

Alabama Department of Public Health, Technical Services Unit

Testing of Emergency Generators and Emergency Lighting

05/08/02

Section 7.9 of the 2000 Edition of the NFPA *Life Safety Code* clarifies the requirements contained in previous editions of the Code for testing of emergency generators and emergency lighting.

Battery-powered emergency lighting must be tested annually for at least 90 minutes, per paragraph 7.9.3. Documentation of the test, and the level of illumination at the end of the test, must be maintained to confirm code compliance. A monthly functional test for at least 30 seconds is also required.

Testing requirements for emergency generators, contained in Section 6-4 of NFPA 110 *Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems*, consist of weekly inspections, and monthly operation under load for at least 30 minutes. These are the code requirements that Technical Services will enforce. NFPA 110, Chapter 6, contains maintenance schedules which outline the items that should be checked at each inspection or test. There is no code requirement for an emergency generator to be tested annually for 90 minutes, nor for a weekly run.

There are many benefits gained from frequent exercising of generator equipment, and facility managers may elect to run generators as often as weekly. However, Technical Services will not require a weekly run.