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Electrical Panel Accessibility

Immediate and unrestricted access to electrical equipment (i.e. panelboards, disconnects, etc.) is essential for protecting employees in the workplace. Therefore, electrical equipment must not be blocked by any items including, but not limited to, boxes, furniture, storage shelves, or palletized items (see **Photograph 1**).

In addition to violating California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, blocked electrical equipment may also hinder emergency response efforts. For example, electrocution is a potential life-threatening emergency that may require the immediate elimination of power, typically done by shutting down overcurrent protection devices (i.e. circuit breakers). In accordance with California Code of Regulations (CCR)¹, National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA)² and California Fire Code (CFC)³, a clear working space (see **Figure 1**) must be maintained at all times and must meet the following requirements:



Photograph 1 – Blocked Electrical Equipment

1. *At least one entrance/access point* of sufficient size must be provided to allow access to the working space.
2. A *working space depth*, measured from front of the electrical panel(s), of at least 36 inches.
3. A *working space width* of 30 inches or *width of the electrical panel(s)*, whichever is greater. Electrical panel doors must open a minimum of 90°; ensuring that there will be adequate room to repair, adjust, shut down, or reset overcurrent protection devices without placing an employee between panel door and the panelboard.
4. A *minimum headroom of working space* of 6.5 feet must be maintained⁴, except that where the electrical equipment exceeds 6.5 feet in height, the minimum headroom may not be less than the height of the equipment. However, it is *California Baptist University's policy that no shelving or storage* is to be placed above any electrical panels.

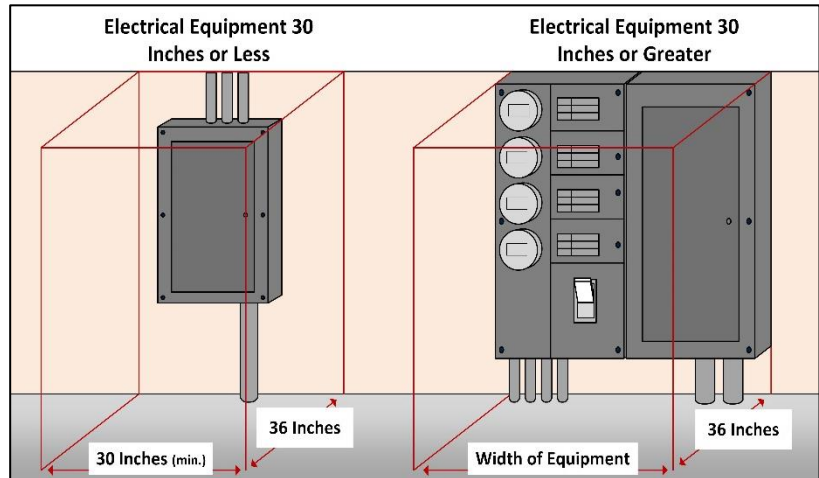


Figure 1 – Electrical Equipment Working Space

¹ Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) section [2340.16](#)

² NFPA 70 - National Electrical Code (2014); NFPA 70E - Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace (2015)

³ CFC Section 605

⁴ [8 CCR 2340.16 \(f\)](#)