

Means of Egress

When exiting the building, employees and other building occupants shall be ensured of a smooth and unobstructed path of exit travel from any point within the workplace to a place of safety. OSHA General Industry Standards specify the following requirements (ref. 29 CFR 1910.36-37 and NC Fire Code 2006) that will be upheld by Caldwell County Government.

Design and Construction Requirements for Exit Routes

- An exit route must be separated by fire resistant materials
- Openings into an exit must be limited
- At least two exit routes must be available in a workplace to permit prompt evacuation of employees and other building occupants during an emergency
- Each exit discharge must lead directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside and these must be large enough large enough to accommodate the building occupants likely to use the exit route
- Employees must be able to open an exit route door from the inside at all times without keys, tools or special knowledge
- The capacity of an exit route must be adequate (see CFR 1910.36 (e) for specifications)

Maintenance, safeguards, and operational features for exit routes

- Exit routes must be kept free of explosive or highly flammable furnishings and/or decorations
- Exit routes must be free and unobstructed. No materials or equipment may be placed, either permanently or temporarily, within the exit route. The exit access must not go through a room that can be locked, such as a bathroom, to reach an exit or exit discharge, nor may it lead into a dead-end corridor. Stairs or a ramp must be provided where the exit route is not substantially level
- Safeguards designed to protect employees during an emergency (e.g. sprinkler systems, alarm systems, fire doors, exit lighting) must be in proper working order
- Each exit route must be adequately lighted so that an employee with normal vision can see along the exit route
- Each exit must be clearly visible and marked by a sign reading "EXIT"
- Each exit route door must be free of decorations or signs that obscure the visibility of the exit door
- If the direction of travel to the exit or exit discharge is not immediately apparent, signs must be posted along the exit access indicating the direction of travel to the nearest exit and exit discharge. Additionally, the line-of-sight to an exit sign must clearly be visible at all times
- Each doorway or passage along an exit access that could be mistaken for an exit must be marked "Not an Exit" or similar designation, or be identified by a sign indicating its actual use (e.g. closet)
- Each exit sign, if illuminated, must be illuminated to a surface value of at least five foot-candles by a reliable light source and be distinctive in color. Self-luminous or electro luminescent signs are permitted

- Each exit sign must have the word “Exit” in plainly legible letters not less than six inches high, the principal strokes of the letters in the word “Exit” not less than three-fourths of an inch
- All exit routes must be maintained during construction, repairs, or alterations
- During new construction, employees must not occupy a workplace until the exit routes are completed and ready for employee use for the portion of the workplace they occupy
- During repairs or alterations, employees must not occupy a workplace unless the exit routes are available and existing fire protections are maintained, or until alternate fire protection is furnished that provides an equivalent level of safety
- Employees must not be exposed to hazards of flammable or explosive substances or equipment used during construction, repairs, or alterations, that are beyond the normal permissible conditions in the workplace, or that would impede existing the workplace

Floor Plans

- Floor Plans must identify the following:
 - Exits
 - Primary evacuation routes
 - Secondary evacuation routes
 - Accessible egress routes
 - Areas of refuge
 - Manual fire alarm boxes
 - Portable fire extinguishers
 - Occupant-use hose stations (n/a in most county buildings)

See Appendix _ for floor plans of each building of contact Safety Office