



Informal Interpretation Report Number 5621



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Section 1023 exception 2.4

Question:

Is it the intent of the code that elevators cannot open into exit vestibule? Comment: Section 1020.4 states that elevators cannot open into exit passageways. Section 1023 exception 2.4 states the vestibule area is only for egress but does not address elevators. What differentiates an exit passageway from a vestibule?

Answer

No. Please see the attached commentary.

Commentary:

There may be a bit of confusion here regarding the terms. A vestibule is a hall, chamber, space, or area between the outer door and the interior of a building. The code addresses vestibules primarily as an element of one of the alternatives for smokeproof enclosures. (FBCB 909.20) An exit passageway is an element of the exit system connecting exit enclosures or an exit enclosure with an exit discharge. (FBCB 1020) Exit passageways may be visualized as exit stairs laid on their side. They are used to overcome situations where travel distance limits can not be met. The opening restrictions for exit enclosures apply with exceptions for service areas fronting on exit passageways in covered mall buildings. (FBCB 402.4.6) Elevators typically open into elevator lobbies, not vestibules. If an elevator opens onto a fire rated corridor, a fire rated elevator lobby is required with exceptions. Elevator lobbies are required to separate the elevators from the corridor and have to have at least one means of egress not requiring travel through the elevator lobby. (SBCB 707.14.1) Regarding the intent of the code and an elevator opening into a vestibule, if the

vestible is part of the exit system, no, and the elevator may not open into the vestibule. Elevators may not open into an exit passageway except as permitted for covered mall buildings.

Notice:

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