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Going up: How property owners can extend the life of their building's elevators

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Ask anyone whose building has an elevator and they will tell you that they are convenient. But ask anyone whose building has been without an elevator for an extended period of time and they will tell you that they are not just handy to have, they are downright critical to your facility's operation. Elevators are the central artery of any building. When elevators are functioning properly, they move product and people swiftly and efficiently. But when things go wrong, they can be a drain on resources and patience!

Unfortunately, elevators, like any other piece of machinery, do eventually fail. But a few simple tips can help you get the most out of your elevator investment for as long as possible.

Find The Right Maintenance Program

Regular maintenance is key to prolonging the life of your equipment. Having a licensed mechanic routinely inspect your elevator will help catch small problems before they become more costly. The breadth and frequency of your maintenance program will vary depend on the needs of your building and the usage of your elevator, but in general, more usage should equal more maintenance.

Complete All Recommended Repairs And Upgrades In A Timely Fashion

Advances in technology have dramatically improved equipment uptime, safety and reliability over the years. While older equipment may still run perfectly fine, investing in key upgrades can prevent unnecessary equipment wear and tear and prolong your elevator's life. The elevator mechanic who visits your building regularly for maintenance often has important recommendations to improve equipment safety and performance in both the short term and long term.

Understand Obsolescence & Proprietary Parts

How old is too old? It is important to keep in mind that age isn't always the determining factor in defining obsolescence. As technology changes almost daily, building owners and managers can find themselves faced with obsolescence much sooner than expected. Although it is impossible to know what tomorrow will bring, ask for non-proprietary parts and equipment whenever possible to ensure that you have options down the road.

Keep Up With Your Annual Testing

Elevators should always undergo an annual safety test. This test not only evaluates the safety of your elevator, but it will also help you keep on top of changing code requirements. Furthermore, a regular maintenance program and careful attention to safety requirements will help avoid costly code compliancy issues.

As A General Rule, The Money You Spend On Your Maintenance Should Equate To Less Money Spent Repairing Your Elevator

If you find yourself constantly dipping into emergency funds to repair your elevator yet your elevator is still running unreliably, it may be time to review your elevator needs and make sure your

maintenance program coincides with the demand you are placing on your equipment. Because the needs of each elevator can be as unique as the individual buildings that house them, a complete evaluation is recommended prior to undertaking any large project. Elevator maintenance companies such as Atlantic Elevator Service are usually happy to provide an initial consultation at no charge. For more information and tips on how to extend the life of your elevators, please join Atlantic Elevator Service for our 2014 NEBFM talk on June 19 at 12:45.

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