



Life Safety Code 2000 Edition Nursing Homes/Facilities

Provisions for Exit Discharges - November 15, 2004

The following is provided to clarify the requirements under the *Life Safety Code 2000 Edition* pertaining to section 7.1.10 Means of Egress Reliability and section 7.7 Discharge from Exits. (Chapter 7.1.10.1 and Chapter 7.7.1)

1. Question: Must an exit discharge be surfaced with material other than grass or soil?

Chapter 7.1.10 states that "the means of egress shall be continuously maintained free of all obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency."

The surface of the exit discharge must be usable at all times, i.e. full instant use, by individuals who rely on assistive support or wheeled devices during evacuation. The paramount consideration in determining compliance is whether the exit path of travel can be easily maintained and is usable in all weather conditions.

Concrete, brick, asphalt or like surfaces, including crushed/compacted stone if it creates a hard surface, are acceptable. Grass, gravel, mulch or similar surfaces are not acceptable in view of Ohio's climate and resident acuity levels. The path must be, at a minimum, 36 inches wide to accommodate assistive devices such as wheelchairs.

Additionally, the path of exit must be maintained free of obstruction including, but is not limited to, maintaining proper drainage, addressing changes in elevation, repair of cracks and snow removal. (Note: other regulations, such as the ADA, may also apply to exits.)

2. Question: Must the exit discharge extend from the exit door to the public way?

Chapter 7.7.1 states that exits shall terminate directly at a public way or at an exterior exit discharge. Therefore, except as provided in Chapter 7.7.1, all exits must be continuous to a public way or other safe place, or to an exit discharge that must, in turn, be continuous to the public way. It is not sufficient to permit the egress system to terminate at the outside of a building.

References:

Life Safety Code 2000 Edition

Life Safety Code Regional Program Letter No. 93-11