

When is acceptance testing in a hospital required?

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Well my go to answer here is, "it depends." Hospitals are currently following the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services mandate to comply with NFPA 80 Standard for Fire Doors and Other Opening Protectives - 2010 Edition, and acceptance testing doesn't make it into the code until the 2013 edition.

So, what is acceptance testing?

Installation of a fire door, shutter, or window assembly shall be inspected and tested. Acceptance testing of fire door and window assemblies shall be performed by a qualified person with knowledge and understanding of the operating components of the assembly being tested. A visual inspection shall be performed to identify any damaged or missing parts that can create a hazard during testing or affect operation or resetting. The acceptance test shall include the closing of the door by all means of activation. The 11 points identified in the code will be inspected at a minimum. A record of the inspection shall be signed by the inspector and kept for review by the Authority Having Jurisdiction. Acceptance tests shall be retained for the life of the assembly.

You can see that there are subtle differences in an acceptance test from that of a periodic inspection.



I have discussed this in great depth with many hospital chief engineers around the country and here is my pitch.

Installation of new fire door assemblies should be documented in the same manner and level of detail as the periodic inspection and testing of fire door assemblies required in 5.2. Records of new fire door assemblies should be retained with the periodic inspections and testing records for the facility. Fire doors, shutters, and windows are of no value unless they are properly maintained and closed or are able to close at the time of fire. A periodic inspection and maintenance program should be implemented and should be the responsibility of the property management.

Since all other fire door assemblies are inspected on an annual basis, doesn't it make sense to initially have a certified inspector come through and make sure the door was installed properly? If there is something installed incorrectly or defected, you can have your contracted supplier/installer fix it before final payment is made. People are more motivated to fix something when payment is being held.

Certified Inspectors are your strategic partner when it comes to making sure your doors are not only inspected to the proper NFPA 80 edition but properly reported. The Door Hardware Institute (DHI) is the nationally recognized standard when certifying fire door inspectors.

Ask to see your inspectors DHI certification.

Jared D. Amato is co-owner of Oregon Door Consultants LLC. A mission of his organization is to bring public awareness to the risks of not properly inspecting and maintaining automatic doors. You can reach him directly at 503.314.3412 or Jared@OregonDoorConsultants.com

