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**Information for Owners of Elevators and
Other Conveyances Serving Commercial Buildings**

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
New Installations and Alterations, Repairs, Replacements to Components of Existing Conveyances . .	3
Permit to Operate Required	4
Annual Inspections	4
Periodic Testing Required Prior to Annual Inspection.	5
Licensing of Contractors and Personnel Installing, Servicing, Maintaining and Testing Conveyances. . .	6
Performing of Service, Maintenance and Tests by Owner.	7
Documentation Required to be On-Site	7
Contractors for Periodic Maintenance or Service.	7
Use of Freight Elevators	9
Accident Reporting.	9
Placing a Conveyance Out of Service for Hazardous Condition	10
Placing a Conveyance Out of Service for Non-Use	10
Removal or Dismantling of a Conveyance	10
In-Ground Hydraulic Jacks – Leaking, Removal, Abandonment.	10

INTRODUCTION

This article is a summary of owner's responsibilities regarding conveyances serving commercial buildings in the State of Wisconsin.

Since 1912, the State of Wisconsin, Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) and its predecessor agencies have regulated elevators and other conveyances serving commercial buildings in an effort to provide for the safety of passengers and users of buildings and sites.

Terminology to Assist in Using this Document

Commercial building: A public building, place of employment, place of worship, fraternal organization or the common area of a multi-family residential building containing owner-occupied dwelling units (condominium).

Conveyance: Elevator, escalator, moving walk, dumbwaiter, Type B material lift, vertical or inclined platform lift or stairway chair lift.

Elevator: Passenger elevator, freight elevator, limited use/limited application (LULA) elevator, inclined elevator (usually outdoors on a sloped site), power sidewalk elevator, stage or orchestra elevator, rooftop elevator or special purpose personnel elevator (SPPE).

For the purposes of this article, the term “elevator” may also include a private residence or Part V elevator under these circumstances:

- a) installed in limited types of commercial buildings between September 1, 1988 and July 1, 2002 to be accessible to the general public.

- b) installed in a commercial building to only serve a single dwelling within the building, not accessible to the general public.
- c) installed in a commercial building for demonstration purposes only, or under other special circumstances, by petition for variance.

Inspection: Performed by a licensed elevator inspector of this department, an agent municipality or a private inspection contractor. When a conveyance is first installed the acceptance inspection must be passed prior to turn-over and use of the conveyance and issuing of the first annual permit to operate (PTO). Thereafter, an annual inspection must be passed in an effort to ensure continued safety, code compliance and issuing of the annual PTO for the conveyance to remain in service. An inspection may also be required after certain alterations, repairs or replacements of critical components. The term "inspection" is sometimes used by conveyance service contractors to describe a service they provide. For the purpose of the elevator code, inspections are performed only by a licensed elevator inspector, not by a conveyance service contractor.

Re-inspection: Performed by a licensed elevator inspector of this department, an agent municipality or a private inspection contractor. May be deemed necessary by the inspector when the initial, annual or alteration, repair or replacement inspection finds violations.

Maintenance: Where performed on building components or elevator car interiors, may be performed by the owner or authorized personnel who are not required to be licensed. Where performed on other elevator components, maintenance may only be performed by properly licensed personnel, not by an owner or inspector.

Service: Performed only by a licensed elevator contractor, not an owner or inspector. Periodic service is not directly required by code. Service may not be performed by an inspector.

Tests: Performed only by a licensed elevator contractor, not an owner or inspector. Periodic tests *are* directly required by code for most conveyances. Tests may not be performed by an inspector.

Checks: Activity that may be performed by the owner or authorized personnel to verify operation of firefighters emergency operation key switches or hydraulic elevator oil level. Checks may not be performed by an inspector.

Current Wisconsin Codes

Current Wisconsin DSPS codes are available at no cost through the DSPS web site at www.dsps.wi.gov. Select Rules and Regulations
Wisconsin Administrative Code
Administrative Code (Current and Archive)
Scroll down and select Department of Safety and Professional Services (SPS)
Chs. SPS 301- ; Safety, Buildings, and Environment
Select Chs. SPS 301-319; General, Part I
Select **Chapter SPS 318, [Elevators, Escalators and Lift Devices](#)**

These codes are also commonly referred to for elevators and other conveyances.

