Summary of the Corridor Utilization Policy

Manual Chapter 1361

The intent of this policy is to ensure that corridors provide for:

1. a readily apparent, safe and adequate means by which building occupants may exit a building in the event of a fire or other serious emergency;
2. adequate access and use by emergency personnel;
3. the safe movement of people during normal daily use of the building; and
4. the safe transportation of goods and materials.

This policy applies to all buildings located on the NIH Bethesda campus and the NIH Animal Center (NIHAC) in Poolesville. Corridors of buildings not covered by this policy shall conform to the requirements of the local authority having jurisdiction. Contact the Occupational Safety and Health Branch (6-2346) or a member of your IC Safety Committee to obtain additional information regarding this policy.

Corridors required for emergency evacuation in patient care areas of Building 10 shall be at least eight feet in clear and unobstructed width. Patient-use corridors in the ACRF shall be clear and unobstructed the full constructed width. All other corridors of Building 10 and the ACRF shall be at least five feet in clear and unobstructed width. In buildings where constructed corridors are five feet in width, occupants shall maintain the entire width free of any material or equipment.

A minimum 54 inch width of clear and unobstructed egress must be maintained in all corridors of other buildings on the NIH campus. This policy prohibits the use of the clear width for temporary storage of construction material, equipment scheduled for installation, supplies pending movement into labs or offices, surplus materials or similar items which would serve to jeopardize area occupants.

No exceptions to reduce the corridor width from the stated dimensions shall be allowed.

No storage is allowed in:

- horizontal exits (e.g., 29A, 29B, 36, 37)
- stairwells
- areas of refuge (e.g., 10, ACRF, Lister Hill)
- elevator lobbies

Storage shall not block laboratory or office doors. An adequate clear space must be provided on one or both sides of all doorways: an 18-inch clear space on the latch side of the door jamb or, alternatively, a 12-inch clear space on each side of the door jamb. This "clear space" is primarily

intended to provide safer and greater room access to response personnel and equipment in the event of an emergency.

All exit doors, including stairwell doors, shall be clear of storage to a distance of five feet on either side of the door. While not an approved exit in an emergency, elevator doors must also remain clear of any storage to a distance of five feet on either side of the door.

Storage is allowed on one side of the corridor only: the side opposite fire alarm pull stations, fire extinguishers, electrical panels, etc. The selected side should be uniform throughout the building to enable the occupants to become familiar with a clear path pattern regardless of the floor they occupy at the time of an emergency.

All emergency equipment; including safety showers, eyewashes, sprinklers and fire extinguishers, must be maintained with full and unobstructed access at all times.

Storage or equipment placement shall not block fire alarm system equipment (fire alarm pull stations, fire alarm panels, etc.), utility panels or closets. A 36 inch clear space must be provided on each side of the panel or device.

All approved material storage (paper, cardboard, plastic, etc.) shall be contained within suitable metal cabinets with metal doors. Combustible materials must be stored within the cabinets, since these materials constitute a potential fuel source. Storage on top of cabinets is not allowed.

The following items are prohibited in the corridors:

- flammable or combustible liquids
- hazardous chemicals
- compressed gas cylinders - all sizes
- biological agents at or above Biosafety Level 2
- equipment operating under either positive or negative pressure, high temperature or high voltage
- equipment with exposed machine parts (e.g., unguarded belts, pulleys or gears)
- live animals
- equipment or storage cabinets with glass fronts or panels; including refrigerators,
- incubators, etc.
- open shelves

Although liquified gases (e.g., cryogenic liquids) often present equal or greater hazards than compressed gases, the typical equipment using liquid nitrogen as a freezer supply or serving as a refrigerator backup is considered to represent minimal risk and would be permitted if properly located in the corridor.

The use or storage of radioactive materials in corridors is specifically prohibited, except for the amount of radioactive material in actual use within a scintillation counter or film cassettes in a locked freezer.

Construction materials may be stored temporarily in the corridor during the workday, as long as the minimum prescribed clear corridor width is maintained. Construction materials shall not remain in the corridor overnight. Equipment and supplies shall not, under any circumstances, be stored in stairwells.

Equipment and supplies cannot be abandoned in corridors, horizontal exits, designated areas of refuge or stairwells. Dispose of unneeded property by contacting the appropriate IC Property Custodial Officer. Refer to the NIH Personal Property Management Guide for additional information.

Containers for the storage/disposal of waste materials shall not be left in the corridor. The NIH Waste Disposal Guidedescribes specific disposal procedures for the following types of waste: chemical, multihazardous, radioactive, medical pathological, general and recycling.

Electrical service to authorized equipment shall be provided by permanent installation of an easily accessible, protected outlet located adjacent to the equipment. The use of extension cords or equipment power cords passing through doorways or walls is prohibited.