



## CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY CODE TALK

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### New Requirements for Stairway Video Monitoring in NFPA 101, 2015 Edition

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The 2015 edition of NFPA 101®, Life Safety Code® marks the addition of a new requirement centered on stairway video monitoring for exit stair usage. It applies to new high-rise buildings with occupant loads of over 4,000 people. Before we provide greater detail on what this means, explain how it could be used or provide some information on the reasoning behind its addition, let's give an overview of NFPA 101®.



NFPA 101® is the premier Standard for life safety and one of the most authoritative sources for minimizing the danger to life from fire and related hazards. It provides strategies to protect people based on building construction, protection and occupancy features ([www.nfpa.org/101](http://www.nfpa.org/101)). Follow the link and go to the document information page of NFPA 101® to learn more. Click the quick access link "Official document scope" to explore the full scope of NFPA 101® and get a flavor for how much it contains.

What do we mean when we say stairway video monitoring for new high-rise buildings with occupant loads of over 4,000 people? Essentially, if you have a new high-rise development with over 4,000 occupants, and the applicable Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) has adopted the 2015 edition of NFPA 101®, without amending the requirements in 11.8.8, then you have to provide stairway video monitoring. Note, this only applies to exit stairs but can be integrated with security systems when in



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accordance with NFPA 731, Standard for the Installation of Electronic Premises Security Systems.

So what does this mean? Well, in the case of an emergency in a high-rise building designed to these requirements, it would now be possible to monitor the egress of occupants. The central command hub for the building could get real time data on what's happening. Personnel responsible for emergency evacuations could make a judgement call on blocked or overcrowded exits. Emergency responders may be able to tap into this information and use that data when planning how to best approach the incident. For more information on advancements in data for the Fire Service, check out NFPA 950, *Standard for Data Development and Exchange for the Fire Service* and NFPA 951, *Guide to Building and Utilizing Digital Information* ([www.nfpa.org/950](http://www.nfpa.org/950) and [www.nfpa.org/951](http://www.nfpa.org/951)).

The High Rise Building Safety Advisory Committee (HRBSAC) submitted the proposed changes for the 2015 edition of NFPA 101®. This is an advisory committee established by the NFPA Standards Council to provide advice on issues related to high-rise buildings. For a full review of the HRBSAC substantiation, look at the First Draft Report and Second Draft Report on the document information page ([www.nfpa.org/101](http://www.nfpa.org/101)). In the summary, the HRBSAC identified the need for improving situational awareness of what happens in exit stairs during an evacuation. It was viewed as an important topic with regards to occupant life safety and worthy of further attention in NFPA 101®.

Hence, if you see stairway video monitoring in a new high-rise building, or if you're directed to another stairway exit during a fire drill in the near future, you may be experiencing the requirements of section 11.8.8 of NFPA 101®. In a high-risk scenario, those requirements may play a pivotal role in saving your life.



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Also, remember continuous advancements in technology are reflected in changes to NFPA 101®. You, as a member of the public, can shape those changes. Are you studying anything that could be used to advance life safety? Why not do a little research and develop a change to be submitted for the next edition? Go to [www.nfpa.org/submitpipc](http://www.nfpa.org/submitpipc) and follow the instructions to submit Public Input or Public Comments. The respective Technical Committee may agree with your change. Even if they don't, they have to review it and respond to it.

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