

High Rise Fire Emergency Planning Requirements

The Village of Lombard classifies a high rise as any building that has occupied floors 75 feet or higher above Fire Department access. High rise buildings, because of their height and the large number of people they may contain, are required to follow a number of fire safety regulations relating to preparation and training of people within the building.

These requirements are contained in Chapter 4 of the 2009 Lombard Fire Code.

Fire Safety Director

Each high rise building is required to have a Fire Safety Director, and Alternate, appointed by the building owner. The Fire Safety Director is responsible to oversee the preparedness and initial response of a building's fire and life safety systems and building occupants to a fire alarm.

The Fire Safety Director's responsibility is to prepare for and manage possible fire emergencies until the Fire Department arrives to assume control of the incident. The primary action of the Fire Safety Director during a fire emergency is to report to the building emergency control center (panel) to direct the building's emergency response. In addition, the Fire Safety Director meets the responding fire company to advise them on the status of the alarm and the building's fire protection systems.



Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan

Each high rise building in Lombard is required to have a fire safety and evacuation plan that details actions by building occupants and staff during a fire emergency. This document should be developed in accordance with Section 404 of the 2009 Lombard Fire Code. The intent is to describe the actions to be taken by occupants and staff of a building in the event of a fire emergency. The plan itself need only be submitted to the fire code official when requested.

Emergency Evacuation Drills

The Lombard Fire Code requires that all high rise buildings conduct emergency evacuation drills on an annual basis, in accordance with Section 405.

Floor Wardens

Additional members of the high rise building response team are the assigned floor wardens. Floor wardens are volunteers recruited from among the building tenants. Their role is to help with the evacuation of building occupants. There is an exception to the requirement for floor wardens. Residential condominiums and apartments not employing staff are not required to have floor wardens, although they are strongly encouraged.

Floor wardens should participate in training on a regular basis, at least once a year. They should also be involved in your building's emergency evacuation drills. Training assistance, in the form of lesson plans, handouts, and videos, is available on the Lombard Fire Department's website at www.villageoflombard.org.

Controlled Evacuation

Evacuation of a high rise building during a fire emergency can be a major undertaking. For the majority of high rise buildings, the fire alarm only rings on those floors in the direct vicinity of the fire. This allows those individuals who are at most direct risk to exit the area as quickly as possible. This is called a controlled evacuation.

The reasons behind a controlled evacuation are:

- Evacuating all floors at once may create serious back-ups in the stairwells. This may not only impede prompt exiting from the building, but also slow the access of firefighters to the fire.
- Stairwell pressurization could be lost if all doors were open at the same time.
- There is no immediate need to evacuate more people than are directly threatened.

The following controlled evacuation procedures are recommended for most buildings:

- The alarm must sound on a minimum of the fire floor and the floor above and below. You may add floors to this alarm sequence at your discretion, but you may not go below the minimum.
- Standard evacuation instructions are to exit the floor using the stairwells, go down three (3) floors, and re-enter the building. Wait for further instructions. Often the easiest location to wait is the elevator lobby.
- A very important point to be made with these instructions is that you should **never enter onto a floor where the alarm is sounding**. If it is, continue down the stairs to a non-alarm location.
- The bottom five floors evacuate to the outside of the building when they hear the alarm and go to the designated outside meeting place.

For More Information Contact:

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