



Preparedness Committee
Security and Life Safety
Commercial Office Building Protective Measures

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Topic: | Elevator Entrapments |
| Date: | Jan 2014; Revised May 2018 |

Background Vertical transportation has minimal risk, and is technically advanced to err on the side of safety and stop for precautionary measures, yet an elevator entrapment can be a traumatic event for those involved. One of the best ways to keep elevator entrapments to a minimum is to have an elevator service maintenance contract in place with a reputable company, to conduct periodic cab inspections, and to practice good housekeeping measures. The elevator contract should address and identify the response measures and expectations during an entrapment. In addition, per code, elevators need to be inspected and certified on an annual basis. Lastly, tenants should be trained on how to react to an entrapment, such as remaining calm and pressing the “Emergency Call” button located in each cab.

Response Measures Upon receiving a call for an entrapment, the following measures should be performed by the person receiving the call (usually Security):

- Identify the stopped elevator cab number and the location of the entrapment.
- **Immediately** call the elevator service company and initiate building procedure for elevator entrapments.
- Obtain names of the entrapped person(s) and company information.
- If able to (and per elevator company instruction), perform trouble-shooting actions such as remotely calling the cab to another floor.

Best Practices / Considerations Once the above information is obtained, consider the following actions:

- Talk to the entrapped persons throughout the entrapment (this can alleviate any anxiety), help keep them calm, and assure them that help is on the way.
 - Provide update information, such as elevator company estimated time for arrival.
 - Ask if you can call their supervisor and inform them of the situation.
 - Inform them to “sit down” if they are feeling faint.

- If an entrapped person begins to experience any medical issue (i.e. shortness of breath), immediately **call 911**. Building personnel should use their best judgement to determine when to call first responders.
- Dispatch Engineering and/or Security to location of entrapped cab. Note that first responders can also communicate with entrapped persons.
- Entrapped persons should never attempt to pry open doors and should only exit cab if cab is level and/or if Security, Engineering, or Elevator Technician gives them the “OK” to do so. Again, entrapped persons should **never** attempt to pry open or exit cab on their own.
- Ideally, Security should meet with all entrapped persons after exiting cab.
- After conclusion and meeting with the elevator service company, identify root cause of entrapment.

Conclusion / Follow Up An elevator entrapment can be a traumatic event, but with proper planning and training, building employees will be more confident in their response and service will not be delayed, thus minimizing the entrapment and down time of elevator.

At the conclusion of an elevator entrapment, Security should consider the below actions.

- Obtain relevant information for an Incident Report.
- For entrapments lasting longer than 30 minutes, an Elevator Stoppage Report must be filed with the Chicago Department of Buildings (usually within 48 business hours).
- Return building back to normal operations (security posts, elevators, etc.).
- Conduct after-action-review with team to identify gaps in response measures and opportunities for improvement.
- Report findings with building management, and update response plans as necessary.

Note: The above measures are provided for informational purposes only and do not constitute any set standard, guideline, or code. They are offered as possible options to consider when developing response measures to issues in a commercial office building. When developing response measures, consider all variable, such as building size and design, staffing, time of day, etc. The purpose of these measures is to provide general information to those persons responsible for developing site-specific protective measures, to serve as practices to consider when drafting emergency operations plans, and do not constitute any set policy or procedure.