Ch. SPS 302, [Fee Schedule](#)

Ch. SPS 305, [Licenses, Certifications and Registrations](#)

Ch. SPS 361-366, [Commercial Building Code](#)

Adoption of National Standards

Most codes administered by DSPS adopt a national standard. At this time, SPS 318 adopts the following national standards for conveyances. See **SPS 318.1005**.

ASME A17.1 / CSA B44 (2013 edition) Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators

ASME A18.1 (2011 edition) Safety Standard for Platform Lifts and Stairway Chairlifts

Other codes important to conveyances adopted through state codes or as secondary references include the following:

- ASME A17.6** (2010 edition) Standard for Elevator Suspension, Compensation and Governor Systems
- ASME A17.7 / CSA B44.7** (2007 edition) Performance-Based Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators
- NFPA 13** Automatic Sprinkler Systems (2013 edition, although 2007 may apply to recent projects)
- NFPA 72** National Fire Alarm Code (2013 edition, although 2007 may apply to recent projects)
- NFPA 70** National Electrical Code (2017 edition, although 2011 may apply to recent projects)

Effective Date of Conveyance Codes

In general, the conveyance code to be applied for the life of the conveyance is the code in effect when the original installation contract was signed between the owner and the conveyance contractor. For example an elevator with the installation contract signed on February 28, 1985 will be inspected to the November 1984 state code and the 1981 edition of ASME A17.1 adopted by the state code at the time.

Components of a conveyance that have been replaced, repaired or altered after the initial installation may have contract dates that differ from the original installation contract date. For example, if the 1985 elevator had firefighters emergency operation contracted to be installed in 2005, the firefighters emergency operation system would be inspected each year to the 2005 code requirements. Parts of the elevator not altered in 2005 would continue to be inspected to the codes in effect on their initial installation contract date. This allows improvements to be made to a conveyance without requiring upgrading unrelated components at the same time. See **SPS 318.1004(9)**.

Current codes that are retroactive for existing conveyances are generally limited to maintenance, repair, replacements, alterations, tests and inspections in **ASME A17.1, Part 8**.

NEW INSTALLATIONS AND ALTERATIONS, REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENTS TO COMPONENTS OF EXISTING CONVEYANCES

The installation of a new conveyance or changes to components of an existing conveyance must be performed by a licensed elevator contractor utilizing only properly licensed personnel. See the sections below regarding Licensing of Contractors and Personnel and Service Maintenance and Tests by owner.

The licensed contractor must, by law, have approval granted *prior* to commencing the installation or one of the alterations, repairs or component replacements listed in the code. See **Wis. stat. 101.983(1)(a)**. See **SPS 318.1007** for alterations, repairs and component replacements to existing conveyances where prior approval is required.

The approval will be issued by this department or the cities of Milwaukee or Madison. The approval may include corrections to the contractor's plans as well as instructions to other contractors to achieve timely compliance with safety codes and passing of final inspections. Approval from this department will include information regarding the owner on record, site, conveyance, applicable fee and information to contact the plan reviewer and inspector.

One copy of the approval, one copy of the approved plans where applicable and one copy of the application to perform the work must be on site from the beginning of the elevator contractor's work until passing the final inspection of the conveyance. See **SPS 318.1008(4)**. Failure to comply with rules regarding prior approval will result in additional fees charged.

A copy of the approval to begin the work will also be sent to the owner. If an owner is aware of work beginning but has not received their copy of the approval, it is in their best interest to contact their contractor and this department or Milwaukee or Madison as applicable.

PERMIT TO OPERATE (PTO) REQUIRED

A conveyance serving a commercial building must, by law, have a valid permit to operate while in service. See **Wis. stat. 101.983(2)(a)** and **SPS 318.1011(1)**.

