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## Emergency Lighting and Exit Signs in Commercial and Industrial Tenant Spaces

This guide outlines the requirements of the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Manitoba Building Code (“the Code”) for emergency lighting and exit signs in a one storey commercial or industrial tenant space (suite) or in a one storey, one tenant building. This guide covers only those occupancy classifications defined below.

### ■ *Definitions*

**Group A, Division 2 occupancy:** Assembly occupancies such as clubs, restaurants, churches, schools, licensed beverage establishments, etc.

**Group D occupancy:** Business and personal service occupancies such as offices, banks, beauty parlours, etc.

**Group E occupancy:** Mercantile occupancies such as retail stores, shops, supermarkets, etc.

**Group F occupancy:** Industrial occupancies such as warehouses, factories, repair garages, etc.

**Suite:** A single room or series of rooms of complementary use operated under a single tenancy such as a commercial rental unit in a shopping centre or multi-tenant commercial building. A more detailed definition may be found by referring to Part 1 of the Code.

### ■ *Exit Signs*

Exit signs shall be provided in accordance with Subsection 3.4.5. of the Code in any suite that:

- (a) Has an occupant load of more than 150 persons,
- (b) Is a licensed beverage establishment (including a licenced restaurant) having an occupant load of more than 60 persons,
- (c) Has a fire escape as a required means of egress, or
- (d) Is required to have two or more means of egress and is located in a building that is required to have exit signs.

### ■ *Emergency Lighting*

Emergency lighting shall be provided in accordance with Subsection 3.2.7. of the Code in:

- (a) Principal egress routes within a suite classified as Group A Division 2 that exceeds 150 m<sup>2</sup> (1615 ft<sup>2</sup>) in area,
- (b) Areas where the public may congregate in a suite classified as Group A Division 2 having an occupant load of 60 persons or more, and
- (c) Principal egress routes within a suite classified as Group D, Group E, or Group F occupancy that exceeds 200 m<sup>2</sup> (2153 ft.<sup>2</sup>) in area.

### ■ *Application To Existing Suites*

1. A lawfully existing suite will not have to be upgraded to meet the preceding requirements for emergency lighting and exit signs **except where:**
  - (a) The suite is being increased in area,
  - (b) The occupancy classification of the suite is being changed,
  - (c) The occupant load of the suite is being increased, or
  - (d) The majority of the suite is being renovated.
2. Where a suite is undergoing renovations, any existing emergency lighting or exit signs shall be relocated and/or extended as necessary to suit the renovations.

### ■ *NOTES*

1. The Code contains other requirements for emergency lighting and exit signs that are not covered in this guide, such as minimum emergency lighting levels, emergency power supply capacity, and minimum dimensions of exit signs, etc. For additional information, refer to Subsections 3.2.7. and 3.4.5. of the Code.
  2. The Plan Examination and Inspection Branches are not permitted to act in the capacity of a design consultant. Therefore, the owner may be required to retain the services of a person who is skilled in this area of work to provide a design that meets the requirements of the Code.
  3. This guide does not attempt to address every possible situation that could be encountered. Emergency lighting and/or exit signs may be required notwithstanding any of the other requirements outlined in this guide. Please direct any inquiries to the electrical plan examination branch by calling 204-986-5268.
  4. The Winnipeg Electrical By-law requires that an electrical permit be obtained by a Licensed Electrical Contractor prior to the commencement of any electrical work.
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PLANNING, PROPERTY  
AND DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT



## ELECTRICAL PLAN EXAMINATION

# Emergency Lighting and Exit Signs

For more information on this bulletin or other code requirements, please contact

**Plan Examination Branch**  
**PH: 204-986-5268**  
**FAX: 204-986-3045**

*Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this publication. However, in the event of a discrepancy between this publication and the governing City of Winnipeg By-law, the By-law will take precedence.*

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