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Periodic Inspections and Tests of Residential Type Elevators Serving Commercial Buildings

Date: 2-26-2015, Revision to memo dated 7-17-2013

Subject of Revision:

Updated with latest codes and additional information.

Background:

From September 1, 1988 to June 30, 2002 the Wisconsin administrative code allowed private residence elevators (also referred to as Part V or Part 5 elevators) to be installed in some commercial buildings. The most common application for these elevators was in places of worship where existing foundations and steep pitched roofs would make installation of a full-size passenger elevator impossible without significant structural changes. There are approximately 150 of this type of installation statewide.

During this time, the limited use / limited application (LULA) commercial elevator was being developed to be slightly larger than a residential elevator but with more features of a commercial elevator. By 2002 the LULA elevator code included allowances for use in similar situations where pit depth and reduced overhead clearance were required, eliminating the need to use residential elevators in almost all of those situations.

Current Limitations:

Since July 1, 2002, residential elevators can be installed within commercial buildings only under these conditions:

- 1). Where used for demonstration purposes without providing an accessible route, with permission of the department such as by petition for variance.
- 2). In an existing building where installation of a larger elevator, even a LULA elevator would be technically infeasible, with permission of the department such as by petition for variance.
- 3). Where entirely within a *single dwelling unit* such as a condominium or apartment unit within the commercial building.
- 4). Where communicating between a *single dwelling unit* such as a condominium or apartment unit and a common area within the commercial building. Access to the elevator must be limited to only the occupants of the single dwelling unit.

Requirements for Periodic Inspections:

Residential type elevators installed to serve commercial buildings under the September 1, 1988 through June 30, 2002 codes, and later according to 1). and 2). above, are commercial

installations therefore are subject to the periodic inspection requirements of SPS 318 and the adopted ASME A17.1 code. SPS 318 and ASME A17.1 do not exempt these elevators from annual inspections where serving commercial buildings.

Residential type elevators installed in commercial buildings to serve single dwellings only according to 3). and 4). above are exempt from periodic inspection requirements according to stat. 101.983(2)(e).

Requirements for Periodic Tests:

Periodic testing for these elevators differs from inspections. Residential type elevators installed to serve commercial buildings are subject to periodic testing only under these conditions:

A). Per SPS 318.1708(2)(j) 2. This is a department rule in addition to the requirements in ASME A17.1 section 8.6.7.3.1: Where an elevator of the private residence type or Part V type serves a commercial building and is equipped with a safety device that is subject to testing, the 5-year safety test in ASME A17.1, 8.6.4.20.1 – and where applicable the governor test in ASME A17.1, 8.6.4.20.2 – shall be performed. The test results shall be submitted to the department on approved forms.

B). Where periodic tests are required as part of permission described in 1). or 2). above.

Although tests other than the 5-year safety and governor tests are not required, an inspector has the authority to place a conveyance out of service where a condition poses an imminent threat to life or limb according to SPS 318.1011(8)(c) 2. If conditions of excessive wear, corrosion or damage are present, the inspector may request tests be performed.

Residential type elevators installed in commercial buildings to serve single dwellings only according to 3). and 4). above are exempt from periodic test requirements according to ASME A17.1, 8.6.7.3.1, which recommends periodic testing but does not require it.