

## General Questions about Current Code and Elevator Safety

### Why do we even need an elevator safety code?

Each day in the United States building transportation (elevators and escalators) transport an estimated 575 million passengers. Elevators and escalators are sophisticated machines that, if not regulated by safety codes, could present a safety hazard for millions of people.

### How safe are elevators?

Elevators, escalators and moving walks are the safest form of transportation in the world. Their safety record of moving millions of passengers every day, with extremely low rate of incident, is unsurpassed by any other transportation system.

### What is a "prescriptive" code?

A prescriptive code specifies in detail exactly what materials are to be used and how they are to be assembled.

### What is ASME A17.1/CSA B44 that I keep reading about?

ASME A17.1/CSA B44 is the Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators. In 1921 the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) developed uniform safety requirements for elevators, and published the first edition of ASME A17.1. The code is intended to serve as the basis for the design, construction, installation, operation, testing, inspection, maintenance, alteration, and repair of elevators and escalators.

### What is ASME A17.7/CSA B44.7, and how does it relate to ASME A17.1/CSA B44?

ASME A17.7/CSA B44.7 is the Performance-based code for elevators and escalators or the PBC. ASME A17.7/CSA B44.7 is a companion to the 2007 and later versions of the Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators, ASME A17.1/CSA B44 that provides Authorities Having Jurisdiction with an objective and structured method for approving new technology while ensuring continued elevator safety. Under ASME A17.7/CSA B44.7 safeguards must be provided and documentation must be presented that designs and products are equivalent or superior to the current standards. It is important to remember that ASME A17.7/CSA B44.7 is not replacing ASME A17.1/CSA B44, but is a vital addition.

### Doesn't the current elevator code already allow for new technology?

ASME A17.1/CSA B44 is based on prescriptive language to address building transportation technology that has already been introduced. Nevertheless, the need for a method to introduce new technology is recognized in the 2007 and later edition of ASME A17.1/CSA B44; earlier editions did not provide for a uniform structured approach for Authorities Having Jurisdiction to ascertain the safety of new approaches. This process was inefficient and cumbersome and it deterred the introduction of alternate technology in North America as there was no defined process that was universally acceptable to Authorities Having Jurisdiction.

### Why would a state or locality be using an older version of the elevator safety code, isn't the most recent edition automatically used when it is published?

Not all states and localities automatically adopt updated building transportation safety codes. In fact, many states and localities require the Authority Having Jurisdiction over building transportation safety to conduct an administrative rulemaking process to adopt an updated version of the code. As a result, many jurisdictions do not adopt new codes for long periods of time after their publication. This is unfortunate as the public in those jurisdictions are not assured of the same level of safety that the latest codes provide.

For additional information on the codes and standards including the PBC [click here](#).