

## INFORMATION MEMORANDUM 83-X-55

TO: All Directors, Supervisors and Compliance Officers

FROM: William M. Lybrand, Director of OSH

SUBJECT: Number of Exits Required in Factory-Industrial, Mercantile and Storage Occupancies

DATE: April 21, 1983

### PURPOSE

This memorandum clarifies the requirements for the number of exits required in:

- a. Factory-Industrial occupancy – includes buildings or structures, or any portions thereof, for assembling, disassembly, repairing, fabricating, finishing, manufacturing, packaging or processing operations that do not involve highly combustible materials or materials that have inherent characteristics that constitute a high fire hazard. Examples in this occupancy group are manufacturing plants, factories, mills, assembly plants, processing plants and sawmills.
- b. Mercantile occupancy – includes stores, markets, and other rooms, buildings or structures for the display and sale of merchandise. Examples in this occupancy group are supermarkets, department stores, shopping centers, drugstores, variety stores, antique shops and auction rooms.
- c. Storage occupancy – includes buildings or structures, or any portions thereof, used for storage that is not classified as hazardous occupancy or for the purpose of sheltering animals. Examples of this occupancy are aircraft hangers, parking garages, warehouses, storage buildings and freight depots.

### BACKGROUND

In the past, the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) has utilized the Life Safety Code, NFPA 101, as a guide. This is contrary to what has been mandated for other State regulatory agencies and local building code. In the future, the Standard Building Code will be utilized by the Division of OSH as a guide for the arrangements and number of exits.

### GUIDELINES Arrangement and Number of Exits.

- a. Arrangement for factory-industrial, mercantile, and storage occupancies:\
  1. Exits shall be so located that the distance from the most remote point in the floor area, room or space served by them to the nearest exit, measured along the line of travel, shall not be more than 150 feet for unsprinklered

areas, rooms or spaces and 200 feet for sprinklered areas, rooms and spaces. Where floor areas are sub-divided into small spaces or rooms, and the egress travel in the room or space does not exceed fifty (50) feet, the distance of travel to an exit shall be measured from the corridor entrance to such rooms or spaces.

2. Where more than one (1) exit is required, at least two (2) shall be located as remote from each other as practicable and be so arranged to provide direct access in separate directions from any point in the area served and to minimize the possibility that both may be blocked by any one fire or emergency condition.
- b. Minimum number of exits for factory-industrial, mercantile, and storage occupancies:
1. There shall be not less than two (2) approved independent exits accessible to each area, serving every story or level, except as follows:
    - a. The minimum number of exits, except where more are necessary to comply with travel distances or except as modified in (b) below, for factor-industrial, mercantile, or storage occupancies base on occupant load shall be as follows:

<u>Minimum number of exits</u>	<u>occupancy load/story or level</u>
2	1-500
3	501-1000
4	more than 1000

- b. In the following cases there may be access to one (1) exit provided that such exit is enclosed by construction affording not less than one (1) hour fire-resistance:
  - i. In mercantile occupancies at street floor level having floor area less than two thousand two hundred fifty (2250) square feet and a distance of travel to an exit not exceeding fifty (50) feet.
  - ii. In storage occupancies, one (1) story only, and having a floor area less than two thousand five hundred (2500) square feet with a distance of travel fifty (50) feet or less. (Also see Program Directive) #82-1910.37-2.)

### ACTION

When making safety and health inspections of factory-industrial, mercantile, or storage occupancies, the compliance officer shall adhere to the requirements for exits as set forth under the “Arrangement and Number of Exits” section of this memorandum. Any variations from these requirements must be approved by the Assistant Director/OSH Compliance.

### EFFECTIVE DATE

This memorandum is effective upon receipt and will remain in effect until cancelled or superceded.