The permit to operate shall be valid for one year from the assigned inspection anniversary date, by law. A permit to operate may not have a term of longer than one year. See **Wis. stat. 101.983(2)(d)** and **SPS 318.1011(4)**.

The permit to operate shall be posted in the conveyance, in the machine room, control room or control space, or in another location approved by the department or agent municipality. See **Wis. stat. 101.983(2)(d)** and **SPS 318.1011(3)**.

ANNUAL INSPECTIONS

The renewal of a permit to operate shall be contingent upon one or more inspections to determine compliance with code requirements.

Within an agent municipality (Milwaukee or Madison), the inspection will be performed by the agent municipality.

Outside an agent municipality, the inspection may occur in one of two ways:

1). An owner may contract directly with an independent licensed elevator inspecting contractor. The following contractors are currently operating in Wisconsin.

ATIS Elevator Inspections, LLC
(855) 755-2847
E-mail: wj@atis.com Website: www.ATIS.com

National Elevator Inspection Services, Inc. (NEIS)
262) 560-6220
E-mail: mimi.ziemann@us.bureauveritas.com Website: www.us.bureauveritas.com

Performance Elevator Consulting, LLC
(262) 853-1054
E-mail: PerformElevCons@wi.rr.com

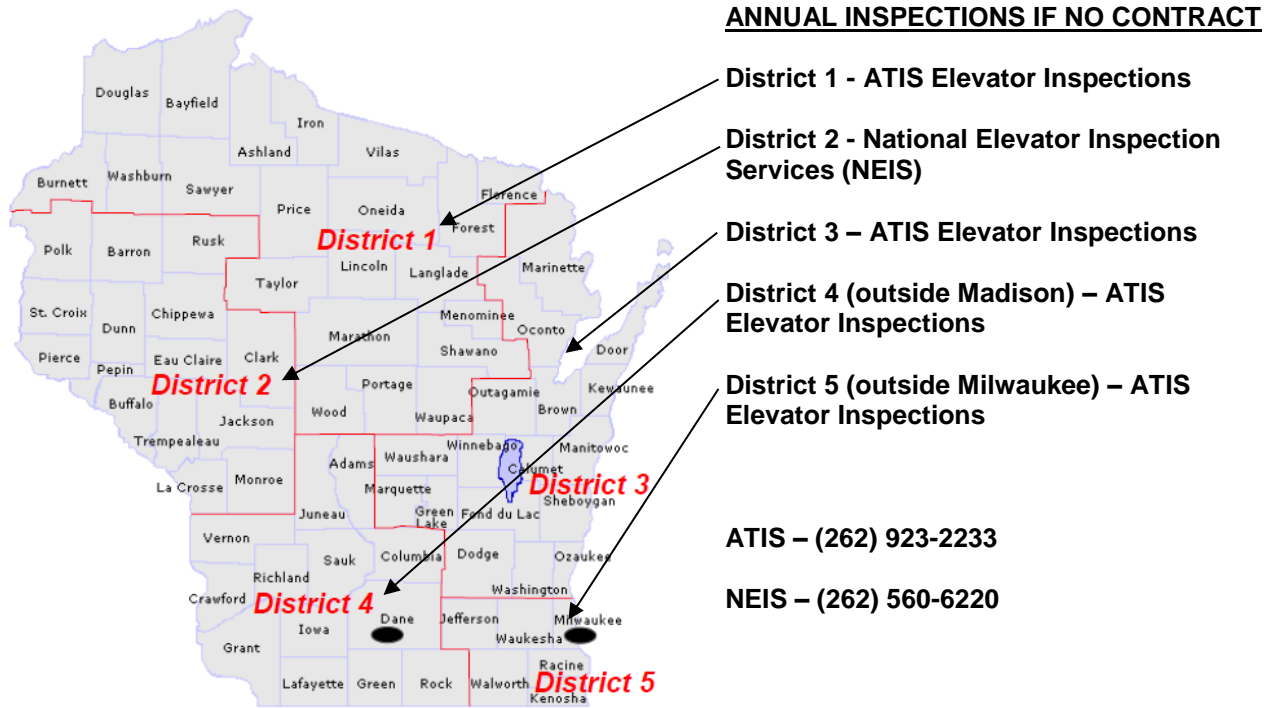
Star Elevator Inspections
(651) 488-7926
E-mail: info@starelevatorinspection.com Website: www.starelevatorinspection.com

