

Date: 9/16/2025

From: Mike McAlister, Industrial Safety Division Chief

To: All elevator owners, contractors, mechanics, and inspectors

Cc: Industrial Safety Division, Kansas Department of Labor
Division of Facilities and Property Management, Kansas Department of Administration
Local 12, International Union of Elevator Constructors

RE: Elevators — Safety restrictions on access to Elevator Pits and Hoistways

Synopsis: Only licensed elevator personnel, or those being supervised by licensed elevator personnel, may be permitted access to elevator pits and hoistways.

Cited herein: K.S.A. 44-1805

Elevator pits, hoistways, and the top of elevator cars are inherently dangerous and confined spaces that may expose individuals, especially those who are not trained and qualified in elevator operations, to hazards such as falling, shearing, crushing, and electrical shock.

The State of Kansas follows the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (“ASME”) A17.1 – Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators which is generally used throughout the United States. This code makes clear that elevator pits and hoistways should only be accessible to licensed elevator personnel (ASME A17.1-2022 Section 2.2.4.4) and that top-of-car inspection operation shall be used only by elevator personnel (ASME A17.1-2022 Section 2.26.1.4.1(e) and 2.26.1.4.2). Additionally, keys to pit access and hoistway access are classified as Security Group 1 and are restricted to use by licensed elevator personnel (ASME A17.1-2022 Section 8.1.2.)

Elevator owners, contractors, and maintenance personnel are reminded that only trained elevator personnel licensed by the Kansas State Fire Marshal may access elevator pits and hoistways. Any other personnel working in an elevator pit or hoistway must be accompanied by and directly supervised by a licensee to ensure their safety. All doors and accessways to elevator pits and hoistways must be locked unless licensed elevator personnel are present.

Please note that there are extreme situations where emergency personnel who have been properly trained to handle elevator emergencies may be forced to enter pits and hoistways. However, this should only be done as a last resort when there is an immediate threat to life safety, the situation requires timely extraction of a victim or extinguishment of a fire, qualified elevator personnel are not available or the length of their response time would endanger life safety, and the incident commander determines that entry is necessary based on the threat and conditions. Otherwise, emergency personnel should not access pits, hoistways, or circumvent any elevator safety devices. (See ASME A17.4- 2015 for more information.)

Elevator safety violations, including improperly secured pits or hoistways or access to pits and hoistways by unauthorized personnel, should be immediately reported to the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office.

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