



Emergency lighting, often referred to as egress lighting, is used in buildings as a safety precaution for power outages so that people will be able to find their way out of a building. Exit signs can also be used in conjunction with emergency lighting unit equipment.

Emergency lighting may be equipped with battery backups that are installed within, or adjacent to, existing lighting fixtures, powered by a central standby source, such as a bank of lead-acid batteries, an emergency generator, or may be self-contained unit equipment which incorporates the lamp, battery, charger and control equipment as depicted in the photo above.

Emergency lighting is an integral part of the building and needs to be maintained for the safety of the building occupants. The International Fire Code (IFC) sets forth specific requirements to ensure emergency lighting equipment is functional and available for service, which includes testing and maintenance.

Activation Test

An activation test of the emergency lighting equipment is required to be completed monthly. The activation test is to ensure the emergency lighting activates automatically upon normal electrical disconnect and stays sufficiently illuminated for a minimum of 30 seconds.

Power Test

For battery powered emergency lighting, such as unit equipment, a power test is required to be completed annually. The power test is to ensure the emergency lighting equipment activates automatically upon normal electrical disconnect and stays sufficiently illuminated for a minimum 90-minute duration as specified in the International Building Code (IBC).

Activation Test & Power Test Records

Records of activation and power tests must be maintained on the premises for a minimum of three years and be available for review by the fire code official upon request. The records must include the location of the emergency lighting tested, if the unit passed or failed, the date of the test, and the person completing the test. If the testing indicates unit(s) failed, subsequent records need to show corrections made.

Supervision of Maintenance and Testing

Routine maintenance, inspection and operational testing must be overseen by a properly instructed individual such as a facilities manager or building engineer.

Example:

Emergency Lighting Equipment Test Record (Month _____ Year _____)				
				Tested By: John Doe
Location	Pass	Fail	Date Tested	Duration: 30 sec / 90 min
1 st floor hallway	X		1/1/2015	30 seconds
1 st floor elevator lobby		X	1/1/2015	30 seconds
Corrections made: 1/2/2015 - Battery replaced in the light at the 1st floor elevator lobby. The unit was re-tested and passed.				