

§483.70(b) Emergency Power

(1) An emergency electrical power system must supply power adequate at least for lighting all entrances and exits; equipment to maintain the fire detection, alarm, and extinguishing systems; and life support systems in the event the normal electrical supply is interrupted.

Interpretive Guidelines §483.70(b)(1)

“**Emergency electrical power system**” includes, at a minimum, battery-operated lighting for all entrances and exits, fire detection and alarm systems, and extinguishing systems.

An “**exit**” is defined as a means of egress which is lighted and has three components: an exit access (corridor leading to an exit), and exit (a door), and an exit discharge (door to the street or public way). We define an entrance as any door through which people enter the facility. Furthermore, when an entrance also serves as an exit, its components (exit access, exit, and exit discharge) must be lighted. A waiver of lighting required for both exits and entrances is not permitted.

Procedures §483.70(b)(1)

Review results of inspections by the designated State fire safety authority that the emergency power system has been tested periodically and is functioning in accordance with the Life Safety Code.

Check placement of lighting system to ensure proper coverage of the listed areas. Test all batteries to ensure they work.

Probes: §483.70(b)(1)

Is emergency electrical service adequate?

Additional guidance is available in the National Fire Protection Association’s Life Safety Code 99 and 101 (NFPA 99 and NFPA 101), 12-5.1.3 which is surveyed in Tags K105 and K106 of the Life Safety Code.

§483.70(b)(2) When life support systems are used, the facility must provide emergency electrical power with an emergency generator (as defined in NFPA 99, Health Care Facilities) that is located on the premises.

Interpretive Guidelines §483.70(b)(2)

“Life support systems” is defined as one or more Electro-mechanical device(s) necessary to sustain life, without which the resident will have a likelihood of dying (e.g., ventilators suction machines if necessary to maintain an open airway). The determination of whether a piece of equipment is life support is a **medical determination** dependent upon the condition of the individual residents of the facility e.g. suction machine maybe required “life support equipment” in a facility, depending on the needs of its residents).

Procedures §483.70(b)(2)

If life support systems are used determine if there is a working emergency generator at the facility. A generator is not required if a facility does not use life support systems. Check that the emergency generator starts and transfers power under load conditions within 10 seconds after interruption of normal power. Where residents are on life support equipment, **do no test** transfer switches by shutting off the power unless there is an uninterruptible power supply available.

Probes §483.70(b)(2)

Is there a working generator if the facility is using life support systems?