



California State Fire Marshal CODE INTERPRETATION

Date Issued	7-2-2009	Interpretation #	Revised 04-025
Topic	Illumination and power relating to photoluminescent exit signs.		
Code Section(s)	California Building Code, Sections 1003.2.8.4 & 1003.2.8.5		
Requested by	Dennis Lockard, Fire Marshal Newport Beach Fire Department P.O. Box 1768 Newport Beach, CA 92658		

Section 1003.2.8.4 requires that exit signs be internally or externally illuminated. Based on this section, I have the following questions:

1. Do photoluminescent exit signs meet this requirement?

Yes. This is applicable as long as the photoluminescent exit signs are listed in accordance with UL 924, (including the July 11, 2001 revision) and are installed and maintained per manufacturer's specifications.

2. Must photoluminescent exit signs be continuously illuminated for 24 hours?

No. Photoluminescent exit signs must have a continual light source (minimum five foot-candles of florescent) whenever the building is occupied. Also, the signs must remain lit for the 90 minute requirement when the lights go out or in the event of a power failure.

3. Are photoluminescent exit signs required to be illuminated only when the occupancy is occupied?

Yes. A minimum 5 foot-candle external unfiltered fluorescent illumination must be present on the sign face at all times the building is occupied.

4. May the occupancy turn off the external illumination to the exit sign after business hours?

Yes. However, the external illumination source must be energized at all times during building occupancy.

5. Additionally, Section 1003.2.8.5 requires that all exit signs must be illuminated at all times. To ensure continued illumination for not less than 1 ½ hours in case of primary power loss, the exit signs shall also be connected to an emergency power source. Based on this section, do photo luminescent exit signs meet the requirement?

Yes. However, the installation must be per UL 924, with revisions through, and including, July 11, 2001.