Van Deusen & Associates (VDA)
(331) 888-3063
E-mail: kcunningham@vdassoc.com Website: www.vdassoc.com

Wisconsin Elevator Inspection Inc. (WEI)
(262) 567-4400
E-mail: info@wi-elev.com Website: www.wi-elev.com

Wisconsin LLC Dale Ostrowski Inspections P.C.
(815) 823-4000
daleostrowskiinspections@yahoo.com

2). If an owner chooses not to contract directly with one of the above independent licensed elevator inspecting contractors, the inspection will automatically be scheduled by this department to be performed by an inspecting contractor having a written contract with the department or by a department inspector. For such annual inspections where the owner does not have an inspection contract, the inspection will be performed by ATIS or NEIS by district according to this map. **See SPS 318.1011(5).**



The inspection contractors and the department maintain records and schedules to keep inspections up to date however the Owner is ultimately responsible for ensuring their conveyances are operating safely and have a valid PTO. If an inspector does not perform the required annual inspection between 120 and 30 days before the PTO will expire, the owner should contact the inspector directly. ***The inspection must occur, all applicable tests performed satisfactorily, any violations corrected and any necessary re-inspections passed prior to PTO expiration for a conveyance to remain operating.***

PERIODIC TESTING REQUIRED PRIOR TO ANNUAL INSPECTION

The inspector performing the annual inspection must find copies of all applicable test records with passing results on site as part of their inspection. The number and type of periodic tests required may vary greatly from one conveyance to another depending on the type of the equipment. For efficient inspections and issuance of the annual PTO, it is essential that periodic testing is up to date at the time of the annual inspection.

Elevators (Other Than Private Residence-Type)

For a full-size passenger or freight elevator suspended with cables, flat suspension belts or chains (commonly called “electric” elevators), up to 16 tests are required annually and up to 11 tests are required every 5-years. See **A17.1, 8.6.4.19 and 8.6.4.20.**

For a full-size passenger or freight elevator of the hydraulic type, up to 14 tests are required annually and up to 7 tests are required every 5-years. A hydraulic elevator with a jack or piping in the ground and not visible for inspection having a contract date before January 1, 1994 is also required to have an annual pressure test of the system. See **A17.1, 8.6.5.14, 8.6.5.15 and SPS 318.1708(2)(h).**

Private Residence Elevators Installed to Serve Commercial Spaces Within or At Commercial Buildings

A private residence elevator (including an older “Part V” elevator) installed to serve a commercial space within or at a commercial building is subject to annual testing only if an inspection reveals the need for such a test. Such a private residence elevator having a safety device is subject to 5-year tests of the safety device (and governor where the safety device is governor-actuated). See **SPS 318.1708(2)(j)2**. See this article on the Elevators and Conveyances web page regarding [Periodic Inspections and Tests of Residential Type Elevators Serving Commercial Buildings](#).

Escalators and Moving Walks

An escalator or moving walk is subject to up to 22 separate annual tests. All escalators, regardless of age, are subject to annual check of the step / skirt performance index. See **A17.1, 8.6.8.15**.

Dumbwaiters and Type B Material Lifts

A dumbwaiter or Type B material lift is subject to annual testing of some components. Five-year testing is not required. See **A17.1, 8.6.10.1.1**.

Vertical and Inclined Platform Lifts and Stairway Chair Lifts

A platform lift or stairway chair lift is subject to an annual test only if an inspection reveals the need for such a test. A platform lift or stairway chair lift having a safety device that can be tested is subject to 5-year tests of the safety device (and governor where governor-actuated). See **SPS 318.1810(7)**.

