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Advisory Regarding Elevator Sumps

Adopted December 4, 2019

The following advisory is issued by the Board of State Examiners of Plumbers and Gas Fitters (“Board”) with regards to recent changes to 524 CMR (the “Elevator Code”) which may implicate provisions of the Uniform State Plumbing Code.

Effective June 1, 2018 (with a concurrency period which ended on December 1, 2018), the Massachusetts Board of Elevator Regulations updated the provisions of the Elevator Code, which governs all elevator installations in Massachusetts. Among the new changes in the Elevator Code is a new requirement for a drain or sump pump. Specifically, ASME A17.1-2013 Section 2.2.2.5 (adopted by 524 CMR 35.00) states (with regards to the design and construction of elevator pits):

“In elevators provided with Firefighters’ Emergency Operation, a drain or sump pump shall be provided. The Sump pump/drain shall have the capacity to remove a minimum of 11.4 m³/h (3,000 gal/h) per elevator.”

There are many methods of installing such a pump/drain system. Where the discharge will be entering a building’s sanitary waste disposal system, the pump/drain system requires special attention as a Plumbing System per M.G.L. c. 142, s. 1, 13, and 248 CMR 10.03. It should also be noted that the code does not prohibit utilizing the storm drainage system for this discharge if permitted by a local ordinance, by-law, rule, or regulation. To assist members of the elevator trade. Licensees, registered design professionals, and other interested parties in meeting this new requirement the Board would like to emphasize the following rules which govern plumbing systems of this type:

“Discharge from gravity drains or pumps entering the sanitary or storm drainage system shall comply with the requirements of 248 CMR 10.00. Elevators utilizing hydraulic oil or other petroleum distillates which may be harmful to the sanitary of storm drainage system shall discharge through a properly sized oil/water separator installed in compliance with 248 CMR 10.09”

Note: Licensees should note that installation of an oil minder pump would not accomplish the separation purposes of 248 CMR 10.09 in these types of installations and could also undermine the effectiveness of the pumping system in an emergency. Accordingly, the installation of an oil minder pump in lieu of a gas/oil separation system shall be construed as a violation of the code and is prohibited.

