



**COUNTY OF PRINCE WILLIAM**  
5 County Complex Court, Prince William, Virginia 22192-9201  
(703) 792-6930 Metro 631-1703 FAX: (703) 792-7054

DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC WORKS  
Division of  
Building Development

**BUILDING OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION 2003-08**  
**November 16, 2006**

**CODE/EDITION:** VIRGINIA UNIFORM STATEWIDE BUILDING CODE/2003

**SECTION(S):** National Electrical Code/2002, Article 700 Emergency Systems

**QUESTION:**

1. What building systems are classified as emergency systems which fall under the scope for the National Electrical Code, Article 700?

**ANSWER:**

1. Emergency systems are those systems legally required that are essential for safety to human life.

For normal occupancy buildings the goal of the emergency systems is to provide for notification and evacuation during a fire event. Therefore, the building systems classified as emergency systems are exit signs, egress lighting, fire detection systems and fire alarm systems.

For buildings designated as "Emergency Shelters" by Prince William County the goal of the emergency systems is to provide notification and evacuation during a fire event, as well as, to provide for the minimum requirements to safely sustain human life in an occupied building. Therefore, the building systems classified as emergency systems for "Emergency Shelters" are: exit signs, egress lighting, fire protection systems (i.e. detection systems, alarm systems, communication panels and fire pumps), communication systems (i.e., public announcement systems, telephone systems, required computer network systems), security systems (i.e., intrusion and alarm systems, security camera systems) and power systems limited to the portion of the building designated as the emergency shelter (i.e., heating and ventilation systems and cooking facilities).

Eric M. Mays, P.E., C.B.O.  
Building Official