

**CHANGE TYPE:** Modification

**CHANGE SUMMARY:** The permitted location for low-level exit signs selectively required in Group R-1 occupancies has been expanded to now allow the bottom of such sign to be mounted up to 18 inches above the floor.

**2018 CODE: 1013.2 Floor-level Low-level exit signs in Group R-1.** Where exit signs are required in Group R-1 occupancies by Section 1013.1, additional low-level exit signs shall be provided in all areas serving guest rooms in Group R-1 occupancies and shall comply with Section 1013.5.

The bottom of the sign shall be not less than 10 inches (254 mm) nor more than ~~12 inches (305 mm)~~ 18 inches (455 mm) above the floor level. The sign shall be flush mounted to the door or wall. Where mounted on the wall, the edge of the sign shall be within 4 inches (102 mm) of the door frame on the latch side.

**CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE:** To help guide occupants of Group R-1 guest rooms to the exits during emergency conditions, additional exit signs are required within the egress system serving the guest rooms. Limiting the application to the egress system serving the guest rooms of hotels and other Group R-1 occupancies recognizes the transient nature of building's use, the often-delayed response to emergency conditions, and the typical low ceiling height in the corridors.

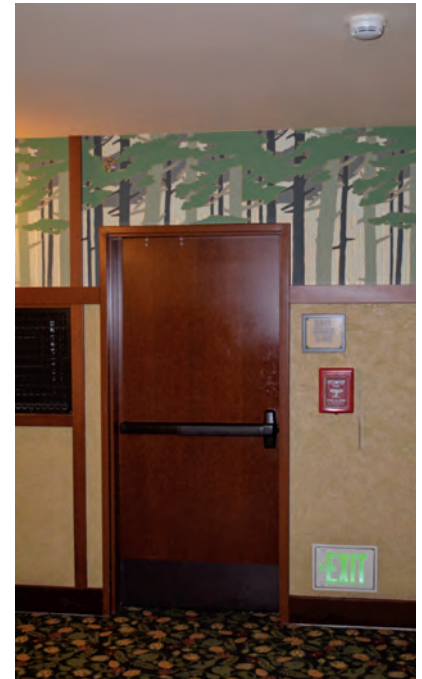
In the 2015 IBC, only a 2-inch tolerance was established for where the bottom of required low-level exit signs must be located. This 2-inch allowance was often challenging for designers and property owners due to field conditions or desired interior finish and trim. For example, several high-end resort properties have installed 12-inch-tall base boards in the exit access corridors of their hotels. The requirement for the bottom of the sign to be located within 10 to 12 inches above the floor level creates issues for these and similar facilities.

The bottom of the required low-level exit sign is now permitted to be located between 10 and 18 inches of the floor level. The additional 6 inches now available provides sufficient flexibility for designers and owners without adversely impacting the level of life safety of the occupants of the Group R-1 occupancies because the low-level exit signs will still be visible below the smoke layer from a fire (in the zone in which the occupants would presumably be crawling).

NFPA 101 *Life Safety Code* Section 7.10.1.6 permits the bottom of low-level exit signs to be installed between 6 and 18 inches above the floor level. Therefore, there is another life safety standard that permits the bottom of low-level exit signs to be installed up to 18 inches above the floor level. Although NFPA 101 permits the bottom of the low-level exit signs to be just 6 inches above the floor level, the IBC retains the requirement for a minimum of 10 inches above the floor level because ICC A117.1 Section 404.2.9 requires door surfaces within 10 inches of the floor to be a smooth surface for the full width of the door. As low-level exit signs can be installed either on the wall or the door, it is important that the low-end limit be such that it does not conflict with accessibility requirements.

## 1013.2

### Floor Level Exit Sign Location



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Low-level exit sign



This excerpt is taken from *Significant Changes to the International Building Code®, 2018 Edition*.

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