

Fire and Life-Safety Group (FLS)
Exit Signs Policies and Procedures

Introduction

This document was prepared to list some but not all of the requirements based on the latest edition of adopted codes in 2011. Please ensure that all the requirements of applicable codes at the time of new installations or changes to existing installations are verified and implemented.

Code Requirements

Graphics:

Section 1011.5.1 of the 2009 edition of the *International Fire Code (IFC)* states that every exit sign and directional exit sign must have plainly legible letters not less than 6 inches high with the principal strokes of the letters not less than .75 inches wide. The word "EXIT" must have letters with a width no less than 2 inches except the letter "I", and the minimum spacing between letters shall not be less than .375 inches. Signs larger than that minimum established in this section must have letter widths, strokes and spacing in proportion to their height.

The word "EXIT" must be in high contrast with the background and must be clearly discernible when the exit sign illumination means is or is not energized. If an arrow is provided as part of the exit sign, the construction must be such that the arrow direction cannot be readily changed.

Illumination:

Section 1011.4 of the IFC states that internally illuminated exit signs need to be listed and labeled and need to be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and illuminated at all times.

Section 1011.5.2 of the IFC states that the face of an exit sign illuminated from an external source must have an intensity of not less 5 foot-candles.

Power Source:

Section 1011.5.3 of the IFC states that exit signs need to be illuminated at all times. To ensure continued illumination for a duration of not less than 90 minutes in case of primary power loss, the sign illumination means need to be connected to an emergency power system provided from storage batteries, unit equipment or an on-site generator.

Inspection and Maintenance:

Section 7.10.9.1 of the Life Safety Code (NFPA 101) States that exit signs must be visually inspected for operation of the illumination sources at intervals not exceeding 30 days.

Section 7.10.9.2 of NFPA 101 states that exit signs connected to or provided with a battery-operated emergency illumination source, where required in 7.10.4 needs to be tested and maintained in accordance with 7.9.3.