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STATE OF IOWA

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FIRE SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS
for
HOTELS, APARTMENT HOUSES, DORMITORIES,
LODGING OR ROOMING HOUSES

ROBERT D. RAY
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DIVISION OF FIRE PROTECTION
Department of Public Safety

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DES MOINES, IOWA

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LODGING OR ROOMING HOUSES

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State Fire Marshal

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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DES MOINES, IOWA

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CHAPTER 32

FIRE SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR HOTELS, APARTMENT HOUSES, DORMITORIES, LODGING OR ROOMING HOUSES

32.1(100)T.III GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS--APPLICABLE TO ALL CLASSES OF BUILDINGS IN THESE REGULATIONS

32.1(1) Each building or structure referred to in these regulations, whether new or old, designed for human occupancy, shall be provided with exits sufficient to permit the prompt escape of occupants in case of fire or other emergency. The design of exits and other safeguards shall be such that reliance for safety to life, in case of fire or other emergencies, will not depend solely on any single safeguard; additional safeguards shall be provided for life safety in case any single safeguard is ineffective due to some human or mechanical failure.

32.1(2) Exits shall be so arranged and maintained as to provide free and unobstructed egress from all parts of every building or structure at all times when the building or structure is occupied. No locks or fastenings to prevent free escape from the inside of any building shall be installed on exit doors. Exit doors shall open outward and indicated with the word "Exit".

32.1(3) Exits shall be visible or the routes to reach them shall be conspicuously indicated in such manner that every occupant of every building or structure will readily know the direction of escape from any point within the building.

32.1(4) In buildings or structures where artificial illumination of exit signs is required, adequate and reliable illumination shall be provided for all of the exit signs.

32.1(5) All vertical ways of exit and other vertical openings between floors of buildings shall be suitably enclosed or protected as necessary to afford reasonable safety to the occupants while using the exits and also to prevent the spread of fire, smoke or fumes through vertical openings from floor to floor before occupants have evacuated the building.

32.1(6) Window Exits. Window exits opening onto outside fire escape platforms are permissible in Class B hotels, apartments, lodging and rooming houses provided the window is easily opened without the use of tools and is sufficient size to allow an adult to pass through.

32.1(7) Dead End Corridors. Dead end corridors cannot exceed the first twenty (20) feet of exit travel from any room door with means of exit in only one direction in a Class A or Class B hotel.

32.1(8) Gas piping. All gas piping and the installation of gas appliances shall be in accordance with the provisions of Division VIII of the State Regulations Governing the Use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas.

32.1(9) Electrical Wiring and Appliances. The electric wiring, lighting and installation of all electrical appliances shall be in accordance with the standards of the current edition of the National Electric Code.

32.1(10) Fire Protection Equipment and Devices. Approved type fire extinguishers shall be provided on each floor, so located that they will be accessible to the occupants, and spaced so that no person will have to travel more than seventy-five (75) feet from any point to reach the nearest extinguisher. Additional extinguishers may be installed in areas that constitute a special hazard. Type and number of portable fire extinguishers shall be determined by the State Fire Marshal.

32.1(11) In all buildings or structures of such size, arrangement or use, where delayed detection of a fire could endanger the occupants, the Fire Marshal may require an automatic fire detection alarm system.

32.1(12) In cases of practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship, the State Fire Marshal may grant exceptions to these regulations but only when it is clearly evident that reasonable safety is thereby secured. Existing buildings and structures shall not be occupied or used in violation of the provisions of these regulations.

32.1(13) Nothing in these regulations shall be construed to prohibit better types of building construction, more exits, or otherwise safer conditions than the minimum requirements specified in these regulations.

32.1(14) Compliance with these regulations shall not be construed as eliminating or reducing the necessity for other provisions for safety of persons under normal occupancy conditions nor shall any provisions be construed as requiring or permitting any condition that may be hazardous under normal occupancy conditions of buildings or structures.

Section 2. DEFINITIONS

32.2(1) For the purpose of these regulations, the following definitions and classifications shall be used.

