



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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CONNECTICUT BUILDING CODE

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You want to know if the current Connecticut state building code requires (1) elevators in multi-floor residential buildings and (2) stand-by power (generators) in housing for the elderly or disabled. You also want to know if any bills addressing these issues above have been proposed recently.

With two exceptions, the current Connecticut State Building Code requires any building that has five or more stories to have an elevator if it was issued a building permit after December 31, 2005. Buildings equipped throughout with automatic fire sprinklers do not have to have elevators on floors that have (1) a horizontal exit and are located at or above the level of exit discharge or (2) a ramp (Connecticut State Building Code § 1007.2.1). The code defines a “horizontal exit” as an exit path (1) from one building to an area on approximately the same level in another building or (2) through or around a wall or partition to an area on approximately the same level in the same building, which provides safety from fire and smoke from the area affected by fire. It defines the “level of exit discharge” as the horizontal plane located at the point where an exit ends and an exit discharge begins. (Any building for which a building permit was issued before December 31, 2005 is subject to the code in effect when the permit was issued.)

The current building code contains no specific provisions addressing stand-by power in housing for the disabled or the elderly. All buildings required to have elevators must have stand-by power to operate them

during a power failure, irrespective of their classification. Also, all high-rise buildings must have stand-by power to illuminate exit signs and elevator cars, and activate emergency voice and alarm communication systems, automatic fire detection systems, and fire alarm systems if the buildings have an occupied floor located more than 75 feet above the lowest level where fire department vehicles have access (Connecticut State Building Code § 403.10 & 403.11).

While the building code does not specifically address the stand-by power issue in housing for the elderly and disabled, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), which provides financing for elderly housing, requires any CHFA-financed housing that consists of or exceeds four dwelling units or two and one-half stories to have an emergency generator. Also, CHFA requires any building that must have a fire pump for fire protection to have an emergency generator, unless it has a diesel fire pump (CHFA *Standards of Design and Construction*, 2011, p. 137). Other funding entities may have similar requirements.

We searched proposed state legislation for the past 20 years and found no bills addressing the above issues.

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