

MAINTAINING YOUR BUILDING'S ELEVATORS

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Elevators have come a long way in the past few decades, largely due to advancements in electronics and the addition of computer monitoring. They are no longer simple pulley systems capable of being maintained and repaired by the average technician. If an elevator in your building requires maintenance, chances are you'll need to hire a specialized contractor.

Because of the technology in today's elevators, fixing them can be quite costly. That's why you should always be on the lookout for potential problems and deal with them before they become a major headache for your business.

An elevator maintenance program is an essential part of your business to keep your elevators running properly. A good elevator maintenance program should be:

- ▶ Proactive, to catch potential problems before an elevator is shut down,
- ▶ Responsive, to get the problem fixed as soon as possible, and
- ▶ Capable, to recognize both common and uncommon problems and fix them in a timely manner.

An elevator has a lot of moving parts, so be on the lookout for these potential problems.

- ▶ Long wait times. If the elevator seems to take longer than usual to get from floor to floor, time how long it takes and compare it to the elevator manufacturer's specifications. If it is taking longer than normal, have an elevator technician take a look. Overheating. If your elevator has an electrical traction system, it can easily overheat if the mechanical room is improperly ventilated. The mechanical room for this type of system is often on the building's roof, so dirt and humidity can also cause the elevator's traction system to overheat. Inspect the mechanical room regularly to avoid this common problem.
- ▶ Lack of hydraulic fluid. A lack of hydraulic fluid in the elevator's reservoir can cause a loud noise when the elevator is in use. Luckily, replacing the hydraulic fluid in an elevator is a simple and cost-effective way to keep an elevator running smoothly. A hydraulic fluid test should be performed regularly, according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- ▶ Door malfunctions. Elevator doors receive significant use and are vulnerable to misuse, as well. Consider upgrading to infrared edges to eliminate physical contact with objects or passengers. The doors' bearings and skirts should be lubricated on a regular basis.

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- ▶ Vandalism. Elevators are common vandalism targets, so make sure vandal-resistant interiors and control panels are installed. Elevators that have frequent shutdowns are more likely to be vandalized.

All elevators will need service work at some point. If you notice any of the aforementioned problems, do not try and fix them yourself. Simply disengage the elevator and rope the area off.

When arranging for service to be performed, make sure to find a service company you can trust. A technician should be on-site within an hour to avoid long, inconvenient shutdowns.

For more information about elevator maintenance and other strategies to help protect your assets and mitigate loss, contact us today at (856) 489-9100.

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