32.2(2) Hotels--Class A. Class A hotels shall include all buildings or group of buildings, under the same management, in which there are more than twenty-five (25) sleeping accommodations for hire, primarily used by transients who are lodged with or without meals, whether designated as a hotel, inn, club, motel, or by any other name. So called apartment-hotels shall be classified as hotels.

32.2(3) Hotels--Class B. Class B hotels shall include all buildings or group of buildings, under the same management, in which there are twenty-five (25) or less sleeping accommodations for hire, primarily used by transients who are lodged with or without meals, whether designated as a hotel, inn, club, motel or by any other name. So called apartment-hotels shall be classified as hotels. Class B hotels, more than two (2) stories in height, shall be limited to sleeping accommodations for ten (10) persons only in each story above the second story.

32.2(4) Apartment Houses. This includes buildings furnishing living quarters for three (3) or more families living independently from each other with independent cooking facilities whether designed as an apartment house, tenement, garden apartment, or using any other name.

32.2(5) Dormitories. This shall include buildings where group sleeping accommodations are provided for persons not members of the same family group. There may be several occupying large rooms or there may be a series of closely associated rooms under joint occupancy and single management. These buildings may be called college dormitories, fraternity houses, sorority houses, nurses' homes, convents, or similar types of occupancy.

32.2(6) Lodging or Rooming Houses. This shall include buildings or groups of buildings, under the same management, in which separate sleeping rooms are rented providing sleeping accommodations for a total of more than four (4) persons who are nonrelated. Accommodations may be for either transients or permanent guests, with or without meals, but without separate cooking facilities for individual occupants.

32.2(7) Row Housing. Contiguous individual family units two (2) stories in height, separated by fire walls from roof level to basement floor with no access through the fire wall, shall not be classed as an apartment house but shall be classed as single family dwellings for the purpose of these regulations only.

Section 3. HOTELS

32.3(1) Section 3 shall apply to hotels as defined in Section 2, 2.2 and 2.3.

32.3(2) Exits.

(a) No less than two (2) exits, as remote from each other as practical, shall be accessible from every floor. Exits and ways of access thereto shall be so arranged that from every point in any opened area, or from any room door, exits will be accessible in at least two (2) different directions except as provided in Section 1, 1.7.

(b) The exits, as specified in 3.2 (a), shall be such that it will not be necessary to travel more than one hundred (100) feet from the door of any room to reach the nearest exit, except that where an automatic sprinkler system is provided, the distance may be increased to one hundred fifty (150) feet.

(c) Types of Exits from Upper Floors. Exits from upper floors shall be in accordance with the following types: (1) Enclosed stairways, (2) horizontal exits, (3) outside stairways, (4) fire escapes, Class B.

(d) Construction and Arrangements of Exits. All stairs, ramps, or other ways of exit shall be of such width and so arranged as to avoid any obstruction to the rapid evacuation of the hotel in the event of fire. Fire escapes shall be constructed as specified in Chapter 103, Code of Iowa.

(e) Exits from public hallways or passageways in Class A hotels shall have illuminated signs with the word "EXIT" in letters six (6) inches high and three-fourths (3/4) of an inch wide. Where the exits are not visible from every point of the hallway or passageway, directional signs shall be provided to indicate the exit. Class B hotels shall have exits marked and if artificial illuminated signs are necessary, they shall be the same as required for Class A hotels.

(f) In Class B hotels, the second means of exit may be a Class C fire escape in accordance with Chapter 103, 103.7, Code of Iowa, providing the hotel does not exceed four (4) full stories in height.

(g) There shall be conspicuously displayed, in each sleeping room of Class A hotels, a legible floor plan showing the arrangement of exits and the direction of travel to reach them from the guest room.

32.3(3) Protection of Vertical Openings.

(a) All stairways, elevator shafts and other vertical openings shall be enclosed or protected with material equal to one-hour, fire-resistive construction. All required exit stairs, which are located so that it is necessary to pass through the lobby or other open space to reach the outside of the building, shall be continuously enclosed down to the lobby level.

(b) Unprotected vertical openings may be permitted in fire-resistive buildings with Class A finish, or in sprinklered buildings, not to exceed two (2) floors. This paragraph is to permit open stairways from the lobby to the mezzanine level or open stairs from the lobby to basement areas used for hotel purposes.

