Measures of Success and Scoring Category Changes

By Dean Samet, CHSP - DSamet@ssr-inc.com

According to the April 28, 2010 Joint Commission Online, a number of Measures of Success (MOS) requirements have been deleted effective April 26, 2010 and several Elements of Performance (EPs) will change from a “C” to an “A” scoring category effective July 1, 2010. Compliance with affected Elements of Performance is still expected. If your organization is currently completing the MOS data submission for the affected EPs based on your last survey, go to The Joint Commission Connect extranet and enter “MOS requirement removed” in the text box and submit.

Before showing the recent changes, let’s review the particulars of what an MOS is and what the scoring categories are.

Some EPs require an MOS (as designated with a “D” in a circle in the accreditation manual) if that EP was found to be out of compliance at the time of survey or when performing a Periodic Performance Review (PPR). An MOS is a numeric or quantifiable measure, typically related to an audit, that determines whether an action is effective and sustained.

All EPs are designated as either an “A” or “C” scoring category. “A” EPs usually relate to structural requirements, e.g., policies or plans that either exist or don’t exist, and are scored either (2) or (0), respectively. The “A” EPs may also address an issue that must be fully compliant even though it focuses on performance or outcome, e.g., National Patient Safety Goals, or may also relate to a Medicare Condition of Participation that must be fully compliant. “C” EPs are frequency-based and are scored based on the number of times an organization does not meet a particular EP. These are given a score of (2) if there are one or fewer occurrences of noncompliance; (1) if there are two occurrences of noncompliance; and, (0) if there are three or more occurrences of noncompliance.

The Environment of Care (EC) standards with MOS deletions are listed below. (Note: Those designated with an asterisk will be changed from a “C” to an “A” scoring category, effective July 1, 2010.)

EC.02.01.01 EPs 7, 11
EC.02.01.03 EP 6
EC.02.02.01 EPs 7*, 8
EC.02.03.01 EP 1
EC.02.03.05 EPs 3, 4, 7*, 9*, 12*, 16*, 17*, 18*, 19*, 20*
EC.02.04.01 EP 3
EC.02.04.03 EP1
EC.02.05.01 EP 3
EC.02.05.05 EP 1
EC.02.05.07 EP 2

Go to the April 28, 2010 Joint Commission Online publication for a complete list of changes which also include the following chapters: Information Management (IM), Leadership (LD), Medication Management (MM), Medical Staff (MS), Provision of Care (PC), Performance Improvement (PI), and Record of Care, Treatment, and Services (RC).
Electrical Arc Flash Safety - Part 1: Why is it important?

By David Stymiest, PE, FASHE, CHFM, GBE - DStymiest@ssr-inc.com

With the release of the 2009 edition of NFPA 70E®, Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace®, increased attention is being focused on electrical power system safety and the dangers associated with electrical arc flashes.

According to CDC’s National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH), electrical hazards cause more than 300 deaths and 4,000 injuries in the workplace each year. Some electrical injuries are instantly fatal, while up to 40% of electrical injuries are ultimately fatal according to a paper written by three critical care physicians and referenced in a recent electrical industry magazine article. A research and consulting firm specializing in workplace injuries has compiled often-quoted statistics indicating that five to ten reported electrical equipment arc flash explosions occur per day in the USA.

An arc flash is basically a short circuit through the air. It is very destructive and dangerous. When an arc flash occurs, a large amount of concentrated heat and blast energy explodes outward from the electrical equipment. Injuries include severe burns from the superheated ball of gas and molten metal, other injuries from the flying shrapnel, hearing damage from the powerful pressure waves, and eye damage from the high-intensity flash. Studies indicate that the temperature of the arc plasma center often reaches 35,000 °F, which is roughly three to four times the temperature at the surface of the sun.

Arc flash events, or arcing faults, are commonly caused by careless cover or device removal, a foreign object such as a tool dropped into energized equipment, parts failure such as the misalignment of moving contacts, dirt contamination or dielectric breakdown, or entry of a foreign body such as an animal.

According to an OSHA letter reprinted in an industry safety bulletin, OSHA considers NFPA 70E® to be “a recognized industry practice. The employer is required to conduct hazard assessment in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.132(d)(1). If an arc-flash hazard is present, or likely to be present, then the employer must select and require employees to use the protective apparel.”

Future articles will discuss specific elements of electrical arc flash safety programs.

This article is based upon a portion of the author’s Health Facilities Management magazine article entitled “Shock Resistant – Preventing arc-flash hazards in the hospital setting.” Segments reprinted from Health Facilities Management, by permission, October 2009, Copyright 2009, by Health Forum, Inc. Contact David Stymiest at DStymiest@ssr-inc.com for more information.