LICENSING OF CONTRACTORS AND PERSONNEL INSTALLING, SERVICING, MAINTAINING AND TESTING CONVEYANCES

For new installations and changes to existing conveyances listed in **SPS 318.1007, Tables 1 – 4** an application for plan review must be submitted by a licensed elevator contractor or by a properly- licensed individual employed directly by the owner to perform limited work only on the conveyances of that owner. An owner employing such an individual is not required to become a licensed elevator contractor. See **SPS 305.9905(1)(a) and (b)**.

Individuals having a license of a type in 1 through 5 below may erect, construct, alter, replace, repair, maintain, test, remove or dismantle any type of conveyance. See **SPS 305.991(1)(a)**:

1. licensed elevator mechanic.
2. licensed elevator mechanic–restricted.
3. registered elevator apprentice.
4. registered elevator apprentice–restricted.
5. registered elevator helper.

6. licensed lift mechanic.
7. registered lift apprentice.
8. registered lift helper.

Individuals having a license of a type in 6 through 8 may only erect, construct, alter, replace, maintain, repair, remove or dismantle vertical platform lifts, inclined platform lifts, stairway chair lifts, LULA elevators, residential elevators, residential inclined elevators, and dumbwaiters. They may *not* perform those tasks related to full-size commercial type elevators, escalators or moving walks. See **SPS 305.991(1)(c)**.

PERFORMING OF SERVICE, MAINTENANCE AND TESTS BY THE OWNER

NOTE: Working on or near conveyance equipment can be extremely dangerous! Knowledge of the equipment is necessary to avoid crushing, fall, electric shock and other hazards!

In a Machine room, Hoistway or Pit

An owner or other non-licensed individual authorized by the owner may access elevator machine rooms and hoistways for the purpose of cleaning, changing lamps and servicing, repairing or testing *building* components only. Such personnel must be trained to do so safely. See this article on the Elevators and Conveyances web page regarding [Accessing Elevator Hoistways and Pits](#)

An owner or other authorized, non-licensed individual may *not* perform any function of service or testing to an elevator, escalator or lift except if properly trained, an owner or authorized individual may perform quarterly checks of firefighters emergency operation on an elevator to meet SPS 318.1708(2)(k) or oil level for a hydraulic elevator to meet SPS 318.1708(2)(g). Unexplained loss of oil must be addressed immediately by licensed elevator personnel. See **A17.1, 8.6.5.7.**

Inside an Elevator Car

If properly trained, an owner or authorized individual may perform quarterly checks of elevator firefighters emergency operation system components. Deficiencies in firefighters emergency operation must be addressed immediately by licensed elevator personnel. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(k).**

An owner or authorized individual may install interior finishes inside an elevator car, provided the work:

- 1). is performed entirely inside the car.
- 2). is limited to finish surfaces of the walls, floor and ceiling. Materials exposed to the interior of an elevator must meet requirements for smoke development, flame spread rating and other requirements of **A17.1, 2.14.2.**
- 3). does not involve equipment necessary for the elevator to be operational such as the car operating panel, and
- 4). does not result in an increase or decrease of more than 5% in the sum of the elevator car dead load plus its rated load. See **SPS Table 318.1007-1, Item 11.**

An owner or authorized individual may change lamps within a conveyance for conveyance illumination. See **SPS 305.991(2)(b)2.**

CONTRACTS FOR PERIODIC MAINTENANCE AND SERVICE

Although most elevators and other conveyances require periodic *testing* and an MCP is required to be provided to the owner by the installing or service contractor, codes do not require a conveyance to undergo periodic maintenance or service. A conveyance is required to be maintained and serviced as necessary for safe operation.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED TO BE ON-SITE

Maintenance Control Program

Effective Sept. 1, 2014, the owner must receive a maintenance control program (MCP) from the conveyance contractor for new installation of an elevator, escalator, moving walk, dumbwaiter or Type B material lift. For alterations to an existing conveyance of one of these types, an MCP must be provided for the altered components. An MCP is not required for platform lifts or stairway chair lifts. Where required, the MCP must

provide manufacturer's recommendations for examinations, tests, cleaning, lubrication and adjustments of components based on equipment age, condition, wear, design, quality, environmental conditions. See **A17.1, 8.6.1.2.1** and a sample MCP in non-mandatory **Appendix Y**.

