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### Elevator Pit Ladders

Are pit ladders required on all elevators, new and existing? The answer is yes with exceptions.

First: Yes pit ladders have been required by since the 1955 A17.1 code, which required ladders for access in pits deeper than 4'-0" deep. The 1978 code revised this requirement to pits deeper than 3'-0" and added the requirement that the ladder extend 3'-6" above the floor. The A17.1 code revised the requirements again in 1994, 2000, 2002, 2005, and 2007 but the requirement for a pit ladder was never dropped.

The A17.3 code for the minimum requirements for existing elevators only calls for access to the pit. Since pit ladders have been a requirement for new installations since 1955, you have to agree that A17.3 is referring to the requirements for pit ladders in A17.1 since 1955 when it mentions pit access.

So the short answer is YES. Pit ladders are required.

Exceptions: 1. Elevators installed prior to 1955. However, when these elevators are replaced or modernized, they will be required to have a pit ladder.

2. If the pit is 10'-0" deep or deeper, Pit ladders are prohibited. Pit access would then have to be by extension ladder or pit door.

Be Safe,

Gary Brewer  
Chief Elevator Inspector  
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