

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 3, 1973

TO: Borough Superintendents

FROM: Thomas V. Burke, Director of Operations

SUBJECT: EXITS OF LARGE RETAIL STORES

BACKGROUND: Kumamoto, Japan, Thursday, November 29 - A fire raged out of control in a crowded department store today, and police reported 107 persons killed and 100 injured.

INTENT: With the coming of the Christmas season, it is especially important that those stores where large numbers of persons congregate for Christmas shopping, maintain the exits in a clear, unobstructed condition and that exit and directional signs be provided so that the location of the exits may be obvious to persons in the stores.

REQUIRED ACTION:

1. CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

A) Each such store in your borough shall be inspected for these conditions as quickly as possible so as to require sufficient exits for the great number of persons using the retail stores at this time. Exit signs are to be located so that signs designating at least two exits are visible from any point of a floor. Passages to exits shall be required to be clear and unobstructed. Doors are to be readily openable, with no obstructions of any kind.

B) It shall be required that any obstructions of

exits be eliminated at once and the emergency inspector shall require compliance before he leaves the premises. Upon failure to do so, a summons to court shall be issued to a responsible person in charge of the store.

C) Escalators or moving stairs shall be inspected to determine if the horizontal shutter is functioning properly.

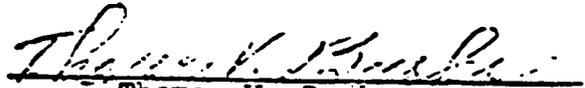
D) When exit or directional signs are not adequate, verbal notice shall be given that placement of additional signs is required; and violation orders are to be filed subsequently. Reinspection shall be made not later than one week after issuance of the violation notice and where the exit or directional signs have not been installed, summonses to court are to be issued to persons in responsible charge of the stores.

2. PLUMBING DIVISION

A) Each such store in your borough shall be inspected as quickly as possible to determine if a sprinkler system is in operation. The O.S. & Y. Valve shall be inspected and the inspector's test valve shall be opened.

B) Should the sprinkler system be deemed inoperative, the plumbing inspector shall not leave the premises until either corrective measures are taken or the Borough Superintendent is notified by telephone.

3. This procedure shall be started on Monday, December 3rd, and shall be completed as quickly as possible, as discussed by telephone.



Thomas V. Burke
Director of Operations

TVB/PEO/df

Distribution:

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