



OSWEGO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

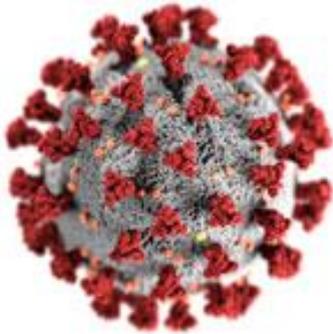


3511 WOOLLEY ROAD • OSWEGO, IL 60543 • (630)554-2110 FAX: (630)554-8681

Michael Veseling, Fire Chief • Dick Kuhn, President • Bob Trip, Secretary
Ken Holmstrom, Treasurer • Rodger Long, Trustee • Jason Bragg, Trustee

July 22, 2020

Ingress and Egress Concerns During the COVID-19 Pandemic



New or temporary social distancing approaches to controlling building occupant flow have resulted in the potential for public safety to be compromised - like blocked or locked emergency exits to limit or prohibit access to portions of a building.

As businesses and communities adapt and strive to comply with recommendations regarding social distancing, many have found it necessary to alter the way people move in and out of their establishments. In some cases, patrons are asked to queue outside the business, and in others they are even corralled into lines and aisles in order to maintain 6 feet of physical separation.

However, fire and life safety requirements - *including those mandating a minimum number of emergency exits* - have **not** changed as a result of COVID-19 or social distancing. The potential for a fire and the need for emergency exits has not changed, regardless of the number of people in a building.

The number, placement and capacity of exits is based on more than just “how many people can I have in my business”. The type of occupancy (use), travel distance to exits, and remoteness/separation of exits are all examples of other factors that were considered when originally designing the building, and they must all still be considered, even with a potentially drastically reduced occupant load due to COVID-19 restrictions and precautions.

Number of Exits

<u>Req'd Exits</u>	<u>Occupant Load</u>
1	49 or less
2	50 -500
3	501-1000
4	1000 or more

Exit Configuration/Arrangement

<u>Req'd Exits</u>	<u>Sprinklered</u>	<u>Separation of Exits</u>
2	No	1/2 Maximum Diagonal
2	Yes	1/3 Maximum Diagonal
3+	<i>same as above with additional exits arranged a reasonable distance apart so if one exit is blocked others may remain available</i>	

see diagram and explanatory information below

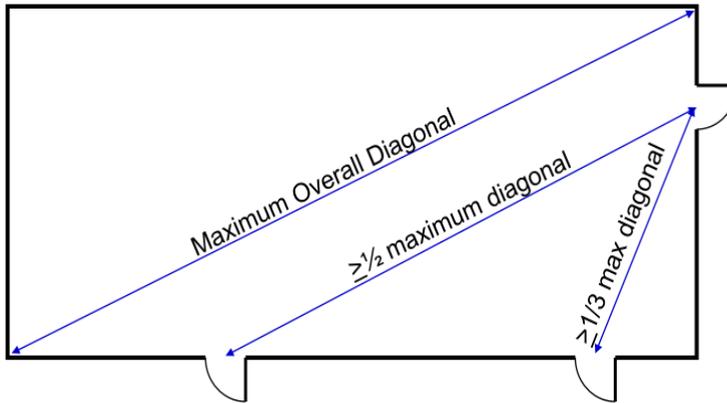


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Where two exits are required, they shall be separated a minimum of 1/2 of the overall diagonal of the building or area served for unsprinklered buildings. Where the building is fully sprinklered, the required separation is reduced to 1/3 of the overall diagonal.

Where access to three or more exits is required, at least two must be separated as above.

The additional required exit(s) must be located a reasonable distance from the others so that if one becomes blocked, the others may remain available.

Access to Exits/Operations of Doors

In general...

- Manually operated flush bolts or surface bolts are not permitted
- Egress doors shall be readily openable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort
- The unlatching of a door or leaf shall not require more than one operation

If re-configuring your business layout for ingress/egress, traffic flow, and occupancy limits due to the COVID-19 CDC recommendations, all the above shall still be considered and adhered to. If your current situation allows you to temporarily make an egress path inactive, every effort should also be made to **a)** provide clear signage directing patrons to the nearest active exit, and **b)** where appropriate keep the temporarily “inactive” exits available for emergency use.

**** PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE IS INTENDED AS GUIDANCE, AS ALL SITUATIONS ARE POTENTIALLY DIFFERENT - TWO IDENTICAL BUILDINGS USED IN DIFFERENT MANNERS, ALTHOUGH USING THE SAME REQUIREMENTS, WILL LIKELY HAVE VERY DIFFERENT EXITING NEEDS**

Excerpts of information taken from
US Fire Administration
ICC's International Building & Fire Codes