

**Interpretation IC 170-2008-13 of  
ANSI/ASHRAE/ASHE Standard 170-2008  
Ventilation of Health Care Facilities**

Date Approved: June 26, 2018

**Request from:** Archie F. McCartney III, Director of Facilities Engineering, VCU Community Memorial Hospital, 1755 N. Mecklenburg Ave., P.O. Box 90, South Hill, VA 23970.

**Reference:** This request for interpretation refers to the requirements in ANSI/ASHRAE/ASHE Standard 170-2008, Section 6.1.1, regarding ventilation and pressure relationships upon loss of electrical power.

**Background:** Within a couple of weeks of opening our new hospital, we had a power failure and the emergency generators started and provided emergency power to the hospital. During this time we noticed that the AHU (AHU-3), which serves our operating rooms, did not maintain the proper air changes, temperature or humidity levels. When we questioned the architect and engineers, we were informed that the design only included the supply fans for that unit to be on emergency power in order for our hospital to provide the proper pressure relationship for the OR's. They also stated this was provided in order for our hospital to only finish up a case in the event of loss of normal power and not to start a new case until normal power has been restored. When I reviewed FGI 2010, ASHRE 170 Section 6, NFPA 99 (1999) and NFPA 101 (2012) I believe they state something different.

If the interpretation below is not correct, what parts of the interpretation are correct and what parts are incorrect?

**Interpretation:** It appears that ASHRE 170 Section 6 says that all ventilation and pressure relationship requirements shall be maintained in the event of a loss of normal power as long as a case is in the OR. It appears that they are looking at the codes in a very narrow window and I would like ASHRE's interpretation of what is required. I believe when the codes use the word ventilation they are referring to the total output of the system temperature, humidity, air changes and pressure relationships not just pressure relationships.

**Question:** Is this interpretation correct?

**Answer:** No

**Comments:** For the spaces listed in Section 6.1.1, only the pressure relationship and the minimum outside air and total air changes per hour in Table 7.1 are required to be maintained on a loss of normal electrical power.