

OREGON STATE FIRE MARSHAL
Fire & Life Safety Services
TECHNICAL INFORMATION BULLETIN #10

“Storage in Egress Corridors in Health Care Facilities”

Corridors, hallways, passageways, landings, and aisles are considered part of the means of egress (exit) and are required to meet certain width requirements. This required width must remain clear and unobstructed at all times for occupant use.

The general code requirements are as follows:

- ◆ The 1985 Life Safety Code (NFPA 101), Section 12-2.3.3 states: “Aisles, corridors and ramps required for exit access in a hospital or nursing home shall be at least 8 ft (244 cm) in clear and unobstructed width”.
- ◆ The 1998 Oregon Uniform Fire Code, Section 1203 states: “Obstructions, including storage, shall not be placed in the required width of a means of egress, except projections allowed by the Building Code. Means of egress shall not be obstructed in any manner and shall remain free of any material or matter where its presence would obstruct or render the means of egress hazardous.”
- ◆ The 1998 Oregon Structural Specialty Code (Uniform Building Code), Section 1001.1 states in part: “A means of egress is an exit system that provides a continuous, unobstructed and undiminished path of exit travel from any occupied point in a building or structure to a public way.”

Therefore, the practice of items being stored in egress corridors is not allowed due to the potential for problems with evacuation in an emergency situation.

From an operational standpoint, any item in a corridor that is considered “in use”, such as a housekeeping cart, patient lift, wheelchair, etc., must be attended by a working staff person. A working staff person is one who is using the item and is in the immediate area of the item. Any item not attended will be considered as stored and must be removed from the corridor or relocated so as not to diminish the required corridor width. This includes removing the item during the staff person’s breaks.