



Exit and Egress Facilities in Multi-Unit Residential, Office, Mercantile & Industrial Buildings

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Purpose:

- To inform owners, strata councils, and management companies that any changes or alterations to exit and egress facilities in buildings must comply with the City's requirements including the BC Building Code and the BC Fire Code.

Background:

- The Building Approvals Department, RCMP, and Richmond Fire-Rescue have noticed an ever-increasing number of changes for exit/egress facilities and door hardware to provide a higher level of security.
- To ensure fire and life safety issues are not jeopardized, a guide has been developed to assist owners, strata councils and management companies of multi-unit residential, office, mercantile, and industrial buildings.

Implementation:

Requirements for All Multi-Unit Residential, Office, Mercantile & Industrial Buildings

- Doors which are required exits or located in an access to an exit, must allow unrestricted egress and exiting from the building. These doors may be locked to exclude entry but must allow egress for exiting. The latching, locking and other fastening devices must be readily openable from the inside (direction of exit travel) without requiring keys, special devices or specialized knowledge of the door's opening mechanism.
- Magnetic locking devices are permitted if installed in conformance with the current BC Building Code "Door Releasing Hardware".
- Doors in fire separations must have a self-closing device and a positive latching system to hold the door in a closed position after each use. These fire-rated doors and assemblies must not be altered or cut as the original factory certification may be voided.
- Plans, building permits, and possibly electrical permits, may be required if changes to exit/egress door assemblies and locking hardware are undertaken.

Additional Requirements for High Buildings (Over 6 Storeys in Height)

- The exit stair shaft must allow an occupant to travel not more than 2 storeys up or down to reach an unlocked door for "Emergency Access to Floor Areas".
- Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions concerning this bulletin, please contact the Supervisor, Building Inspections at 604-276-4354.