



INCLINED STAIRWAY LIFTS in RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCIES

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

The California Building Standards Code requires stairways in R-2 multifamily and R-3 single-family occupancies to be 36 inches minimum in width. When someone wishes to install an inclined stairway lift on an existing stairway it is frequently not possible to maintain this minimum required stairway width.

DISCUSSION

Senior residents or residents with mobility impairments frequently request to use an inclined stairway lift to enter and exit their residences. Without a lift they would face challenges to access their units and might have to move.

Section 1011.2 of 2016 California Building Code only allows an incline stairway lift to be installed on stairway serving occupancies in R-3 single-family residences or within dwelling units in R-2 occupancies.

Section 313.3 of 2016 California Existing Building Code requires all stairs in existing group R occupancies shall have a minimum width exclusive of handrails of 30 inches.

Section R321.2 of 2016 California Residential Code requires platform lifts, where installed, shall comply with ASME A18.1.

ASME A18.1 publishes the safety standards for inclined stairway lifts (platform lifts and chairlifts) installed for a private residence and other locations for use by the mobility impaired.

ACTION

1. Inclined stairway lifts installed on private stairways in R-2 multifamily occupancies and in R-3 single-family occupancies where serving not more than one dwelling unit will be permitted. A twenty-inch (20-inch) minimum free and clear passage width shall be provided. This clear passage width shall be maintained where the lifts are in the stored position.
2. Inclined stairway lifts installed in stairways serving two dwelling units may be permitted for existing residential buildings if a twenty six-inch (26-inch) minimum free and clear passage width is provided. This clear passage width shall be maintained where the lifts are in the stored position, and the lift shall be stored at the level where the dwelling units are located.
3. Inclined stairway lifts installed in stairways serving more than two dwelling units may be permitted for existing residential buildings if a thirty-inch (30-inch) minimum free and clear passage width is provided. This clear passage width shall be maintained where the lifts are in the stored position. A "The Lift Shall Not Be In Operation During Emergency Evacuation" placard (laminated) shall be placed on the wall where the lift is stored. The letters shall be in red color and not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height.
4. The structure on which the equipment is installed shall be capable of safely supporting the loads imposed.
5. The electrical equipment shall be certified to the requirements of CAN/CSA-B44.1/ASME A17.5. The installation of electrical equipment and wiring shall conform to the requirements of the latest edition of California Electrical Code.
6. The supporting tracks or guiderails shall be securely anchored to the stairs, or floor structures. The factor of safety used in the design of the guiderails and tracks shall be not less than 5 based on the rated load.

7. At no point in its travel shall the edge of the platform or footrest facing the upper landing be more than 24 inches above a step or landing as measured vertically.
8. No chairlift shall be installed to operate on a greater incline than 45 deg as measured on the mean.
9. Operation of a lift shall be controlled by control switches at all stations, and shall be by means of the continuous-pressure type. Controls shall be 48 inches maximum and 15 inches minimum above the landing surface.

- **A BUILDING PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR THE INSTALLATION OF AN INCLINED STAIRWAY LIFT.**
- **MANUFACTURES SPECIFICATIONS AND INSTALLATION GUIDELINES SHALL BE INCLUDED AS PART OF THE BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION.**
- **WHERE A STAIRWAY LIFT IS INSTALLED IN A STAIRWAY SERVING MORE THAN ONE DWELLING UNIT, THE OWNER SHALL DISCUSS WITH THE HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION OR ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STAIRWAY.**
- **INSTALLATIONS NOT REQUIRING MODIFICATIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE PREMISES WIRING DO NOT REQUIRE AN ELECTRICAL FEE.**
- **UNITS INSTALLED ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING SHALL BE LISTED FOR EXTERIOR USE.**
- **THE PERMIT APPLICATION SHALL INCLUDE AN ACCURATE DIMENSIONED PLAN-VIEW DRAWING OF THE STAIR AND LIFT AND SHOW ALL CLEARANCES WITH DIMENSIONS.**
- **A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION BULLETIN SHALL BE PLACED IN THE PERMIT FILE AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE PERMIT HOLDER AND PROPERTY OWNER. IT IS THE PERMIT HOLDER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION BULLETIN TO THE PROPERTY OWNER.**