THE NEWEST WAY TO STAY UP TO DATE WITH FACILITY RESOURCES

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Wayfinding: Guide The Way With Color

Color has always played a role in how we react to the world. In our daily lives, we may avoid traffic routes lined with orange traffic cones or yield to the flashing red lights that alert us of an emergency. In architectural environments, colored materials and surfaces can be deployed as informational design elements to save lives or simply to point us toward a parking garage. We might not consciously remember learning the color code, but it’s undeniably central to how we navigate our environments. It is a wayfinding tool as well.

Biologically, to perceive color, information must travel through the optic nerve and send signals to the visual cortex of the brain, where images are formed and colors differentiated. Enhanced by cultural learnings and personal psychology, this process is part of what drives us to wake...
Want to further your professional FM development but not sure where to start? This workshop will help you decide if you want to pursue the CFM certification. Regardless if you decide to pursue the CFM or perhaps the FMP or SFP, you will gain valuable information in this small, interactive group environment. Or perhaps you just need a refresher before taking the CFM exam. Plan to join us!

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Make sure you don't say THIS.

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As our scientific understanding of color evolves, building technology is keeping pace by developing advanced color-based solutions relevant in virtually every architectural environment and building type. Color is integral to space plans and facility management programs that provide for security and life safety. For facility executives looking to maximize the possibility of their spaces, elements such as doors, frames, and hardware should be included in those plans and programs.

Colored doors, frames, and hardware can be deployed to aid wayfinding and navigation in facilities where building occupants have diverse physical, developmental, and cognitive capabilities. That makes color relevant for wayfinding just about everywhere.

Ambiguous, monochromatic interior color schemes, for example, may be aesthetically appealing, but they can also be disorienting for occupants in unfamiliar architectural environments and may create navigational difficulties for those with visual-spatial challenges and perception impairment. Color can be applied to functionally significant interior features like doors, frames, and hardware, to create distinctive landmarks and emphasize navigable pathways. Color-coding in this way can assist in the mental mapping of meaningful landmarks within an environment.

Meanwhile, effective wayfinding during emergencies can be crucial to life safety in public spaces. Lighting for paths of safe egress is required by code. And lighting has always played a critical role in architectural design, not only in the creation of space and place, but also in the definition of an environment’s unique dimensionality. Like lighting, color can be an equally significant communicator of space and place that serves as a life-saving indicator of environmental
Color may also be the easiest method for incorporating emergency wayfinding into an existing structure, as it doesn’t require structural building overhauls. Consider the use of color on doors, frames, and hardware to communicate paths of safe egress or shelter.

The importance of color is significant enough that regulators and professional organizations have created guidelines to advise on best practices. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has designated red to indicate fire protection equipment, danger, high risk or emergency; green for first aid and safety equipment locations; and, so on. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) have both established color languages as well, all in an effort to keep people safe.

Studies have shown that color can actually improve or impair our ability to focus, to learn, to heal, and to behave within an architectural environment. The degree of its impact is such that even color quality, known as the Color Rendering Index (CRI), is an element of the WELL Building Standard (WELL) that provides for visual appeal and enhancement of occupant comfort and productivity in any building type. Making color a priority can contribute to the built environment by keeping us safe, helping us find our way, and enhancing our experience of the space.

We are here to serve YOU!
Please don't hesitate to send us your ideas, feedback or gripes!

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Check out other members, learn about our committees and see our calendar of upcoming events!