



City of Ashland Building Safety Division

51 Winburn Way • Ashland, OR 97520

Phone (541) 488-5305 • Fax (541) 488-6066

Email: Building@ashland.or.us

Policies / Interpretations / Procedures

BD-PP-0015

THUMB-TURN DEADBOLT LOCKS

Policy Summary:

States that the Division will not approve the installation of “stand alone” thumb-turn deadbolt locks on any exit door in a building regulated by the Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC).

Background:

Staff is often asked about the acceptability of thumb-turn deadbolt locks on exit doors. Currently-existing thumb-turn deadbolt locks also come into question during the plan review and inspection of buildings being renovated.

Discussion:

Staff is often requested to approve proposals for the use of thumb-turn deadbolt locks on secondary exits or on main exits that comply with OSSC Section 1003.3.1.8 Exception 1, which allows the main entry to be key-locked during times other than business hours. Although the code clearly prohibits the use of manually operated edge- or surface- mounted flush bolts and surface bolts or other similar type of device used to close or restrain the door, the question has traditionally been associated with the language in the charging statement of the referenced code section that states:

Regardless of the occupant load served, exit doors shall be openable from the inside without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort. (emphasis added)

It is important to note that the intent of this code section is particularly focused on the concept of ensuring that the hardware installed be of a type that is familiar to most users and readily operated under any condition of visibility, including darkness, and under conditions of fire or any other emergency. In addition, the hardware must be readily operable, providing the assurance that the building occupant can grip the operating device and operate it. Many thumb-turn locks are, by their nature, difficult to operate and nearly impossible for many disabled persons.

Policy:

Thumb-turn deadbolt locks may not be installed on egress doors of commercial buildings unless the thumb-turn deadbolt functions with a single action of the door hardware and is an integral part of the door hardware lever assembly.