10 Common Life Safety Citations

K-Tag surprises: No one likes them. And yet many providers are hit with them each year. Striving for the zero citation survey can be a difficult task, but the payoff in terms of safety for residents and staff and your reputation can be significant. To help you on your way, we've identified 10 of the most common life safety citations being issued today, as well as what you can do to prevent them in your facility.

01

K62 Sprinkler System Maintenance

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

The testing and maintenance of automatic sprinkler systems, making sure that you're doing the tests for the system at the right frequency found in **NFPA 25**.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Sprinkler heads (damaged, painted, mixed type, obstructed)
- Missed or overdue inspections (calibration of gauges, 5 years)
- Lack of replacement parts/tools (heads and wrenches)
- Gauges past due for calibration
- Storage placement

CHECK TO MAKE SURE you document your tests!

3,621
Total providers cited

02

K147 Electrical Wiring and Equipment

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Electrical wiring to be in accordance with **NFPA 70**, National Electrical Code. Commonly, offenders are things like power strips, power cords, etc. being used in areas we're not allowed to.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Power strips (used near residents, linked together, covered up with rugs, or have multiple appliances plugged in)
- Exposed wiring (missing light switch and outlet covers, missing junction box cover plates)

CHECK TO MAKE SURE there isn't exposed wiring or tangled cords.

3,056
Total providers cited

03

K353 Sprinkler System Maintenance & Testing

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Automatic sprinkler and standpipe systems are inspected, tested and maintained in accordance with **NFPA 25**. Records of system design, maintenance, inspection and testing are maintained in a secure location and readily available.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Sprinkler tests, inspection or maintenance is not documented
- See Common Problems for K62

CHECK TO MAKE SURE you are scheduling and conducting maintenance and testing on this equipment per the standards. Track and document the work!

2,373
Total providers cited

04

K29 Hazardous Areas Separated

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Keeping areas like solid linen, trash rooms, repair shops or any room that may potentially be hazardous separated. There need to be specific door types for separation, and cleanliness and organization are important factors.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Self-closing doors that are obstructed (or not self-closing at all)
- Usage of space changed and doors/closures are not adapted
- Solid utility bins stored in non-hazardous rooms

CHECK TO MAKE SURE there are no door stops or any other door props.

2,373
Total providers cited

05

K18 Construction of Doors

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Making sure that the doors that protect corridor openings can prevent smoke. It's not only the construction, but it's also to ensure that there are no obstructions that could prevent it from closing.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Gaps in doors as they age / warp / shrink
- Doors without a proper latch
- Obstructions such as door stops

CHECK TO MAKE SURE you also check your automatic / self-closing doors.

2,262
Total providers cited

06

K25 Smoke Barriers (1/2 hour fire rating)

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Smoke barrier walls with the correct fire rating, depending on old or new construction (plus any additions, changes or retrofitting).

COMMON MISTAKES

Improper closures in ceilings. If you do make a hole, make sure you still seal it.

CHECK TO MAKE SURE there are no errors that occur after a building passes inspection during construction.

1,686
Total providers cited

07

K144 Generator Inspection and Load Testing

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Generators need to be inspected weekly and monthly. Must be tested under a load for 30 minutes in accordance with **NFPA 99, section 3.4.4.1**.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Missed inspection tests
- Missed documentation
- Incorrect timing of the tests

CHECK TO MAKE SURE you have the proper documentation and state requirements.

1,761
Total providers cited

08

K321 Hazardous Areas

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

That hazardous areas are protected in accordance with 18.3.2.1. Areas should be enclosed with a 1-hour fire-rated barrier and with a ¾ hour fire-rated door without windows. Doors should also be self-closing or automatic-closing. Hazardous areas should also be protected by a sprinkler system.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Wrong types of doors (non-self-closing) in hazardous areas
- Lack of sprinkler systems
- Doors are obstructed in some way

CHECK TO MAKE SURE you have the properly rated fire doors and sprinkler systems are installed in your facility's hazardous areas.

1,616
Total providers cited

09

K363 Corridor – Doors

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Corridor doors and doors to rooms containing flammable or combustible materials have self-latching and positive latching hardware. Clearance between bottom of door and floor covering is not exceeding 1 inch. There is no impediment to the closing of the doors.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Obstructed doors
- The wrong type of doors in corridors
- Door clearance is too large
- Doors don't close properly

CHECK TO MAKE SURE your corridor doors can easily close and clearance does not exceed 1 inch.

1,247
Total providers cited

06

EXIT

K38 Exit Accessibility

WHAT IT LOOKS FOR

Ability to leave the building at all times if there is a problem or emergency. Make sure that they are clear of obstructions and clear for both staff and residents.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- Storage blocking exits or the pathway
- Delayed egress devices or failure
- Doors not clearly marked as an exit, such as camouflage doors

CHECK TO MAKE SURE you aren't blocking any exits at any time and that your doors are clearly marked as an exit.

1,700
Total providers cited

BEST PRACTICES

- Ensure that your staff has a reminder system with a "how to" list so that they know what to look for.
- Create mock survey inspections.
- Perform quarterly audits.
- Keep a secondary copy of all your forms and handbooks, either in hard copy or in software.

REMEMBER
These regulations are designed to save lives. Strive to be one of the **20% of facilities that are deficiency free!**