



July 2005
Volume 3, Issue 4

*A Newsletter for Healthcare Executives and Facility Managers on Issues
Related to Accreditation and Regulatory Compliance*



They have also been looking at how well the organizations have been maintaining their fire safety equipment . . .

JCAHO LIFE SAFETY CODE SPECIALIST SURVEYORS -- WHAT SPECIFIC AREAS HAVE THEY BEEN SURVEYING?

For hospitals of 200 beds or more, the LSC Specialist surveyors have been surveying organizations for compliance with the following JCAHO Environment of Care standards:

- EC.5.20 (Life Safety Code/SOCTM)
- EC.5.50 (Fire Safety Equipment/Systems)
- EC.5.50 (Interim Life Safety Measures)
- EC.7.40 (Emergency Power Systems)
- EC.7.50 (Medical Gas and Vacuum Systems)

The surveyors have been reviewing the organization's Statement of Conditions™ (SOCTM) to ensure that it is current and that the organization is making sufficient progress toward the corrective actions described in the previously approved SOCTM. They have also been looking at how well the organizations have been maintaining their fire safety equipment and building's features of fire protection per the NFPA 10, 25, 72, 80, 90A, 101 and 1962. Records for inspection and testing of fire alarm, detection and suppression systems and components are being looked at, including: initiating devices, supervisory signal devices, valve tamper switches, water flow devices, duct detectors, electromechanical release devices, heat detectors, manual fire alarm boxes, smoke detectors, occupant alarm notification devices, off-premises emergency services notification transmission equipment, water-based automatic fire extinguishing systems fire pumps (if required), fire department connections, kitchen automatic fire extinguishing systems, portable fire extinguishers, standpipe occupant hoses, fire and smoke dampers, etc.

Each organization is also being asked to show a copy of their policy and criteria for using interim life safety measures (ILSM). Such criteria is to be developed for evaluating various Life Safety Code® deficiencies and any construction hazards to determine when and to what extent one or more of the ILSM should be applied. Implementation of the ILSM helps mitigate potential or actual hazards that exist because of construction or

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renovation activity within the hospital.

ILSM consist of actions to ensure: free and unobstructed exits; daily inspections of construction area exiting; free and unobstructed access to emergency services for fire and police; fire alarm, detection and suppression systems are in good working order; the notification of municipal fire department and that a fire watch is provided whenever a fire alarm or automatic sprinkler system is out of service for more than four hours in a 24-hour period in an occupied building; temporary construction partitions are smoke tight and built of non-combustible materials; providing additional fire-fighting equipment and training staff in its use; prohibiting smoking throughout the hospital's buildings and in or near construction areas; developing and enforcing storage, housekeeping, and debris removal practices; conducting a minimum of two fire drills per shift per quarter and, if necessary, in areas affected by construction or significant LSC deficiencies; increasing surveillance of buildings, grounds, and equipment; and training staff and conducting hospital-wide safety education to promote awareness of fire-safety building deficiencies, construction hazards, and ILSM.



Emergency generators and power systems are being evaluated for proper maintenance, inspection and testing procedures. Both emergency generators and automatic transfer switches should be tested no less than 12 times annually. The Joint Commission allows testing intervals of not less than 20 days and not more than 40 days apart for the year. It is important to run the generators for at least 30 continuous minutes under dynamic load that is 30% or more of the generators nameplate rating. If the 30% load cannot be met, there are alternate ways to achieve or show compliance by assessing the prime mover's exhaust gas temperature against a minimum temperature recommended by the generator's manufacturer, or an annual load-bank test may be performed.

Another area that is being assessed by the Life Safety Code Specialist surveyors is the piped medical gas and vacuum systems to determine how well the hospital maintains, inspects and tests the various critical components such as: master signal panels; area alarms; automatic pressure switches; shutoff valves; flexible connectors; and, outlets. The surveyors have been asking for testing policies and procedures that are utilized and implemented when these systems are installed, modified, or repaired, including cross-connection testing, piping purity testing, and pressure testing. They are also making observations during their Life Safety Code® building tour to ensure that main supply valves and area shut-off valves for the medical gas and vacuum systems are maintained to be readily accessible and clearly labeled.

Before the start of the building tour, the LSC Specialist surveyor has been initially meeting with appropriate hospital staff to become oriented to and determine the building layout and arrangement of smoke compartments and suites; age of the building(s); areas with automatic sprinklers; and areas under construction or renovation. They also want to review any LSC traditional equivalencies or Fire Safety Evaluation System (FSES) equivalencies that have been granted by the Joint Commission. As mentioned earlier, they want to discuss the organization's process for Interim Life Safety Measures (ILSM) and whether or not the organization is using the optional SOC Building Maintenance program (BMP) and to what extent.

During the building tour, the LSC Specialist surveyor has been assessing the following areas for compliance with the Life Safety Code®: Hazardous areas such as boiler and fuel fired heater rooms, central/bulk laundries, paint and repair shops, soiled linen rooms, trash collection rooms, and rooms larger than 50 square feet used for the storage of combustible materials. They have also been assessing required fire separations; required smoke separations; continuity of exits from the highest level serving the building to the outside of the building; kitchen grease producing devices; bottom of laundry and trash chutes; main fire alarm panel; automatic sprinkler fire pump (if required); generator/power equipment; and med gas and vacuum system components. (Continued on Page 3)



JCAHO Life Safety Code Specialist Surveyors -- What Specific Areas Have They Been Surveying? (Continued from page 2)

The addition of the new Life Safety Code Specialist surveyor has hopefully enhanced the survey process resulting in a more comprehensive Life Safety Code® and Environment of Care survey and a safer environment for all.

