

## REMOVE OBSTRUCTIONS AT EXITS, DOORS, AISLES, CORRIDORS, STAIRWAYS, ETC.

### CODE SECTIONS

*International Fire Code 2006 Edition*

#### **MAINTENANCE OF THE MEANS OF EGRESS**

**1028.2 Reliability.** Required exit accesses, exits or exit discharges shall be continuously maintained free from obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency. Security devices affecting means of egress shall be subject to approval of the fire code official.

**1028.3 Obstructions.** A means of egress shall be free from obstructions that would prevent its use, including the accumulation of snow and ice.

**1028.5 Furnishings and decorations.** Furnishings, decorations or other objects shall not be placed so as to obstruct exits, access thereto, egress there from, or visibility thereof. Hangings and draperies shall not be placed over exit doors or otherwise be located to conceal or obstruct an exit. Mirrors shall not be placed on exit doors. Mirrors shall not be placed in or adjacent to any exit in such a manner as to confuse the direction of exit.

**1028.6 Emergency escape openings.** Required emergency escape openings shall be maintained in accordance with the code in effect at the time of construction, and the following: Required emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools. Bars, grilles, grates or similar devices are allowed to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings provided the minimum net clear opening size complies with the code that was in effect at the time of construction and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.

**1014.4.1 Groups B and M.** In Group B and M occupancies, the minimum clear aisle width shall be determined by Section 1005.1 for the occupant load served, but shall not be less than 36 inches (914 mm).

**Exception:** Nonpublic aisles serving less than 50 people, and not required to be accessible by Chapter 11 of the *International Building Code*, need not exceed 28 inches (711 mm) in width.

### EXPLANATION

The required width of an exit way is essentially the minimum width of the aisles or corridors leading to the exit with only two exceptions—handrails and doors which may not diminish aisle width by more than seven (7) inches. The exit width must be maintained throughout the exit path to an exit door and out to the public way, without any obstructions.

### RATIONALE

When all other fire prevention measures have failed and a fire occurs, all occupants must be able to rapidly exit the building to a safe public way. Obstructions such as storage, decorations, or other items will reduce the aisle's ability to offer a rapid exit. All aisles or exitways shall be kept free of all obstructions at all times. The importance of this cannot be over-emphasized. Immediate compliance to this code section is mandatory—the obstructions shall be cleared prior to the Fire District leaving the premises.