Important Reminder: Elevator Use During Construction Projects

Elevators are not appliances. They are the only occupied space in your building… that moves.

When construction or renovation begins, it's essential to understand how this impacts elevator operation—*especially when life safety systems are taken offline*.

Life safety systems include critical features like emergency phones, fire alarm integration, and smoke detection that ensure elevator safety during emergencies. These systems are typically taken offline during major renovations or tenant improvement projects, and when that happens, any affected elevators are no longer compliant with code and must be removed from automatic service.

They **cannot** be used again until a **Construction Use Permit** is issued and the following minimum requirements are met:

- A **dedicated elevator operator** (in many jurisdictions, this can be a laborer assigned specifically to that task—but not just *anyone* using the elevator)
- **Two-way communication** (radios, intercoms, or squawk-boxes) at each landing and inside the cab
- **Lighting** at every floor the elevator serves
- **Clear, trip-hazard-free pathways** at each landing

Check with the local Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to confirm what's required—especially regarding who qualifies as a compliant elevator operator. As stated, some jurisdictions may allow a laborer dedicated to the role, while others might require a licensed operating engineer.

The key takeaway: **You can't shut down a building, move in trades, and expect to keep using the elevators as if nothing has changed**.