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Codes are Crucial

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Question & Answer, with Lori Greene

Q. Can you touch on the new push for "hands-free" entry? What are the code issues to look out for?

A. I hosted a webinar a couple of weeks ago about this topic, and the recording is on the webinars page of iDigHardware (<https://idighardware.com/webinars/>). The main things to watch out for are the requirements for automatic doors, the use of electric strikes or electric latch retraction fire exit hardware on fire doors, and some accessibility issues which are more related to mechanical hardware like special door pulls. There is a Decoded article on this topic that might be helpful: <https://idighardware.com/2020/06/decoded-touchless-solutions-for-healthy-environments/>.

Q. Does all electrified hardware have to be listed to UL 294?

A. The model codes require certain types of access control openings to have components listed to UL 294, but not all types of systems require the listing. For example, the International Building Code (IBC) requires the listing for components of delayed egress and controlled egress systems, and for systems with electromagnetic locks. However, the listing is not required by the IBC for the most common type of access control system, where the reader controls access, but the hardware allows free egress regardless of the status of the access control system. This article addresses the code requirements for UL 294: <https://idighardware.com/2015/11/decoded-code-requirements-for-ul-294-standard-for-access-control-system-units-december-2015/>

Q. With the poll for locking egress doors can you lock a door that unlocks when fire alarm goes off if you have a pull release?

A. Typically, this would not be code-compliant if the door was part of a means of egress – most doors are required to allow egress by operating the door normally (not with a pull release). The exception would be controlled egress applications, which are only allowed in certain types of health care units. Those do not require a pull release but there are other criteria that must be met. There is a video that covers delayed egress and controlled egress here: <http://idighardware.com/2016/08/controlled-egress-vs-delayed-egress-video/>.

Q. Can you provide company name and contact information for relabeling fire doors?

A. This varies by area, although UL and Intertek both have employees who will travel to project sites in just about any location. The best bet is to talk to your local Allegion code expert (press the orange button on [iDigHardware](http://idighardware.com)) and ask who they have had experience with locally.

Q. If you have a fire rated hollow metal frame with a t-strike prep, can you fill it with a metal filler plate and Bondo over it?

A. This modification is not specifically covered in the model codes or standards, so the answer would depend on the listings of the frame manufacturer. They can tell you whether the filler plate is acceptable. Bondo (or another filler material) can be used for some types of cosmetic repairs, but not to fill holes left when hardware is removed. There is a fire door caulk that is listed for filling holes in wood fire doors. The frame manufacturer may allow the use of Bondo to conceal the strike if it is considered a cosmetic repair. Remember that fire doors must latch, so filling the strike isn't the only issue.

Q. Does Allegion have people in most areas to help with dealing with a local AHJ?

A. I have trained at least each one of my Allegion coworkers for each state, and those contacts are listed on iDigHardware.com (orange button). If the local person needs my help, I'm always available to assist them.

Q. Please address indicator deadbolts on single stall bathrooms i.e. public/retail w/ a lock below.

A. There is a code change coming in the next edition of the International Building Code and the International Plumbing Code, which will require indicators on restrooms. There is a blog post about it here: <https://idighardware.com/2020/03/wwyd-single-user-restrooms/>. However, the change does not exempt the restroom door from unlatching with one releasing operation, so a separate indicator deadbolt over a latching lever set would not be code compliant. With very few exceptions, doors in a means of egress are required to unlatch with one releasing operation. One exception to that is entrance doors to dwelling units and sleeping units.

Q. Is it possible to get the printed version of the Allegion code summary in Spanish?

A. Unfortunately, this is not currently available. If there is enough demand for it, I can look into the possibility of having it translated. One question would be whether the information in the guide would be applicable to the Spanish-speaking countries where you would want to use it, or whether it is intended to be used in the US.

Q. Are the codes you are referencing specific to the US?

A. Yes and no. Some of the US model codes, like the International Building Code (IBC) and NFPA 101 – Life Safety Code are adopted in other countries. Or countries may have their own codes – such as Canada, which has codes that vary by province. Although my role is US-based, some of the information that I share is applicable to other countries.

Q. Do you know who the Canadian contacts are?

A. If you visit iDigHardware.com and press the orange button, it will take you to a list of contacts for each state as well as Canada.

Q. If there is no fire alarm system can we still install mag locks in older buildings?

A. The IBC and NFPA 101 do not require fire alarm systems in order for mag-locks to be installed, but the state or local code may mandate a fire alarm system.

Q. Can you cut in a fire rated strike in a fire rated opening after the original door installation?

A. NFPA 80 addresses two different types of field alterations for fire door assemblies – job-site preparations and field modifications. Round holes of limited sizes are allowed as job-site preparations. If the electric strike prep required a rectangular cutout on the frame face, technically that would be considered a field modification. Field modifications require pre-approval from the listing lab. The approval process is started by contacting the door or frame manufacturer and requesting permission to perform the field modification; the manufacturer will contact the lab. If the field modification is not approved, the door or frame may have to be relabeled in the field after the work is complete.

Q. Raceways in doors also present challenges in light of rated openings. Can raceways be prepped in the field?

A. Under some circumstances, yes. The door manufacturer should be consulted to see what is allowed by their listings. The raceway may be done (if approved) as a field modification. There is also a program where installers are certified to use the Perfect Raceway tool to drill the raceway without requiring the door to be relabeled.

Q. Do you have experience with "Emergency Seclusion Rooms" in public schools where a child is placed in them in during a behavioral health issue?

A. Each state has different regulations for these rooms, so there isn't one approach that will work everywhere. The US Department of Education compiled a list of the requirements for each state back in 2009, but I don't think there is an updated version available. You can find that list on this blog post: <https://idighardware.com/2014/04/wwyd-school-seclusion-room/>, which may at least help you figure out where to look for updates for your state.

Q. Do you have a link to all these codes?

A. I'm not sure which codes you need, but a couple of good resources are the ICC website: <https://www.iccsafe.org/>, and NFPA's website: <https://www.nfpa.org/>. For state requirements, you can go directly to the State Building Inspector or State Fire Marshal websites or try using UpCodes: <https://up.codes/>. The resources I mentioned during the webinar are:

- <https://idighardware.com/articles/>

- <https://idighardware.com/videos/>
- <https://idighardware.com/webinars/>
- <https://idighardware.com/guide/>