

building without injury and without being trapped by the fire. Occupants must know the locations of all of the emergency exits. Alternate paths to safety are to be clearly marked, and not unobstructed or locked. If an emergency exit must be locked from the exterior for security reasons, it must be equipped with a "panic hardware" type latch so that it can be opened from the inside without having to unlock it first. Fire doors, which are magnetically locked, are to be released upon activation of the fire alarm system and/or fire pull station located by the exit door. If there are doors that could be mistaken for an exit door but don't lead to an exit, signage is to be posted on the door stating "not an exit". Records have indicated that in a fire emergency, occupants may make their way to stairwells leading to the roof only finding the doors to be locked, where they panicked and became trapped.

If there are any physically-impaired occupants including those with hearing or vision limitations,



wheelchair bound, etc., special procedures are required to be in place to alert and assist with their evacuation of the building. A fire alarm system, public address system, or other means of alerting occupants to evacuate the building must be in full working condition 24-7. When the fire alarm sounds or a fire or other emergency is otherwise announced, all occupants should immediately exit the building by proceeding to the nearest exit in an orderly fashion. If the nearest exit is blocked by fire or smoke, occupants should proceed to an alternate exit. A designated meeting

area(s) must be selected in advance away from the building so as to avoid hampering access by fire fighters.

Panic of occupants in the early stages of a fire evacuation can contribute to high casualty losses. Therefore, the fire code legislation outlines the various occupancies which are required by law to have a validated Fire Safety Plan (FSP). An FSP is a customized manual that outlines life safe-



ty procedures, as well as the availability and description of fire protection equipment in a building. Most importantly, it is an internal map to guide fire fighters in the event that a fire emer-


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