

FURNITURE AND FIXTURES FOR FIRE-RESISTING BUILDINGS.

Some thirty-five years ago, when fire-resistive buildings of the steel-beam type were first erected, fear was expressed by some officials of fire insurance companies that, if this new type of fireproof building became popular, insurance against fire would be unnecessary, says the National Fire Protection Association's Committee on Fire-Resistive Construction. This feeling of security though inversely expressed, is still more or less indulged in by many well-meaning persons who take it for granted that their lives and goods are safe, if inside what was then called a fireproof building, and what we now have more properly designated a fire-resistive building.

In spite of some lamentable disasters, the popular imagination still conceives that the contents of a fire-resistive building will not burn, so that when flames are seen issuing from the windows of a building known as "fire-proof" there are those who will refer with derision to the "fireproof" building, and even some journals will print "fireproof but it burns."

This feeling that all depends upon the building has been reflected by those who are intrusted with the making of building laws, for though they endeavor to make building construction more and more fire resistive, they devote little or no attention to the contents.

DANGEROUS CONTENTS.

Many lives and much property have been lost because of the inflammable nature of the contents of buildings, and there are many instances where this loss has occurred when the building itself has suffered little or no damage, though of the most ordinary fire-resistive type.

Much time and thought have been given to the planning and construction of buildings to render them fire resistive, but with comparatively little expense greater results may be obtained by providing fire-resistive furnishings and equipment to protect the lives of the occupants and the contents of the building.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FIRE-RESISTIVE FURNITURE AND FIXTURES.

1. All solid partitions to be of metal lath and cement plaster, terra cotta, brick, magnesite, or other incombustible material, and all doors with trim shall be of metal or metal-covered or other non-inflammable material, and no wood shall be used except metal covered.

2. All glazing of sash partitions, including doors, shall be of 1/4-inch wire-glass in metal frames, with the balance of the construction of metal, or metal plaster or other incombustible material, and no wood unless covered with metal shall be used.

3. Wooden slat partitions or slat guards back of fire doors or elsewhere shall not be used; wire screens set in metal frames or other metal guards are suggested.

SHELVING.

4. All shelving shall be of metal or other suitable incombustible material. Where the contents of the shelving are of an inflammable nature, the fronts of all shelving are to be provided with doors of the same material as shelves, and if required to be glazed, the same must be done with wireglass fastened with metal independent of putty.

5. All the clothes lockers or closets shall be of metal, and not more than ten in one space or area, unless kept in a separate room enclosed with fire-resistive partitions and doors.

6. All furniture, such as tables, benches and chairs, shall be of metal or other fire-resistive material. No wood shall be allowed except in tops where the under side must be protected with metal.

7. All stock rooms or storage rooms containing inflammable goods must be enclosed to the ceiling with fire-resistive material; no wooden slat partitions shall be used.

INFLAMMABLE GOODS.

In order to reduce the fire hazard due to inflammable goods, it is recommended, where large quantities are stored, to have more than one room, and that the area of no such room exceed 500 square feet unless the goods are packed or stored in separate enclosed fire-resistive shelving or closets, in which case the area of stock or storage room is not to exceed 5,000 square feet unless equipped with automatic sprinklers, in which case it is not to exceed 10,000 square feet.

8. No inflammable material, unless in actual process of manufacture, is to remain exposed; but shall be kept in fire-resistive stock or storage rooms, or fire-resistive enclosed shelving or closets.

9. Fire-resistive solid boxes or receptacles with covers of metal or wood metal-covered, are to be used for all waste, rubbish or refuse, which must be collected and placed therein twice a day, and removed or destroyed once every day. Oily waste or rubbish should have the receptacles set above the floor on legs, twelve inches high.

Small quantities of excelsior or other inflammable material used for packing shall be kept in fire-resistive receptacles, and large quantities should be stored in separate fire-resistive rooms or vaults.

10. The use of electricity is recommended in preference to gas for illuminating purposes, and where gas is used for such purpose it should be properly safeguarded. Steel or wrought iron pipes should be used throughout with properly located valves, and except for removable parts rubber hose should not be used. Any material of an inflammable nature shall be protected from the flame or heat of the gas apparatus by metal and asbestos or other fire-resistive non-conductor.

11. Where there is inflammable material of any nature either in process of manufacture or in storage, there shall be no smoking and the occupants are to carry no matches except of the safety type.

12. The premises are to be provided with standard equipment of automatic sprinklers.

13. There shall be no screens, curtains or hangings of an inflammable nature.

14. All paints, oils, grease, etc., shall be kept in closed cans and when not in use should be stored in a separate room or closet enclosed with fire-resistive doors.

American surety companies are reported to be heavy losers as a result of the suspension of the Lorimer banks in Chicago. The aggregate amount of bonds covering funds in the banks which have been closed is given as \$1,600,000, though this amount may be reduced somewhat through deposits in some instances being less than the amount of the companies' bonds.