

SECTION 35: ANNEX R
35.1.1 EMERGENCY RESPONSE - ELEVATOR INCIDENT

Purpose:

The purpose of this guideline is to establish a uniform procedure for affecting a safe rescue from a disabled elevator. The function of the members of the Pemberton Township Fire Department is limited to safe removal of trapped occupants.

General Information:

- 1) Opening any hoist way door on a functioning elevator will stop the elevator car in whatever position it is currently in, including between floors. The power to car however will remain on and once the hoist way door is shut the elevator should function normally.
- 2) Elevators that go into "Fire Service" generally return to the first floor, unless that is where the alarm originated, upon arrival the doors will open and stay open. The only way to operate the elevator is with the fire service key.
- 3) Elevator shafts may have detection devices (heat and/or smoke) installed based on various codes and standards. Elevator shafts equipped with sprinkler systems will have both a smoke and heat detector installed in the shaft. If the smoke detector activates, the car will go into fire service and return to the first floor. If the heat detector activates, the motor control will automatically shut down and the car will stop where ever it is, including between floors.
- 4) If there is a smoke hatch in the elevator shaft, it may open via the smoke detector, heat detector or both. As there are a variety of releasing mechanisms for these hatches, the building manager must ensure the hatch is properly reset.

Incidents/Emergencies:

An elevator **incident** would include a "stuck" elevator with trapped occupants who are not in immediate danger, have suffered no evidence of injury and are not experiencing any problems due to an existing medical condition (i.e., cardiac related, diabetes, etc).

An elevator **emergency** would include, a fire endangering occupants in a "stuck" elevator, an injured person in a "stuck" elevator and an occupant experiencing a panic attack in a "stuck" elevator.

Procedure:

Upon arrival the officer in charge shall locate the elevator car and determine if the situation is an elevator incident or an elevator emergency.

If an emergency bell is ringing, instruct the occupant to silence the bell by deactivating the emergency stop button. The occupant may have to pull the button from the on position.

It is essential to calmly explain to the occupant(s) what the situation is and what actions will be taken to affect a rescue. It will probably be necessary to continue this dialogue throughout the rescue attempt or until a firefighter accesses the passenger compartment.

STUCK ELEVATOR – NO IMMEDIATE RESCUE REQUIRED –

- 1) Ensure the elevator is not in fire service mood. If so, attempt to operate the elevator with the fire service key.
- 2) Instruct the occupant(s) to push the first floor (lobby) button.
- 3) Press the call button in the lobby. The Officer in Charge may elect to try other floors as well.
- 4) Instruct the occupants to verify that the inside door is fully closed by pressing the close door button and/or pushing the door toward the closed position.
- 5) Ensure the hoist way door on all floors are fully closed. This will require a firefighter to go to each floor and push each hoist way door toward the closed position.
- 6) Locate the elevator motor control room and secure breaker (power) for a minimum of 30 seconds then reset.

If these methods fail to produce results, consider calling for an elevator mechanic. Officer in Charge may opt to remove occupants if arrival time of mechanic is deemed too long.

ELEVATOR INCIDENT – RESCUE REQUIRED –

- 1) Ensure elevator door key and fire service keys are available.
- 2) If the elevator car is stuck at a floor, not between floors, open the hoist way door and attempt to open the elevator car door. Generally speaking, there is push bar toward the upper left hand side of the elevator car door. **DO NOT FORCE THE DOOR UNLESS AN EXTREME EMERGENCY EXISTS.**
- 3) If this method fails or the elevator car is stopped between floors, access top of elevator car by opening the nearest hoist way door. The hoist way door must be propped to remain open. This must be done at the floor above the stuck car. Note - Use care as car may be quite a distance from the hoist way door opening. It may be necessary to access the top of the car via a folding ladder.
- 4) Access the top of the elevator car, locate the maintenance controls and place the switch in the maintenance mood. Open the emergency access door located on the roof of the car. This will require tools as the doors are secured via screws or bolts.

- 5) Use care when accessing the elevator roof. Attempt to stay off of the sheet metal roof, step on support members. No more than two firefighters shall access the elevator car roof.
- 6) Once access is gained, carefully remove ceiling panels. Advise the occupants that the panels are going to be removed and have them go to a corner near the front of the car and protect their heads.
- 7) Move a second folding ladder into the car and make entry. Assist each occupant out of the elevator, onto the roof and out the hoist way door.
- 8) Ensure EMS checks all occupants.
- 9) Secure the roof access panel and ensure hoist way doors are secured.

Miscellaneous:

- 1) Although new elevator shafts are required to have a protected (crush) zone at the bottom of the elevator pit, never allow firefighters to enter the pit without securing the power to elevator and the elevator car has been shored.
- 2) An elevator shall never be jacked or moved in an upward position. The only exception to this is when the elevator car has entrapped a victim.

Forcible entry on an elevator car or hoist way doors is a last resort. If required, the Officer in Charge will determine method, i.e., air bags, Hurst tool, to perform this operation.