Maintenance Records

On-site maintenance records include records of alterations, repairs and replacements, records of oil usage and records of tests of firefighters emergency operation required. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(k)1** and **A17.1, 8.6.1.4.1**.

Maintenance records shall be retained for the most recent 5 years however an owner may choose to retain the records for a longer period of time. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(b)5**. Maintenance records are to remain with the conveyance if ownership of the building or site changes. See this article on the Elevators and Conveyances web page regarding [Maintenance Records](#)

Written Procedures

Written procedures are required for cleaning of elevator car and hoistway transparent enclosures, emergency evacuation procedures for elevators, operating instructions for means to prevent elevator car movement specified in A17.1, 2.7.5.1.1 or 2.7.5.2.1, egress and reentry procedure using the car top exit or hoistway landing door specified in A17.1, 2.7.5.1.3 and 2.7.5.2.3, operating instructions for retractable platforms and startup procedures for escalators and moving walks. These written procedures will not be evaluated as part of inspections at this time. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(k)2**.

Additional On-Site Documentation

Additional on-site documentation includes wiring diagrams, check-out procedures for safety components, unique procedures for maintenance, adjustments, inspections, tests, replacement of components and a record of trouble calls. See **A17.1, 8.6.1.2.2**.

Location of On-Site Documentation

For a conveyance serving a commercial building and having a machine room, control room, or control space accessed directly from a building floor or the roof (not accessed via an elevator car top), the MCP, maintenance records and other required on-site documentation shall be located in the machine room, control room or control space for the conveyance. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(b)3.a., 4.a. and 5.a.**

For a conveyance having an inspection and test panel without a machine room, control room or control space, the inside cover of the inspection and test panel shall provide instructions for locating the MCP, maintenance records and other required on-site documentation. Instructions shall be permanently legible with lettering not less than 1/8 inch in height. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(b)3.b., 4.b. and 5.b.**

The MCP, maintenance records and other required on-site documentation are the property of the conveyance owner, not the conveyance installer or the contractor or individual providing service. The documentation may be removed only with the permission of the owner. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(b)1.b.** These records may be subject to damage in use or may be misplaced so an owner may choose to retain an additional set of these documents elsewhere.

Updating of On-Site Documentation

Where installation of or alteration to a conveyance requires updating of on-site documentation (including wiring diagrams), such updates in electronic form shall be transferred to the paper copy of the documents by the installing or service contractor within 3 months of the maintenance, repair, replacement, or alteration. See **SPS 318.1708(2)(b)1.a.**

USE OF FREIGHT ELEVATORS

By definition, a freight elevator is an elevator primarily used for carrying freight and on which only the operator and the person or persons necessary for unloading and loading the freight are permitted to ride.

Freight elevators typically are not designed to safely carry persons unfamiliar with potential hazards. The tops, side walls and doors or gates of freight elevators often have openings where persons may be injured. Freight elevators are more likely to stop out of level with a landing increasing the likelihood of tripping for persons entering or exiting. Vertically opening doors or gates may create tripping or head impact hazards. Typical freight elevators are designed for loading of about 50 lbs per square foot while passenger elevators are designed for loading of about 100 lbs per square foot therefore a freight elevator can carry about half the load as a comparable passenger elevator. Overloading is likely to result in the elevator falling or other unintended and unsafe operation.

Freight elevators are not permitted to be ridden by the general public except under the direct supervision of firefighters or other emergency personnel such as while on Phase II Firefighters Emergency Operation.

Freight elevators may be used by building employees other than the operator or freight handlers only with permission from this department or the cities of Milwaukee or Madison as applicable. Such elevators must be shown to meet additional code requirements such as loading capacities necessary for carrying passengers.

An individual may contact this department to determine whether a particular elevator is classified as a passenger elevator available for use by the general public or as a freight elevator.

