HEADS UP…

The Joint Commission

TOPIC: Inspects, tests, and maintains emergency power systems
***SETTING:* Office-Based Surgery (OBS) Program**

Why is this important?

Emergency power systems are essential to maintain a safe and functioning environment for patients. However, these systems may fail during power disruptions and leaving practices unable to deliver safe care, treatment, or services to patients. It is vital for emergency power systems to be tested for sufficient lengths of time, inspected, and maintained at regular frequencies to mitigate potential risks associated with losing this critical resource when it is most needed.

Scope of the Problem:

Time period: **October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022**
Number of surveys performed: **92**
Number of surveys with findings for EC.02.05.07 EP 1 & 2 (all SAFER categories): **28 (30%)**
Relevant standard/EP: EC.02.05.07 The practice inspects, tests, and maintains emergency power systems. Note: This standard does not require practices to have the types of emergency power equipment discussed below. However, if these types of equipment exist within the building, then the following maintenance, testing, and inspection requirements apply.
EP 1 At least monthly, the practice performs a functional test of emergency lighting systems and exit signs required for egress and task lighting for a minimum duration of 30 seconds. The completion date of the test is documented. (For full text, refer to NFPA 101-2012: 7.9.3; 7.10.9; NFPA 99-2012: 6.3.2.2.11.5)
EP 2 Every 12 months, the practice performs a functional test of battery-powered lights required for egress and exit signs for a duration of 1 1/2 hours. For new construction, renovation or modernization, battery powered lighting in locations where deep sedation and general anesthesia are administered is tested annually for 30 minutes. The test results and completion dates are documented. (For full text, refer to NFPA 101-2012: 7.9.3; 7.10.9; NFPA 99-2012: 6.3.2.2.11.5)

Sample survey observations [from surveyor notes] and contributing factors

Sample observations:

- There was no evidence that all of the battery-powered egress lights were tested for 90 minutes.
- The battery-powered lights were only tested for 1 hour and not the 90 minutes which is the annual testing requirement.
- There was no evidence of the monthly testing for the battery-powered egress lighting.
- There was no evidence of the monthly testing for the exit signs required for egress.
- There was no evidence of the monthly testing of the task lighting.

Potential contributing factors:

- Leadership was not aware of these requirements.
- Staff were not educated on or aware of inspection and testing requirements.
- Device inventory lists did not include inspection results.
- Lack of a process to track testing information.

How to identify potential problems in your practice

Review your policies and procedures

☐ Does the practice have defined activities and frequencies for maintaining, inspecting, and testing all utility components on the inventory? Are the activities and timeframes for each component specified?

☐ Has your organization identified who is responsible for conducting tests and documenting the results for the emergency power systems and utilities equipment?

☐ Does the practice include all the battery-powered egress lighting, exit signs required for egress and task lighting in their utility component inventory? How often does the organization review and update the inventory?

☐ Does the practice have written procedures for responding to utility system disruptions or failures? How often does the organization review these procedures?

Interview staff

☐ Staff have received training and orientation on how to test and inspect emergency power systems and other utility components.

☐ Staff are aware of the location and have access to the utility component inventory.

☐ Does clinical staff know who to contact if there is a disruption or failure with the utility system?

☐ Can clinical staff demonstrate how to respond to a disruption or failure of the utility system?

Assess your environment

☐ Does the practice document evidence of utility system tests, inspections, and maintenance?

Evaluate implementation

☐ Does the practice regularly monitor and evaluate the utility systems and inventory documentation?

☐ How does the practice monitor and document disruptions and failures with the utility systems and components?

☐ How does the practice document maintenance of the utility systems?

What are some resources can assist me in mitigating risks in these areas?

- The Joint Commission, The Physical Environment: https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/the-physical-environment/