

FIREFIGHTERS GUIDANCE NOTE # 6-32

ISSUE: ELEVATOR RESCUE

For the purposes of this Guidance Note, Elevator Rescue is considered to be the removal of occupants from inside a disabled or stalled elevator car through the elevator doors and does not include rescues from elevator shafts, hoist ways or through the top of the elevator car.

Where fire departments determine that there is a need to engage in elevator rescue, SOPs/OGs should be developed to cover these types of rescues and fire departments should ensure that personnel who respond to such emergencies are trained appropriately to perform this task.

Personnel assigned to elevator rescue should:

- Be trained to determine when an extraction from a stalled elevator is necessary.
- Be made aware of the hazards associated with elevator systems during a rescue, including those related to firefighter safety as well as public safety.
- Be informed regarding how to perform a mainline disconnect with lock-out and tag-out procedures. Firefighters also need to be informed that a rescue attempt should be aborted if upon checking for mainline disconnect confirmation it is found that one or more power phases (legs) are not disconnected.
- Be trained to safely open doors into stalled elevators using tools provided by fire departments.
- Be trained to safely immobilize different types of elevators to prevent unexpected movement during extrication.

At no time should firefighters enter the elevator shaft or hoist way during an elevator rescue. These operations, as well as the removal of occupants through the top of the elevator car, require specialized knowledge and Technician Level training in various technical rescue disciplines including, but not limited to, confined space rescue and rope rescue.

Note: The Elevating Devices Safety Program of the Technical Standards & Safety Authority (TSSA) offers a two day training program, Elevator Emergency Response Training for Firefighters (www.tssa.org). This course prepares firefighters to safely respond to emergency situations involving elevators, including evacuation. Nothing restricts personnel that have taken the course from imparting their knowledge to others within the fire service. However, such training requires practical exercise, in accordance with the skills and safety principles as taught by the TSSA and should be relayed with this caveat.

Reference:

GN # 6-4 Rope Rescue

GN # 6-5 Confined Space Rescue

GN # 6-16 Machinery/Electrical Lockout during Emergency Response

Reference material: ASME A17.4 – 1999 Guide for Emergency Personnel. This guide contains procedures for emergency personnel to safely extricate persons trapped in stalled elevators and provides instructions for use of elevator fire service systems during emergencies. It is downloadable from the internet for a fee:

http://catalog.asme.org/Codes/PrintBook/A174_1999_Guide_Emergency.cfm.

(Note: Consulting the manual by itself is not considered to be training.)