CONVEYANCE ACCIDENT REPORTING

See **SPS 318.1013 Accident reporting** for the owner's responsibilities regarding reporting of accidents associated with conveyances.

- (1) (a) Any *bodily injury* requiring more than first-aid treatment, that occurs *in conjunction with* a conveyance, shall be reported by the owner or owner's agent to the department or agent municipality within 2 business days of the injury, except as provided in par. (b).
- (b) 1. Any *fatality* under par. (a) shall be reported to the department or agent municipality within 24 hours of the fatality.
 2. For the purposes of this section, the agent municipality is the entity that issued the permit to operate for the conveyance.
- (c) At minimum, a report in an acceptable format shall be submitted to the department or agent municipality.

Note: The department may be contacted at telephone (608) 266-7548 during normal business hours. The State Division of Emergency Management can be contacted at (800) 943-0003 during non-business hours. A copy of the elevator/escalator accident report form SBD-10782 and the minimum information needed are available on the Industry Services' website at:

[Conveyance Accident Report Form](#)

- (2) The owner of a conveyance that causes a bodily injury under sub. (1) may not remove or disturb the conveyance or any of its components or permit any such removal or disturbance prior to receiving authorization from the department or agent municipality, except for the purpose of reducing further bodily harm or property damage, or as provided in sub. (4).
- (3) The owner of a conveyance that causes a bodily injury under sub. (1) may not return or allow the return of the conveyance back into operation or service until receiving authorization from the department or agent municipality that issued the permit to operate, except as provided in sub. (4).
- (4) Where authorized by a licensed elevator inspector, the conveyance may be temporarily returned to service until an inspection by the department or agent municipality verifies that continuation of service is acceptable.

PLACING A CONVEYANCE OUT OF SERVICE FOR HAZARDOUS CONDITION

See **SPS 318.1011(8)(c)2** for the requirement to place a conveyance out of service where a hazardous condition is present

Where an inspection report denotes conditions that pose an imminent threat to life and limb and require the conveyance to be taken out of service, both of the following shall be done immediately

- a. the owner or owner's representative shall take the conveyance out of service.
- b. the inspector shall notify the department.

Please note: A conveyance known to be operating with a hazardous condition should be taken out of service by the owner, owner's representative or elevator personnel without waiting for an inspection and report to be completed.

PLACING A CONVEYANCE OUT OF SERVICE FOR NON-USE

An owner may choose to have a conveyance placed out of service where the conveyance is no longer needed. This typically occurs where part of a building served by the conveyance will not be in use for an extended period. Individuals placing a conveyance out of service for non-use must be properly licensed.

NOTE: Working near conveyance equipment can be extremely dangerous! Knowledge of the equipment is necessary to avoid crushing, fall, electric shock and other hazards!

See **SPS 318.1708(6)(e)** or **SPS 318.1810(3)** for procedures for placing conveyances out of service.

An elevator or platform lift that is part of a required accessible route in an occupied building may not be placed out of service. Approval of the building code authority is required for an elevator or platform lift to be placed out of service in a building that will remain in use. See **SPS 318.1708(6)(e)1.g.** or the note below **SPS 318.1810(3)(b)** as applicable.

REMOVAL OR DISMANTLING OF A CONVEYANCE

An existing conveyance may be removed or dismantled only by a licensed conveyance contractor or individuals, except where demolition of the conveyance will safely occur as part of demolition of that portion of the building. See **SPS 305.990(2)**.

NOTE: Working near conveyance equipment can be extremely dangerous! Knowledge of the equipment is necessary to avoid crushing, fall, electric shock and other hazards!

IN-GROUND HYDRAULIC JACKS - LEAKING, REMOVAL, ABANDONEMENT

See the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website for information regarding loss of oil from a leaking elevator hydraulic jack: [DNR What To Do in Case of an Oil Spill](#)

An in-ground hydraulic elevator jack may not be abandoned in place. According to recent DNR ruling an elevator jack may be removed and the hole filled properly by someone other than a licensed well contractor. Additional information about filling elevator jack holes: [DNR Well Filling and Sealing](#)

Rev. 12-19-2018