(c) Wire glass, not to exceed nine hundred (900) square inches in any single frame, may be used in stairway doors.

(d) All doors to stairway enclosures shall be equal to the fire-resistive construction required in 3.3 (a), and shall be a self-closing type.

32.3(4) Interior Finish. The exit ways, lobbies, public assembly meeting rooms and corridors shall have Class A interior finish. Class A finish shall mean the use of materials having a flame spread of less than twenty-five (25) as rated by the National Board of Underwriters Laboratories.

32.3(5) Basements. Basements used only for storage, heating equipment or other purposes than hotel occupancy, open to guests or to the public, shall have no unprotected openings to floors used for hotel purposes.

32.3(6) Special Hazard Areas. All rooms or areas of hazardous occupancy such as those containing boilers, furnaces, refrigerating machinery, transformers, or storage areas, shall be separated or cut off from other parts of the building by fire walls or fire doors.

32.3(7) Fire Alarm Systems and Evacuation.

(a) Each hotel, both Class A and Class B, shall have an alarm device of such character and so located as to arouse all the occupants of the building in case they are endangered by fire. In Class A hotels, an alarm sending station shall be provided at the hotel desk or other convenient control point under the continuous supervision of responsible employees. Additional alarm sending stations or automatic fire detection devices may be required when, in the opinion of the State Fire Marshal, it is necessary to install such devices because of the size or number of occupants in the hotel.

(b) The hotel management shall formulate a plan and instruct the employees on the proper procedure to immediately notify the public fire department in case of fire.

(c) Hotels having fifteen (15) or less guests, with each room having a telephone operated from a central switchboard, can waive the requirements of 3.7 (a).

32.3(8) Fire Extinguishers. Each hotel, both Class A and Class B, shall have fire extinguishers of a size and type and so located as to be effective in extinguishing a small fire. There shall be one (1) Class 2A fire extinguisher located in each corridor on each floor that is accessible to all occupants of the floor. In the case of large buildings, the number of fire extinguishers shall be determined by having one (1) Class 2A extinguisher for each twenty-five hundred (2500) square feet or less of floor area. In hotel kitchens, boiler rooms, paint storage rooms, electric vault rooms, or other areas where there are special hazards to protect, there shall be a minimum of one (1) Class 8B-C fire extinguisher. In the case of hotels having inside standpipe equipped with hose that will reach all areas of the floor, the requirement for Class 2A extinguishers may be waived.

Section 4. APARTMENT HOUSES

32.4(1) Any apartment building which complies with all of the

requirements of Section 3, of these regulations, may be considered as a hotel and the following paragraphs waived.

32.4(2) Each living unit shall have access to at least two (2) separate exits which are remote from each other and are reached by travel in different directions, except that a common path of travel may be permitted for the first twenty (20) feet; that is, a dead end corridor serving apartments may be permitted not to exceed twenty (20) feet in length.

32.4(3) Protection of Vertical Openings. The protection of vertical openings in apartment buildings shall meet the same requirements as set forth in 3.3 of these regulations.

32.4(4) Interior Finish. Interior finish in apartment buildings shall meet the requirements as set forth in 3.4 of these regulations.

32.4(5) Exit Lighting and Signs. All apartment buildings two (2) or more stories high, and having more than ten (10) apartment units, shall have corridor and exit signs. The illumination of corridor and exit signs shall be such that people of normal vision can move freely and the exit signs shall be legible at all times from any common corridor area.

32.4(6) Hazardous Occupancies. Hazardous occupancies in apartment buildings such as boiler rooms, utility rooms and general storage areas shall be protected by walls and fire doors constructed of materials providing at least a minimum of one-hour fire rating.

Section 5. DORMITORIES

32.5(1) Any dormitory meeting all of the requirements in Section 3, of these regulations, will be acceptable and the following provisions may be waived.

32.5(2) Exits.

(a) All dormitories shall have exits so arranged that from any sleeping room or open dormitory sleeping area there will be access to two (2) separate and distinct exits in different directions with no common path of travel unless the room or space is subject to occupancy of not more than ten (10) persons and has a door opening directly to the outside of the building at street or grade level.