Damaged Sprinkler Heads

By Robert Trotter, CBO, CFM - RTrotter@ssr-inc.com

Damaged sprinkler heads can have a detrimental effect on the performance of sprinklers by affecting water distribution patterns, insulating thermal elements, delaying operation, or otherwise rendering the sprinkler inoperable or ineffectual. According to The Joint Commission’s 2010 Hospital Accreditation Standards for Life Safety, hospitals must provide and maintain systems for extinguishing fires. LS.02.01.35 Element of Performance 5 states, “Sprinkler heads are not damaged and are free from corrosion, foreign material, and paint.” The standard offers the following: (For full text and any exceptions refer to NFPA® 25-1998: 2-2.1.1.) Section 2-2.1.1 of NFPA® 25, Standard for the Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems states, “Any sprinkler shall be replaced that is painted, corroded, damaged, loaded, or in the improper orientation.” Note that sprinklers installed in concealed spaces such as above suspended ceilings do not require inspection.
NFPA® Codes Available On-Line (Free!)

By Pete Kendrick, CHFM, CPMM - PKendrick@ssr-inc.com

Have you ever desired to review a National Fire Protection Association (NFPA®) code that is not part of your facility library? If so, it might be useful to know that you can do so for free on the NFPA® website, and the service is available to both members and non-members. There are some limitations which will be addressed below, but here is how to find a code. Let’s look up NFPA 99 Standard for Healthcare Facilities just for fun.

First, go to the website at http://www.nfpa.org/. Click on Codes & Standards which is just below the “sign-in” box. On the left you will see a second link for a “List of NFPA codes & standards” and you should select that. For an example, scroll down and click on NFPA 99 under the Code No. in the center of the page. Select “View the document online (read only).”

At this point click on the View 2005 edition online and if you are a member, log in. If you are “Not registered with NFPA,” click on “Create Account” and fill out the information they are requesting, including the fact that you are agreeing to their terms for accessing the online document(s). You will then get an email with a link that allows you to download Real Reader (it’s free) so you can actually see the code online. Then click on “Open NFPA 99: Standard for Health Care Facilities, 2005 Edition.”

You can either scroll through every page or click the TOC tab to open the table of contents. Click on the chapter covering the information you are looking for. While you cannot search, cut, paste or print, you will still have access to recent editions of the code you need to reference. If you need a copy of a single page you can make a screen shot and print that one page of the code for a hard copy. You will have to re-size the picture unless you have magnifying glasses for eyes.

If you have any questions or need any assistance, please feel free to call me at 615-383-1113 or send an email. Good luck!

Labeling Utility System Controls

By Robert Trotter, CBO, CFM - RTrotter@ssr-inc.com

Accurate labeling of utility system controls is essential during routine and emergency shutdown situations. Hospitals are required by The Joint Commission 2010 Hospital Accreditation Standards for the Environment of Care to manage risks associated with its utility systems. EC.02.05.01 Elements of Performance 1 through 13 describe the specific requirements. In regard to the electrical utility, hospitals should pay particular attention to labeling of electrical panelboards as required by EC.02.05.01 EP 8, “The hospital labels utility system controls to facilitate partial or complete emergency shutdowns.” While The Joint Commission has recently been finding these deficiencies under the Environment of Care Standard it is possible the same finding could be noted under the Life Safety Standard relative to building services. For additional information refer to the 1999 edition of NFPA 70®, National Electrical Code Article 384-13, “All panelboard circuits and circuit modifications shall be legibly identified as to purpose or use on a circuit directory located on the face or inside of the panel doors.”

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Locks on Doors in Means of Egress

By Robert Trotter, CBO, CFM - RTrotter@ssr-inc.com

According to the 2000 edition of NFPA 101®, Life Safety Code®, “Experience indicates that panic seldom develops, even in the presence of danger, as long as occupants of buildings are moving towards exits that they can see…” However, the stoppage of egress travel such as an exit door locked with a padlock (as shown on a marked exit door in an industrial occupancy of a hospital) is potentially conducive to panic. Healthcare occupancies as well as business, industrial and storage occupancies are required to comply with the means of egress provisions for locks, latches and alarm devices for doors. Section 7.2.1.5.1 of the Life Safety Code® states, “Doors shall be arranged to be opened readily from the egress side whenever the building is occupied.” It is also important that locks, if provided, “shall not require the use of a key, tool, or special knowledge or effort from the egress side.”

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