



Corridor Storage

Among the most important methods of ensuring fire and life safety in a building or occupancy is the elimination of corridor storage. Corridors are part of a “means of egress” and are considered escape avenues for all occupants of a given area, floor, or building in the event of an emergency. Nevertheless, Fire Departments around the country are constantly being asked, “What can we put in the corridors?”

The answer lies within the California Fire Code, Article 12 and Title 19 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). The California Fire Code and the CCR specifically require corridors to be maintained free of storage or obstacles that protrude into the exit path, regardless of the required width.



Poor Corridor Storage



Good Corridor Storage

Because corridors are designed for use as a safe haven for occupants’ use during building evacuation, storage of combustible materials or the use of door wedges is not permitted.

Notice in the photograph of Briggs Hall (above, left) that occupants would have difficulty making a safe exit in the event of an emergency. Keep in mind that in a fire visibility could be reduced to virtually zero by heavy smoke. If smoke is present in the exit corridors, it can become very difficult to see. As a result, escape becomes extremely difficult, especially when you must navigate around protrusions and obstacles through dark smoke (low visibility).

In the photograph of the same hallway, taken after the corridors were cleared, (above, right) it is obvious that a safe exit would be much easier during an emergency, and emergency responders would be capable of conducting a much more effective search of the area if necessary. In addition, most corridors have a one-hour fire and smoke wall that theoretically protects the safe haven for up to one hour should a fire emergency occur inside an adjacent room.

Items specifically permitted in or exposed to the corridor with the approval of the Fire Marshal include:

1. Eye wash/showers, as long as they are recessed and don't project into the corridor.
2. Water fountains, as long as they are recessed and don't project into the corridor.
3. Lockers for personal use, as long as they don't project into the required corridor width or create an exiting obstruction, are metal, and are firmly attached to the wall.
4. Display cases with non-combustible or limited combustible materials, as long as they don't project into the required corridor width or create an exiting obstruction, and are firmly attached to the wall.
5. Non-combustible or non-hazardous material, including bulletin boards, may not take up more than 10% of the linear wall space, and may not project into the required corridor width or create an exiting obstruction, and are firmly attached to the wall and/or floor.

Note:

Existing projections including eye washes, drinking fountains, lockers and display cases are required to have "wing walls" installed at a 45 degree angle to divert traffic around the obstacle.

For a quick overview of what is permissible consult the [Corridor Storage Guideline Spreadsheet](#).

We each individually play a key part in making the campus a safe place to work and learn. So do your part:

Keep the corridors CLEAR.