(b) Exits shall be so arranged that it will not be necessary to travel more than one hundred (100) feet from any point to reach the nearest outside door, stair or fire exit.

(c) Exits from upper floors shall be sufficient to provide at least one (1) unit of exit width for every thirty (30) persons. All exit stairways and other vertical openings shall be enclosed or protected with material equal to one-hour, fire-resistive construction. Wire glass, not to exceed nine hundred (900) square inches in any single frame, may be used in the protection of vertical openings.

(d) Corridor and exit ways in dormitories shall have emergency lighting and illuminated exit signs with the word "EXIT" in letters six (6) inches high and three-fourths (3/4) of an inch wide. Where exit signs are not visible from every point of a hallway or passageway, directional signs shall be provided to indicate the exit.

32.5(3) Interior Finish. All interior finish of dormitories in the corridors, stairways and exit ways shall be Class A. Class A finish is also required in sleeping rooms providing accommodations for more than two (2) persons.

32.5(4) Fire Alarm Systems. A manual fire alarm system shall be required for every dormitory and in the case of college, university and school buildings, fire drills shall be regularly conducted and all residents informed as to the meaning of the fire alarm signals and the proper procedure to follow in case the fire alarm is sounded.

32.5(5) Fire Extinguishers. Extinguishers shall be required in dormitories in accordance with 318 of these regulations.

32.5(6) Construction and Arrangement. Dormitories shall be so arranged as to provide one hundred twenty-five (125) square feet for residents as it relates to the gross area of the building. All new construction shall be in accordance with the applicable provisions of the following paragraphs.

(a) Fire-resistive Construction.

1. Columns and piers shall have a fire-resistance rating of not less than three (3) hours.

2. Floors shall have a fire-resistance rating of two (2) hours.

3. Roofs shall have a fire-resistance rating of not less than one and one-half (1½) hours.

4. Beams, girders and trusses shall have a fire-resistance rating of two (2) hours.

5. Walls bearing exterior and interior portions shall have a fire-resistance rating of three (3) hours.

6. Partitions shall have a fire-resistance rating of two (2) hours.

(b) Noncombustible Construction. Noncombustible construction is limited to two (2) stories except when protected with an approved sprinkler system.

1. General--all structural including walls, partitions, columns, piers, beams, girders, joists, trusses, floors and roofs shall be of approved noncombustible rating not less than one-hour, fire-resistive.

2. Exterior walls shall have fire-resistive rating of two (2) hours.

(c) One-story buildings shall be constructed of not less than one-hour, fire-resistant construction throughout except that boiler rooms, heating rooms and combustible storage rooms shall be two-hour, fire-resistant construction. Protected wood frame construction, when roof and floor construction and their supports have one-hour, fire-resistance and stairways and other openings through floors are enclosed with partitions having one-hour, fire-resistance, shall be acceptable as one-story buildings for dormitories.

(d) Other types of construction for dormitories not permitted.

(e) The ratings noted in the above paragraphs are those specified in the National Fire Protection Association Codes.

Section 6. LODGING OR ROOMING HOUSES

32.6(1) Exits. There shall be two (2) means of exit from each floor remote from each other. These exits shall be accessible to

all residents on each floor in case of an emergency. One means of exit for lodging or rooming houses may be a fire escape, Class C, as described in Chapter 103, 103.7, Code of Iowa, providing however, there are not more than ten (10) adults on any floor and the building does not exceed four (4) stories in height.

32.6(2) Any sleeping room below the street floor shall have a direct access to the outside of the building.

32.6(3) The general requirements for fire safety as set out in Section 1, of these regulations, shall be applicable in lodging and rooming houses when, in the opinion of the State Fire Marshal, such specific safeguards are needed to insure the safety to life in the event of fire and whether specifically mentioned or not, lodging and rooming houses shall meet the intent of Section 1 of these regulations.

32.6(4) No frame dwelling, more than three (3) stories in height, shall be occupied or remodeled for use as a lodging or rooming house.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF REGULATIONS

JULY 1, 1962

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