



Legislation Text

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A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to emergency lighting and exit signs.

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Declaration of legislative findings and intent. On August 14, 2003, the largest blackout in the nation's history left 50 million people without power, including everyone in New York City. During this time, many New Yorkers encountered great difficulty in leaving or entering their homes because of inadequate or non-existent emergency lighting and exit signs.

The building code currently requires mercantile, industrial, and institutional buildings over 75 feet tall, as well as business, educational, and most lodging places, to have emergency lighting and exit signs. In contrast, no such requirements exist for apartment buildings.

The Council finds that requiring emergency lighting and exit signs in residential buildings and requiring regular inspections of such equipment will protect the public during times of power failure.

§2. Section 27-382 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding new subdivisions c and d to read as follows:

(c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, in buildings that were required to comply with subdivision a of this section on or before April 1, 1987, all exit lighting shall be connected to an emergency power source or to storage battery equipment meeting the requirements of the commissioner on or before January 1, 2007.

(d) Notwithstanding the foregoing, in existing high rise buildings classified in occupancy group J-1,

including "residential hotels," as such term is defined by the commissioner pursuant to rules and regulations, or J-2 all exit lighting shall be connected to an emergency power source or to storage battery equipment meeting the requirements of the commissioner on or before January 1, 2007.

§2. Section 27-384 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding new subdivisions c and d to read as follows:

(c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, in buildings that were required to comply with subdivision a of this section on or before April 1, 1987, all exit signs shall be connected to an emergency power source or to storage battery equipment meeting the requirements of the commissioner on or before January 1, 2007.

(d) Notwithstanding the foregoing, in existing high rise buildings classified in occupancy group J-1, including "residential hotels," as such term is defined by the commissioner pursuant to rules and regulations, or J-2 all exit signs shall be connected to an emergency power source or to storage battery equipment meeting the requirements of the commissioner on or before January 1, 2007.

§4. Subchapter two of chapter four of title 27 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 27-4022.1 to read as follows:

§ 27-4022.1 Emergency Lighting Inspections. The department shall conduct annual inspections of emergency exit lighting and exit signs required under this title, including, when practicable, inspections under loss of power conditions.

§5. This local law shall take effect immediately upon enactment.