

Fire Barrier Management Strategies

for

Maximizing the Compliance/Cost Ratio

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This is not a discussion about fire damper operation, fire door operation, or how to install firestopping into penetrations.

Yes, these are the components of the Fire Barrier, but this discussion is about how to achieve Fire Barrier compliance in the most cost effective way possible.

What is your desired outcome?

- I. Compliance
- II. Stay within budget
- III. Pass TJC (inspection)
- IV. Ultimately - It's patient safety



What are the obstacles to achieving the outcome?

- I. Budget: Not enough money to do what needs to be done
- II. Resources: Manpower
- III. Focus: Too many other things to worry about
- IV. Trust: Who can I trust to get it done right?
- V. Understanding what's needed for compliance



What is my first step towards cost effective fire barrier compliance?

- I. Get a baseline. Know what you have - The unknown is your enemy. Confront the unknown.
- II. If possible, know it as soon as you can. That allows for a plan.
- III. A plan will allow for an accurate budget, with few or no surprises.
- IV. No surprises means you save money.
- V. A comprehensive plan implemented and followed over a 3 to 6+ year period will allow you to spread your cost more evenly each month and each year, which will make your budget easier to manage, with no surprises.



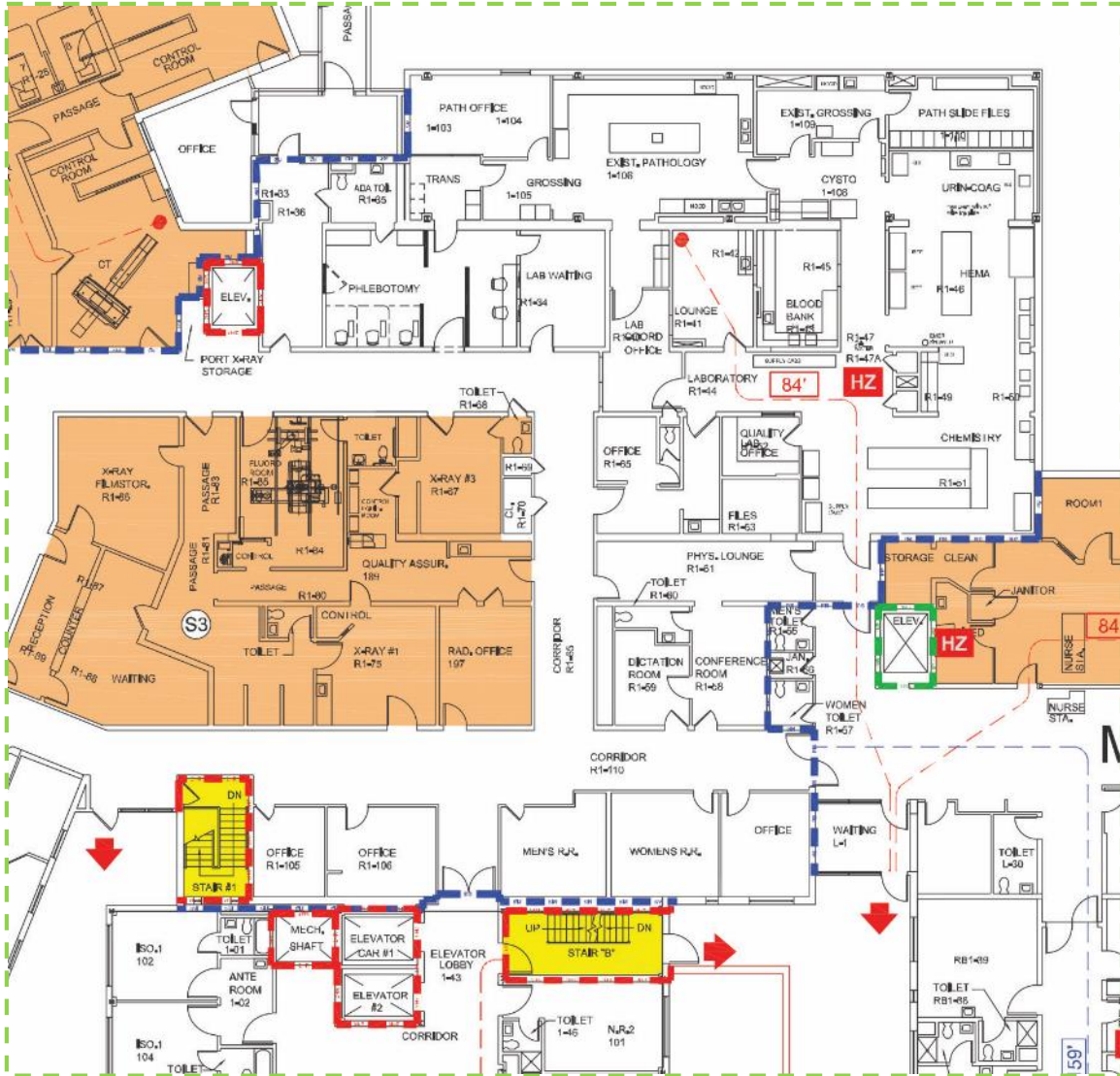
Life Safety Plans

- I. Required by CMS.
- II. Great tool to manage the Fire Barrier, determine scope.
- III. Bad plans = High costs.
- IV. Good Life Safety Plans eliminate the unknown, which saves money.
- V. Invest in good plans, compiled by experts in Life Safety Compliance.
- VI. Plans showing locations of your life safety items is invaluable.

Life Safety Plans



Life Safety Plans



BUILDING FEATURES SYMBOL LEGEND

- 2 Hour Fire Barrier
- 1 Hour Fire Barrier
- Smoke Barrier
- Exit Stairwell
- Suites
- Exit Passageway
- Area under Construction
- Exterior Exit
- Linen/ Trash Chute
- Hazardous Room
- Distance to Smoke
- Distance to Exit
- 3.1 Compartment ID
- Suite ID

How do you know what you have (and where they are)?

- I. Fire Dampers
 - a) Previous inspection may have provided plans, perhaps even on a copy of the Life Safety Plans.
