. Our code officials have found construction, remodeling, etc., completed “in house” that has not received a construction design release. We want to educate the public on this requirement and process so that they are not performing incorrect construction or remodeling that may have to be corrected or be subject to late filing fees.

SUGGESTION Prior to any remodel, addition or construction, designated personnel should make contact with the local building official, or state if a local is not available, to be proactive in determining if a construction design release is needed.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE RULES - 675 IAC 12-4-9 MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Sec. 9. (a) All buildings and structures, and any part of the permanent heating, ventilating, air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, sanitary, emergency detection, emergency communication, or fire or explosion systems, and all parts thereof, shall be maintained in conformance with the applicable rules of the commission, or applicable rules of its predecessor agencies, in effect when constructed, installed, or altered.

(b) The requirements of subsection (a) shall not prohibit maintenance in conformance with the current applicable building rules of the commission or in another manner which would be at least as safe, sanitary, energy conserving and accessible to persons with a physical disability as that required by subsection (a).

(c) Buildings and structures, and any part of the permanent heating, ventilating, air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, sanitary, emergency detection, emergency communication, or fire or explosion suppression systems, and all parts thereof, constructed, installed, or altered prior to the adoption of applicable rules by the commission or its predecessor agencies (including construction, installation, or alteration prior to the creation of the predecessor agencies) shall be maintained in a condition at least as safe and sanitary as they were when constructed, installed, or altered.

(d) This section does not prohibit the removal of buildings, structures, or any part of the permanent heating, ventilating, air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, sanitary, emergency detection, emergency communication, or fire or explosion suppression systems, or components thereof not required for the current use and occupancy by the rules of the commission or its predecessor agencies at the time of construction, installation, or alteration (including construction, installation, or alteration prior to the creation of the predecessor agencies).

(e) Notwithstanding subsection (d), no alteration or removal shall cause an existing building, structure, or any part of the permanent heating, ventilating, air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, sanitary, emergency detection, emergency communication, or fire or explosion suppression systems to become unsafe or overloaded under the provisions of the current rules of the commission for new construction.

(f) Notwithstanding subsection (d), no alteration or removal shall reduce existing fire protection or detection systems or exit capacities to a level less than that required under the provisions of the current rules of the commission for new construction.

WHAT IT MEANS This section of the General Administrative Rules ultimately states that buildings and elements must be maintained in accordance with their code of record when they were built or classified as their current occupancy. It goes on to say that no alteration, remodel, etc., can reduce fire protection in any way, remove or alter an exit that would put the building in noncompliance, etc. Our inspectors are finding that when a building is under remodel or construction, exits are altered, fire protection systems are altered or are not working, etc.

Anytime an exit becomes unavailable, or a fire protection system such as a sprinkler or fire alarm system is not operable for any reason, the fire department shall be notified, and subsequently a fire watch would be required while the facility is occupied.

SUGGESTION Prior to any remodel, addition or construction, designated personnel should make contact with the local building official, or state if a local is not available, to be proactive in determining if any further action should be taken to provide for facility safety.