

BBS MEMO

Ohio Board of Building Standards

January 29, 1998

6606 Tussing Road, Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

USE GROUP I-2 AND CORRIDORS USED FOR THE MOVEMENT OF BEDS

The BBS staff recently received a question regarding "assisted living" facility egress requirements. Assisted living facilities provide care on a 24 hour basis for individuals capable of egress, but in need of personal assistance. Typically, these facilities house elderly persons who receive nursing care, but are not bedridden.

OBBC Section 308.2 describes the I-1 Use Group as any buildings that house "...on a twenty-four hour basis, six or more individuals who, because of age, mental or physical disability or other reasons, must live in a supervised environment but are capable of responding to an emergency situation without personal assistance." The individuals in these buildings can hear or see an alarm, are able to independently assess the situation, and leave the building on their own. The residents are not protected "in-place."

OBBC Section 308.3 describes the I-2 Use Group as any buildings that house "...on a twenty-four hour basis, six or more individuals who are not capable of responding to an emergency situation without personal assistance." This group includes rest homes with three or more individuals who are not capable of responding to an emergency situation without personal assistance. The individuals in these buildings may not be able to hear or see an alarm, may not be able to assess the situation, and may not be independently able to leave the building. The residents can be protected "in-place."

Assisted living facilities may house individuals who are not capable of responding to an emergency situation without personal assistance. If this is the case, *they are required to comply with all provisions of an I-2 Use Group*. Assisted living facilities may choose not to house individuals who are bedridden and, instead, maintain an atmosphere as close to apartment living as possible while still providing 24 hour nursing care. The building official must not only determine if the occupants of the assisted living facility are bedridden but also whether or not the corridors will be used for the movement of beds before determining how the code would apply. Sections 1011.3 and 1017.3 OBBC require 96" corridors and 44" doorways, respectively, for egress elements "...used for the movement of beds." If the individuals housed in an assisted living facility, or any other I-2 Use Group, are not bedridden or the corridors are not to be used for the movement of beds, then the requirements for 96" corridors and 44" doorways would not apply. Some clues to look for might be whether the beds are equipped with wheels or whether the institution has an evacuation plan that provides for the physical removal of patients to areas of refuge without moving the beds.

Building officials should exercise caution when permitting less than the usually required 96" corridors and 44" doorways in I-2 facilities; written clarification of the building's use should be obtained from the owner. **The Certificate of Occupancy must state in the "Special Conditions" portion which areas are not permitted to use beds for evacuation of occupants for future inspections by the fire service.** All other provisions for I-2 apply to assisted living facilities. Contact the BBS staff at 614/644-2613 if you have any questions.