

**BEFORE THE ELEVATOR SAFETY BOARD  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND LICENSING  
STATE OF ARKANSAS**

**IN RE:           CENTRAL ARKANSAS WATER**

**ORDER**

This matter came before the Elevator Safety Board on Thursday, September 16, 2021. The petitioner, Central Arkansas Water, seeks a variance, by and through Taggart Architects, from overhead space requirements for a new elevator installation in an existing building. Taggart Architects did not appear at the hearing on this matter, although they were provided notice as required by law.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

1.       The petitioner is upgrading an existing facility known as the Ozark Water Treatment Plant located at 701 N. Martin Street, Little Rock, Arkansas. These plans call for the removal of an existing elevator in a 1937 building known as the Plant Filter Building. The new installation would be in the existing elevator shaft.
2.       The existing elevator shaft has a structural support I-beam spanning the width of the elevator shaft. The I-beam supports the concrete floor above and the walls in that part of the building.
3.       The beam encroaches on the 24 inches of clearance between the elevator crosshead and the lowest projection located within the top of the hoistway as required by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators, ASME 17.1, section 2.4.71, as adopted by the Rule 010.05-011, Rules of the Elevator Safety Board

(2017). Specifically, there is only 2.5 inches of clearance between the beam and the elevator crosshead.

4. The report of the Chief Elevator Inspector, Greg Tipton, dated August 27, 2021, reflects that the elevator contractor determined that the elevator crosshead could be moved down 6-inches to provide additional clearance. This still 15.5 inches short of code compliance. The report notes that this is the only compliance issue.

5. The principal safety concern is for the elevator personnel working on top of the car, and not the public.

6. The Chief Elevator Inspector recommends that the variance be granted subject to the following conditions:

- a. The elevator crosshead should be moved down 6 inches;
- b. The installation of a mechanical final up limit switch at the top of the hoistway to add an additional layer of protection to stop the upward traveling car in the event of a failure of the normal up direction limit switch;
- c. The addition of a permanently mounted sign on the crosshead reading “DANGER LOW CROSSHEAD CLEARANCE;”
- d. The painting of the crosshead in yellow and black alternating stripes; and
- e. A final inspection by a state inspector who will also witness a complete test by the contractor.

**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

1. The board has authority to adopt administrative rules establishing minimum standards for the installation, construction, maintenance and operation of elevators pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §20-24-106(c).

2. The board also has the power to grant a variance from minimum standards when it is clearly evident that it is necessary in order to prevent undue hardship or when the existing conditions prevent compliance with the literal requirements of the rule. In no case, shall a variance be granted unless in the opinion of the board, reasonable safety will be secured. Ark. Code Ann. §20-24-106(d).

3. In the present case, the board concludes that compliance with the minimum safety standards in the existing building because the I-beam across the elevator shaft is a structural support component. This also creates an undue hardship.

4. The board also concludes that reasonable safety will be secure by the conditions placed upon granting the variance.

THEREFORE, the board grants a variance to Central Arkansas Water for the installation of a new elevator in the existing elevator shaft of the Plant Filter Building of the Ozark Water Treatment Plant subject to the following conditions: 1) the elevator crosshead should be moved down 6 inches; 2) the installation of a mechanical final up limit switch at the top of the hoistway to add an additional layer of protection to stop the upward traveling car in the event of a failure of the normal up direction limit switch; 3) the addition of a permanently mounted sign on the crosshead reading "DANGER LOW CROSSHEAD CLEARANCE" in both English and Spanish; 3) the painting of the crosshead in yellow and black alternating stripes; and 4) a final inspection by a state inspector who will also witness a complete test by the contractor.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

ELEVATOR SAFETY BOARD

By: 

Ralph T. Hudson, Chairman

Date: 10/11/21

Prepared by:

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