- II. Mechanical plans
- III. Written inventory - spreadsheet



How do you know what you have (and where they are)?

I. Penetrations/ Firestopping

- a) Review the Life Safety Plans for where the barriers are.
- b) If no firestopping has been performed for years, do an assessment to determine the scope (quantity) of work.
- c) Why? Our position in the past was “why spend money on an assessment when you could just spend that money on actually getting the work completed.” The problem is that doesn’t address the facility that hasn’t had any firestopping work performed for years and their barriers are like Swiss cheese. Those facilities need to understand the total scope and cost, then build a plan to get compliant.



How do you know what you have (and where they are)?

I. Fire Doors

- a) Although they are right there in front of you, unlike fire dampers and penetrations that are hidden above the ceiling, you need to know which doors need to be on your annual report. The recent CMS clarification helped, but.....

II. Review your Life Safety Plans



Life Safety Compliance Consulting

- I. Big picture review of your processes
- II. Can help bring clarity



What are the Strategies?

- I. Be proactive rather than reactive to keep costs from spiraling out of control.
- II. Know your due dates for compliance, or partner with a company that can do it for you.
- III. Know the time frames for completing tasks so you don't fall behind.
- IV. Know what things are going to cost, sooner than later, so you can budget appropriately.
- V. Explore options of term agreements that can spread the cost more evenly over 3 or more years. Easier on the budget.
- VI. Know what you are getting (and what you're not getting) when you receive a proposal. Understand the value being proposed. Don't pay for things that have no value. Remember, it's your facility, and you should get what you want.

Key Takeaways

- I. Know your outcome
- II. Know what you have
- III. Build a plan to be compliant
- IV. Build a budget that allows you to achieve your outcome
- V. If you have the resources to do it all on your own, that's terrific.

If you don't, there are a number of outside resources that can help, a little, or a lot.



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