

10 Most Common Violations on Elevator Inspections:

#1. Emergency Car Lighting and Communication

It is very common for the battery back-up-system which is used for elevator cab lighting and the emergency bell to go bad. This is very simple for your elevator maintenance contractor to check and it's a good idea to ask them to show you how you can easily check it too.

#2. Housekeeping in the Machine Room and the Pit

Elevator machine rooms are required to house only that equipment directly related to the elevator. It is all too easy to use the elevator machine room for a storage place. A simple check to make sure that there are no non-elevator related materials in the machine room. The pit is required to be kept clean; leaking oil, accumulation of water, and general litter are common violations in pits. Another common violation is a trip hazard such as sump pump wells without proper covers. A walkthrough of the machine room and a look at the pit with your elevator contractor is an easy way to prevent these common violations.

#3. Signs

A sign is required outside of each elevator landing that says "IN FIRE EMERGENCY, DO NOT USE ELEVATOR. USE EXIT" and should have the universal symbol(s) now required by the elevator code. Additionally, where fire service key switches are provided either in the lobby and/or in the car, instructions on operation are required. These signs should be available from your elevator maintenance company for a reasonable fee. Some locations are prone to vandalism. In such cases, vandal resistant signs are available.

#4. GFCI outlets and Lighting

All machine rooms, elevator pits, and car tops require lighting that is protected against breakage. Lighting switches are required to be accessible from the entrances of both pits and the machine room. Also, pits and machine rooms are required to have a convenience outlet that has a GFCI protected circuit breaker built in. This work is generally provided by a qualified electrician and access to the elevator shaft is provided by your elevator maintenance company.

#5. Emergency Phones

Emergency phones, where installed are required to function. Do a simple test by pushing the call button (or picking up the receiver) to verify that there is someone on the other end capable of taking appropriate action in case of an emergency. Phones may be required in existing cars that do not currently have them if there is a possibility that someone could be trapped in the car at anytime and have a need to get help. All newer elevators require a phone and it must be of the "hands free" ADA type.

#6. Hoistway Door Indications

The hoistway doors are required to have indications on the shaft side of the elevator indicating the floor that the doors are located on. (I.E. Ground, First, Second). This work can be done by your elevator maintenance company. Indications should be exactly the same as that on the car operating panel, and on the braille ADA tags at each landing.

#7. Monthly Fire Service Maintenance Log

Where an elevator is provided with fire service, a monthly test of the fire service function is required. A log of the finding of those tests is required to be in the elevator machine room. The monthly test can be performed by your elevator maintenance company, or they may be able to properly train an individual in the building to perform the tests and to be responsible to maintain the fire service log. Fire service is very important in emergency situations, lives of first responders and occupants are at stake. Testing by qualified persons should be a priority and logs should be completely filled out monthly.

#8. Door Restrictors

Elevators installed or substantially modernized after 1982 are required to have restrictions installed on the car doors to prevent opening when the elevator is not at a landing. This equipment is required to be installed by a qualified elevator mechanic. These devices can be difficult to maintain, however they can save lives and should never be disabled.

#9. Machine Room Door and Fire Extinguisher

The machine room door is generally required to be fire rated, self-locking, and if installed in recent years, also self-closing. The machine room is required to have an ABC type fire extinguisher located in the machine.

#10. Annual Tests Overdue

An annual Safety Test of the elevator and escalator safety functions is required to be witnessed by an independent certified QEI inspector. By definition, the inspector must be approved by the local code enforcement department, be currently QEI certified, and cannot have a financial interest in the equipment being tested. The tests are performed by your elevator maintenance company but must be witnessed and certified by the inspector. If the tests are overdue or if the tests were completed without having been witnessed by a certified independent QEI inspector, that is a code violation. It is very important to make sure that your elevator maintenance company does not complete tests without your inspector there.