

Change in the codes after the fire in nightclub

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The station nightclub fire is one of the major fire disasters to happen in the country. The fire ended up killing a hundred and injuring another two hundred and thirty of the four sixty-two people in attendance at that club on that day. The fire was started by fireworks/pyrotechnics which ignited the foam insulation which was installed around the stage (Duval, R. 2007)

Firefighters hurried to the scene of the fire and arrived five minutes after it started but found that the fire had already burned up to the roof. This led to the need to review the old fire laws which existed prior to the fire and new laws were put in place.

Old Codes Subject before the Accident and its Shortcoming during the Accident

A number of errors were found on the fire codes and it is believed that these errors led to the loss of life during the fire. The first code which was in place at that time is seen to be that buildings were expected to have fire alarms. The station nightclub had manual fire alarm boxes and heat detectors with ways of notifying the public and the fire department. However, the fire alarm was not connected to the fire stations alarm office. This was a major shortcoming as the alarm system might have been able to inform both the crowd in place and the fire department, of the danger which was in place and thus helped to save many lives.

Another important code in place during the fire was that every fire engine was to be manned by four people. The fact that this was not achieved on that night led to the inability of the firefighters to effectively deal with the fire. Lack of enough manpower by the local firefighting department led to serious flaws in the time period taken to respond to the fire and also to the procedure taken in dealing with the fire.

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A code which was in place was that areas which are frequent public hang spots were required to undergo regular inspections by the local fire fighting stations ascertain their safety. It is said that the local authorities had not done proper inspection on the building as some of the interior decorative materials used in this building were not compliant to the rules for more than two years. The building is seen to have used class C interior finishing which was highly flammable and hence not acceptable in places like this nightclub, which hold more than three hundred people.

The occupants and egress code were also in place. The occupant's code is seen to regulate the number of occupants who can be allowed in a building at a given time while egress is seen to deal with the number of entry/exit points which are expected in a building which is used by the public. The building was found to be overcrowded during the fire with the number of people exceeding the number put up by the local fire authorities. The exit points were crowded and the doors not properly spaced according to the given NFPA rules thus leading to more casualties as a result of the fire.

Change in the Codes after the fire

There are various recommendations which were put in place after the fire to help prevent the starting of another major fire and also to protect lives just in case a fire started. The first code is seen to be the installation of fire sprinklers in nightclubs and all other areas of assembly which can accommodate more than a hundred people (Mike H., 2007). This was mainly due to the fact that research after the incidence was able to prove that the existence of sprinklers would have helped stop the fire.

New requirements were also placed on the size of the exit points in areas of assembly. These new rules require the size of the main exit points to enable

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two-thirds of the population in the area to pass through while the remaining exits should accommodate half of the population in place. The minimum width that an exit point can have is seen to be seventy-two inches.

The owners should also check all exit points to ensure that they are free from obstruction. New stricter rules of using pyrotechnics were also put in place. This new law required that the use of pyrotechnics is preceded by getting permission on their use from the relevant fire department which serves you.