



PROCEDURE FOR MOBILITY IMPAIRED PERSONS IN OFFICE BUILDINGS DURING ALARM SITUATIONS

General

Persons with a mobility-impairment are in many cases limited in their ability to evacuate by means of stairwells. It is primarily to this type of disability that the following procedures apply.

The procedures to be taken for the evacuation of a mobility-impaired person must be discussed fully with the individual. The mobility-impaired person is usually the best judge of his/her abilities; and can provide valuable assistance in developing an evacuation plan. Persons having a sensory impairment (blindness, deafness, etc.) or a minor physical impairment can, with the assistance of their monitor(s), usually evacuate as quickly and safely as other building occupants. If this is the case, they may be permitted to carry out regular evacuation procedures. However, these persons require at least one buddy to alert them of the alarm, if necessary, and to assist them to evacuate.

For fire safety planning purposes, mobility-impairment is a physical or medical disability which, even with the aid of buddies, would prevent that person from descending the stairs in an evacuation situation at a rate of speed consistent with the normal flow of other building occupants, or which would cause such person physical harm if they attempted to descend the stairs.

Buddy System

At least one buddy is to be assigned to each mobility-impaired person, with additional buddies being provided for special cases to ensure quick and efficient transportation to an area of safety, should this action be necessary. Additional buddies should also be available to replace primary buddies in the event of sick leave, holidays or other temporary absences.

Buddies are best chosen by approaching the mobility-impaired person and his/her office friends and associates. Buddies are thus persons that the mobility-impaired person knows and trusts and they in turn have a sincere interest in and concern for the mobility impaired person. The buddies should also work the same hours as the mobility-impaired person concerned.



During an alarm/emergency situation, the entire building may or may not have to be evacuated

A Buddy System as described should be established for all mobility impaired persons, with sufficient buddies assigned to each mobility impaired person such that they can be assisted to a crossover floor, another safe floor deemed safe or evacuate the building completely should it become absolutely necessary.

ALERT ALARM TONES – approximately 20 times per minute.

EVACUATION ALARM TONES – approximately 120 times per minute.

It is important for the occupants of any building to become familiar with the ALERT and EVACUATION ALARM TONES in their specific building.

Fire Drills

During a fire drill with EVACUATION ALARM TONES, mobility impaired persons are required to assemble at their designated refuge area with their buddies.

Relocation of mobility impaired persons is not required during a fire drill unless there are valid reasons to do so or the mobility impaired person and their buddies want to practice evacuating to a crossover floor (that has ALERT TONES sounding) or completely out of the building.

Confirmation of the alarm being a fire drill to mobility impaired persons on the evacuation floors should be made through the use of fire phones once the mobility impaired persons report their location and status.

All occupants of a building are expected to participate in the fire drill.

ALERT ALARM TONES

ALERT TONES notify the occupants of that a floor area that an emergency situation may exist in the building.

All persons should prepare themselves for possible movement (walking shoes, personal effects, coats etc.) prior to the ALERT TONES changing to EVACUATION ALARM TONES.

Fire Wardens should prepare for evacuation and also ensure that mobility impaired persons have sufficient buddies in place for assistance.



EVACUATION ALARM TONES

Do not use elevators unless under the control of the Fire Department.

In EVACUATION ALARM TONE situations, mobility impaired persons and their buddies should assemble by an exit door near the elevators or in a defined refuge area, ideally near the buildings fire phones.

Mobility impaired persons may be relocated by the Fire Department or may have to relocate to a crossover floor (that has ALERT TONES sounding) with the assistance of their buddies, but only if they are in immediate danger.

There is a possibility that mobility impaired persons may have to completely evacuate the building with only the assistance of their buddies, however, this is an extremely remote possibility.

All ambulatory (self-evacuating) persons in the building are expected to move to a crossover floor (that has ALERT TONES sounding) or evacuate the building completely and meet at their designated meeting point if one has been established.

Evacuating to the parkade and attempting to drive away from the situation is strongly advised against as the parkade overhead doors may not function during an emergency.

The location of mobility impaired persons should be reported through fire wardens or their designate to security/chief fire warden located in the lobby, and/or through fire phones located in refuge areas. This information will be useful to Fire Department Incident Command if an evacuation is deemed necessary.

Sincerely,