

This provides North Zone Agencies guidelines for the use of elevators at a fire emergency. Transportation of personnel and equipment to fires above ground is a complex problem. In some instances this may mean the elevator will have to be used. However, the Company Officer should beware that elevators in high rise buildings have contributed to more fire deaths in the United States than any other building system. All companies with elevators in their first in area should know where the keys are kept and make sure they are available in the event of an emergency.

USE OF ELEVATORS AT A FIRE EMERGENCY:

- Elevators that are used during an actual fire are to be operated only with fire department override keys. These keys will be found in the Knox Box or with the building manager. In some instances, they will be located in the fire control room. All modern elevators should be at ground level upon arrival at the scene.
- Control of the elevator will be obtained by using the independent service key to first call the elevator to the ground floor. In most cases, the use of the key will only call one car at a time if there is more than one in a common bank or hoistway. In some cases, the key will open a control box in which case personnel will then select the use of the elevator by pushing a button.
- Once the elevator has reached the ground floor, the key may have to be left in the outside cylinder to insure correct independent operation. In this case, fire personnel should safeguard its position (**EOM 503.00**).
- Once inside the car, the next step will be to insert the key in the cylinder marked independent operation or FD Service, and turn to activate. In some cases, the interior key may open a box exposing switches or buttons, which perform the same function.
- After this has been completed, the next step before operation is to insure the photo electric eye is shut off. This may be handled in the same manner as the independent operation. Find the switch, button, or key cylinder marked T.S., Traffic Signal, Photo Eye, Ray Off, etc., and turn to the "Off" position. If this is not done and the elevator door opens on a smoke filled floor, the doors may not close, exposing personnel to whatever conditions exist.
- To make the door operational, push the "door close" button, select the floor and push the directional indicator, or in some cases, push the directional indicator and then select the floor. In both cases, the last button pushed will have to be held until the car starts to move. These procedures will vary from car to car and Company Officers should be familiar with the elevator cars in their first in area.
- At no time should an elevator be used when the fire is still considered out of control, however, fire personnel in charge of elevator operations may opt to use the elevators for transporting additional equipment to staging. Elevators may be used during overhaul and mop-up stages, or once a determination is made that there is no fire emergency. Elevators may be used if the top of the shaft does not extend to the fire floor.

TACTICAL GUIDELINES
Elevator Fire Operations

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS MANUAL
8-15-94 PAGE 2 OF 2
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Under fire conditions, even the most sophisticated elevator with all the modern safety devices may function in an unpredictable manner. Personnel working with elevators should be prepared for any sudden unusual changes that may occur. There is no substitute for knowing your first in area. All personnel should be familiar with elevator operations before an emergency arises. The guidelines outlined in this procedure are generic in nature and should not be looked at as the only way to operate an elevator car due to the variety of elevator equipment that is available.