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National Elevator Escalator Safety
Awareness Week steps off November 14th

State Fire Marshal’s office is responsible for elevator safety in Illinois

CHICAGO –According to the National Elevator Industry, Inc., riders travel on one million elevators and 44,000 escalators in North America each year. While elevators, escalators and moving walkways are among the safest modes of mass transit, the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal’s (OSFM) Division of Elevator Safety advises riders to exercise extra caution because unfortunate incidents do occur each year.

“With the proper safety information, almost all accidents are avoidable,” said Robert Capuani, director of OSFM’s Division of Elevator Safety. “Adults need to be especially careful when riding with children, who may be unfamiliar with the equipment and slow to react to the movement of elevator doors or escalator steps and handrails.”

OSFM offers the following elevator and escalator safety checklist:

• Approaching the elevator
  V Know your destination. Push the Up or Down button for the direction you want to go.
  V Stand aside for exiting passengers.
  V Wait for the next car if the elevator is full.
  V Don’t try to stop a closing door with anything including hands, feet or canes. Wait for the next elevator.
  V Take the stairs if there is a fire in the building—do not use the elevator.

• Entering and exiting the elevator
  V Enter and exit carefully. Watch your step.
  V Hold children firmly.
  V Stand clear of the doors – keep clothes and carry-ons away from the opening.
  V Push and hold the Door Open button if doors need to be held open, or ask someone to push the Door Open button for you.

• Riding the elevator
  V Stand back from the doors.
  V Hold the handrail, if available.
  V Pay attention to the floor indications.
  V If the doors do not open when the elevator stops, push the Door Open button.
  V If there is an emergency—use the provided phone or intercom system.
V Be considerate. Keep elevator clean for passenger comfort.

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• **Before entering escalators or moving walkways**
  V No hand trucks or hand carts.
  V No freight.
  V No wheelchairs, strollers or baby buggies.
  V No walkers or wheeled vehicles.
  V No loose clothing—clogs, flip flops, soft-soled shoes or scarves.
  V Be careful when carrying hanging clothes.
  V No running or walking—stand still.
  V Don’t ride barefoot or with loose shoelaces.
  V Parents - supervise the conduct and activity of your children.
  V Use emergency button in emergency situations only.

• **Entering escalators or moving walkways**
  V Check the direction of the moving steps.
  V Step on and off promptly.
  V Take extra care if you are wearing bifocals.
  V Hold children or small packages firmly in one hand.
  V Grasp the handrail as you step promptly onto the moving step.
  V Don’t crowd the escalator. Leave enough room for emergency situations.

• **Riding escalators or moving walkways**
  V Stand toward the middle of the step – away from the sides and face forward. Don’t lean against the sides.
  V Don’t allow children to sit on steps.
  V Do not sit umbrellas on steps.
  V Keep a firm grip on the handrail. Reposition your hand slowly if the handrail moves ahead or behind the steps. Escalators may stop for safety precautions.
  V Don’t rest your handbag or parcels or any other objects on the handrail or steps or anywhere. Keep objects in hands at all times.
  V Pay attention. Don’t window-shop while riding.

• **Exiting escalators or moving walkways**
  V Be sensitive to those in front of you.
  V Don’t hesitate. Step off promptly.
  V Immediately move clear of the escalator exit area – don’t stop to talk or look around. Other passengers may be behind you.

Safety week provides a focal point for the elevator/escalator industry to spread the word about public safety in the elevator industry. For more information about the Elevator Escalator Safety Foundation (EESF) or National Elevator Escalator Safety Awareness Week, contact EESF at (800) 949-6442 or
info@EESF.org.

For more information about fire safety and prevention, please visit www.state.il.us/osfm or www.nfpa.org.