March 13, 2017

Q: We are looking at putting new doors on our resident bedrooms. We have an automatic sprinkler system. Do resident bedroom doors have to be fire rated? I have received feedback that if your facility has an automatic sprinkler system the bedroom doors do not have to be fire rated. If they do in fact have to be fire rated would a steel door be considered fire rated and suitable for their bedroom doors?

A: Resident room corridor doors in health care occupancies are not required to be fire rated by the Life Safety Code. I recommend the provider check with the local building official to be sure the local building codes also do not require a fire rated door. Below is the 2012 LSC code requirement for resident corridor doors for new health care occupancies, Chapter 18. Since the doors are being installed, they will have to meet new construction requirements.

18.3.6.3* Corridor Doors.
18.3.6.3.1* Doors protecting corridor openings shall be constructed to resist the passage of smoke, and the following also shall apply:
(1) Compliance with NFPA80, Standard for Fire Doors and Other Opening Protectives, shall not be required.
(2) A clearance between the bottom of the door and the floor covering not exceeding 1 in. (25 mm) shall be permitted for corridor doors.
(3) Doors to toilet rooms, bathrooms, shower rooms, sink closets, and similar auxiliary spaces that do not contain flammable or combustible material shall not be required to be constructed to resist the passage of smoke.
18.3.6.3.2 Reserved.
18.3.6.3.3 Reserved.
18.3.6.3.4 Reserved.
18.3.6.3.5 Doors shall be self-latching and provided with positive latching hardware.
18.3.6.3.6 Doors to toilet rooms, bathrooms, shower rooms, sink closets, and similar auxiliary spaces that do not contain flammable or combustible materials shall not be required to meet the latching requirements of 18.3.6.3.5.
18.3.6.3.7 Powered doors that comply with the requirements of 7.2.1.9 shall not be required to meet the latching requirements of 18.3.6.3.5, provided that both of the following criteria are met:
(1) The door is equipped with a means for keeping the door closed that is acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction.
(2) The device used is capable of keeping the door fully closed if a force of 5 lbf (22 N) is applied at the latch edge of a swinging door and applied in any direction to a sliding or folding door, whether or not power is applied.  
18.3.6.3.8 Corridor doors utilizing an inactive leaf shall have automatic flush bolts on the inactive leaf to provide positive latching.