



Planning, Property and Development Department · Development & Inspections Division  
Unit 83 – 30 Fort Street (mezzanine level) · Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4X7

## **Policy on Exit Sign Installations in Existing Buildings\***

The adoption of the 2010 National Building Code of Canada by the Province of Manitoba on April 1, 2011 brings significant changes to exit sign requirements. Exit signs are no longer permitted to be red with letters reading "EXIT" (hereinafter called "red EXIT signs") but are now required to have the green "running man" pictogram or the green directional arrow as noted in MBC Sentence 3.4.5.1.(2) and the associated Appendix A reference (hereinafter called "green pictogram signs"). This is the most significant change to the appearance of exit signs in the history of building codes in Manitoba.

Since the appearance of the former and the new vary so greatly from each other, the City of Winnipeg has adopted the following policy for the installation of new exit signs in existing buildings.\* Generally speaking, mixing and matching of red EXIT signs and green pictogram signs in the same floor area will not be permitted.

---

### **Clarifications for existing building\* scenarios:**

- 1. Existing buildings that contains existing red EXIT signs:**
  - a. New red EXIT signs are permitted to be installed in existing buildings to match existing remaining signs. Note that if/when matching red EXIT signs are no longer available a complete exit sign retrofit for the floor area will be required.
- 2. Additions to existing buildings:**
  - a. Building additions that are less than 15% of the existing building area are permitted to retain existing red EXIT signs in the existing portion and to install new red EXIT signs in the addition. However, if green pictogram signs are installed in the addition, they must be installed throughout the existing building as well.
  - b. Building additions that are 15% or greater than the existing building must fully comply with current code requirements and must have green pictogram signs installed throughout the existing building and the addition.
- 3. In existing multi-storey buildings:**
  - a. Only one type of exit sign is permitted in a floor area.
  - b. As per Item 1 above, red EXIT signs to match existing are permitted to be installed where tenant spaces are being renovated or altered but if green pictogram signs are

being installed in a single tenant space, the remainder of the exit signs on that storey must be retrofitted to or replaced with green pictogram signs (see attached Diagram A).

- c. Where green pictogram signs are installed on less than  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the storeys in an existing multi-storey building, existing red EXIT signs are permitted to remain on the other storeys (see attached Diagram B).
- d. Where green pictogram signs are installed on  $\frac{2}{3}$  or more storeys in an existing multi-storey building, all exit signs in the building must be retrofitted to or replaced with green pictogram signs (see attached Diagram B).

**4. In existing single storey multi-tenant buildings with no common public spaces (i.e.: Strip Malls):**

- a. For the purpose of this Policy for exit sign installations, each tenant space will be considered a separate floor area and the guidelines in Item 1 above apply.

**5. Shopping malls (i.e.: multi-tenant shopping centres with indoor common public corridors)**

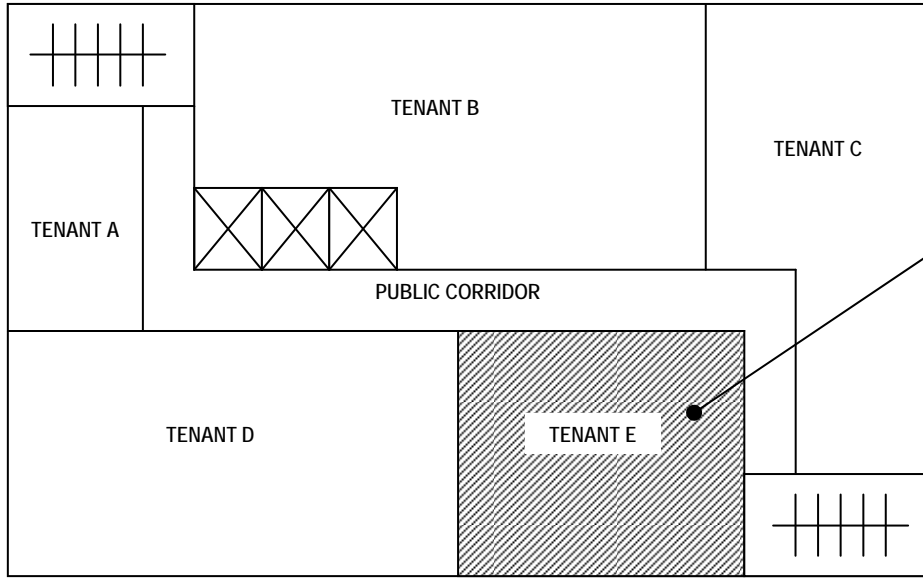
- a. Each tenant space can be treated individually and separate from the public and service corridors and the guidelines in Item 1 above apply.
- b. All public and service corridors must be of one type of exit sign.

**6. Upgrades for the Manitoba Hydro PowerSmart program:**

- a. Retrofit kits to replace the interior of existing red EXIT signs will still be permitted.
- b. If entire exit signs are being replaced with new, they must be replaced with green pictogram signs and the guidelines in Items 1 - 5 above must be applied.

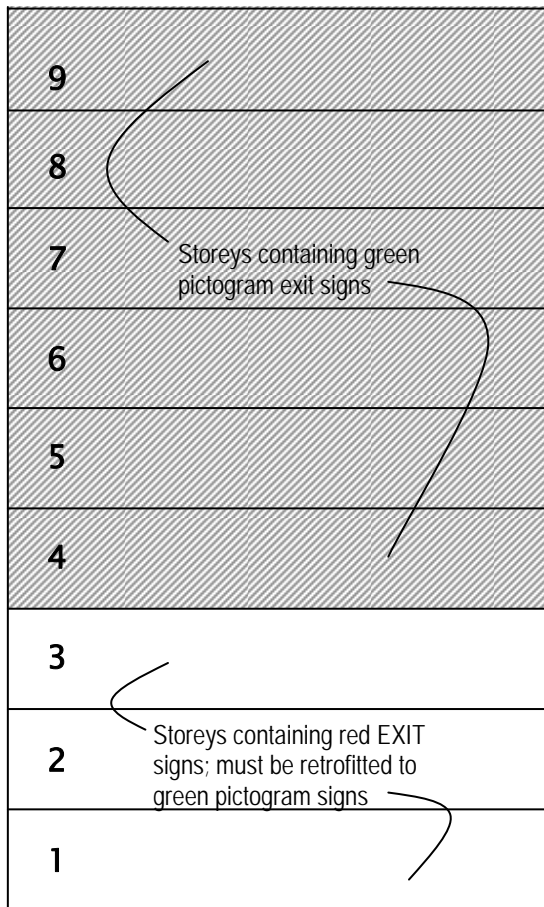
\* For the purpose of this Policy, existing buildings are those that were constructed under Building Codes previous to the 2011 Manitoba Building Code.





If green pictogram signs are installed in Tenant E, the remainder of the floor area (i.e.: public corridor, Tenant spaces A – D, etc.) must be upgraded to green pictogram signs.

**DIAGRAM A**  
Existing Multi-Tenant Floor Area



Storeys containing green pictogram exit signs

Storeys containing red EXIT signs; must be retrofitted to green pictogram signs

If  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the storeys in a multi-storey building have green pictogram exit signs, the remaining storeys must be retrofitted to or replaced with green pictogram signs

**DIAGRAM B**  
Existing Multi-Storey Building