ZITHA TECH SPECIALTY CABLES (Pty) Ltd

Install electrical distribution box in the stairwell



Overview

Section 240.24 (F) prohibits overcurrent protective devices from being installed/located over the steps of a stairway.

Key Takeaways

Placing an electrical distribution box directly over stair steps is prohibited, but installation on a stair landing may be allowed if code-required clearances and working space are maintained.NEC Compliance and Safety Considerations

According to the National Electrical Code (NEC), overcurrent protective devices such as panelboards cannot be installed over the steps of a stairway (NEC 240.24(F)), . This is to prevent hazards when accessing the panel and to ensure safe egress. However, a panelboard can be installed on a stair landing if the landing provides sufficient working space: a minimum of 2 feet 6 inches wide by 3 feet deep, with at least 6 feet 6 inches of headroom in front of the panel, and the panel door must swing open to 90 degrees .

Exit Enclosure Restrictions

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If the stairwell is part of an exit enclosure (required for egress), the NEC and NFPA 101 restrict the installation of electrical equipment and wiring to only what is essential for the stairway, such as emergency lighting, fire department communication systems, or ventilation equipment . Non-essential panels or conduits are generally not permitted in these areas, and local authorities having jurisdiction (AHJ) may enforce stricter rules .

Practical Considerations
• Headroom and access: Equipment under stairs may be limited due to headroom requirements, and the working space in front of the panel must remain unobstructed .

• Fire safety: Any wall penetrations for wiring must be properly fire-stopped, especially in fire-rated walls or partitions, to prevent the spread of fire .

• Existing installations: Panels installed under stairs before current code adoption may be grandfathered, but upgrades or new installations are typically not allowed in the same location .
Summary

While it is not allowed to place a distribution box directly over stair steps, installation on a stair landing is possible if all NEC working space and clearance requirements are met. For stairwells that serve as exit enclosures, only essential wiring and equipment are permitted, and local building codes or AHJ requirements may further restrict placement. Always consult the NEC, NFPA 101, and your local building authority before proceeding.

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2020 NEC, Section 300.25: Wiring Located in Exit Enclosures

This section regulates wiring located in Vertical Exit Enclosures, also known as stair towers. The new 2020 NEC

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In this video, I install the drywall, continue the wiring, electrical boxes and add my Halo light to the ceiling.

New location for main panel

I''ve been reviewing NEC 2008 – particularly NEC 110.26 – Spaces About Electrical Equipment, and it appears to me

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The above mentioned electrical wiring accessories and protective devices are used to control and distribute electric supply (safely to

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Tips for Electrical Box Installation

Installing the electrical wall boxes is necessary for switches and receptacle outlets. Follow

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