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JCAHO EC ADVISORY BULLETIN: ECAB #05-04

What a difference a “word” makes. The Joint Commission has deleted the word “and” from the Environment of Care standard EC.8.10, Element of Performance #12.

In the 2005 Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals (CAMH), Standard EC.8.10 states, “The organization establishes and maintains an appropriate environment.” EP #12 states, “Emergency access provision is provided to all locked and occupied spaces.” Effective July 1, 2005, the Joint Commission will be deleting the word “and” in element of performance (EP) #12.

JCAHO claims that the intent of this EP is to provide emergency access to all locked spaces that are occupied and not locked spaces that are not [typically] occupied, (for example, storage rooms or mechanical rooms or similar spaces). The revised EP #12 will read, “Emergency access provision is provided to all locked, occupied spaces.” This certainly makes more sense and what a difference!

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ELECTRONIC BBI/PFI

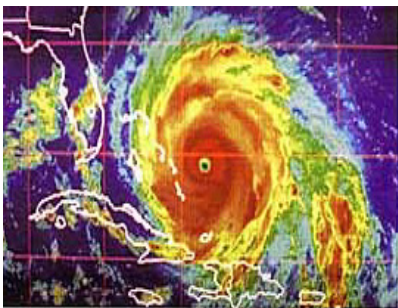
Sometime in August of 2005 it is anticipated that the Joint Commission will be making available an electronic “eBBI/ePFI” tool as part of its on-line electronic application (E-app) for hospitals that are applying for initial or re-accreditation. This newly expanded “eBBI” will be asking for the usual information contained in the Statement of Conditions Part 2: Basic Building Information, as well as additional information such as: What is the age of the hospital building(s) and any additions? What is the percentage of sprinkler protection in the building(s)? Are there any areas under construction or undergoing renovation? The “ePFI” portion will mainly be a reflection of the existing SOC Part 4: Plan For Improvement.

You may access the on-line E-app, Periodic Performance Review (PPR), or eBBI/ePFI via the Joint Commission’s secured password-protected Extranet site called “Jayco.” You are encouraged to start working with this new eBBI/ePFI tool when it is available and begin gathering the additional information requested. It is presently proposed that this will be a mandatory requirement effective January 1, 2007. That appears to be a fair and reasonable timeframe to become familiar with this new tool and process.

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Look for regulatory authorities to review and incorporate some of its changes in their own regulations.



NFPA 110-2005 CHANGES AFFECT EMERGENCY POWER SYSTEMS

NFPA 110, Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems, has changed in 2005. Look for regulatory authorities to review and incorporate some of its changes in their own regulations. Some of the changes include:

- Clearances for generator maintenance
- Rules for Level 1 Emergency Power Supply Systems (EPSS's) located in normal power areas
- Lead-acid vented (flooded) vs. valve-regulated lead-acid (VRLA) batteries
- Seismic requirements modified and clarification of Class X
- Medium voltage generator sets with unit transformers
- Gas supplies to gas-fueled generator sets
- Exhaust system condensate drains
- Lists what can be stored in generator rooms
- EPS lightning protection
- Battery charger wiring connections
- EPSS installation acceptance tests
- Installation acceptance criteria for multiple generators
- Record-keeping requirements
- Fuel oil testing and maintenance, oil contamination
- Maintenance and testing requirements for transfer switches, paralleling switchgear, storage batteries, spark-ignited generator sets
- Monthly testing of generator sets that cannot be loaded above 30% of their ratings
- EPSS special 36 month load test

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Visit www.NFPA.org to obtain a copy of NFPA 110-2005*

NFPA Disclaimer: Although the writer is Chairman of the NFPA Technical Committee on Emergency Power Supplies, which is responsible for NFPA 110 and 111, the views and opinions expressed in this article are purely those of the author and shall not be considered the official position of NFPA or any of its Technical Committees and shall not be considered to be, nor be relied upon as, a Formal Interpretation. Refer to the entire text of the referenced document.

PUBLICATIONS AND SEMINARS

Look for these articles in publication

“New surveyor in town - What are JCAHO’s Life Safety Code Specialists looking for?,” *Health Facilities Management* magazine, May 2005

“Analyze This! Applying Six Sigma to FM,” *Health Facilities Management* magazine, June 2005

“Pumps: Maintaining Building’s ‘Hearts’,” *Maintenance Solutions* magazine, July 2005

“Detailed Infection Control Work Plan for Your Healthcare Construction Project,” *Inside ASHE*, July-August 2005

Seminars in 2005

- Aug. 10 Texas Association of Healthcare Facilities Management, Dallas
“Life Safety Compliance for Healthcare”
- Oct. 3 New England Healthcare Engineers Society, Burlington, VT
“Managing Hospital Electrical Shutdowns”
- Oct. 5 New England Healthcare Engineers Society, Burlington, VT
“EC/JCAHO 2005/2006 Update”
- Oct. 31 Midwest Healthcare Engineering Conference, Indianapolis
“Managing Hospital Emergency Power Systems”
- Nov. 2 Midwest Healthcare Engineering Conference, Indianapolis
“Overcoming Infection Control Challenges in Construction”
- Nov. 3 State of Illinois Chief Engineers Conference, Champaign, IL
“Facility Electrical Maintenance”
- Nov. 10 Texas Association of Healthcare Facilities Management, Houston
“NFPA 99 Compliance”
- Nov. 17 Colorado Association of Hospital Engineers & Directors, Denver
“Role of the JCAHO Life Safety Specialist Surveyors and Other EOC Updates for 2005/2006”

Please let us know if you would like to receive the
Compliance News via email.



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