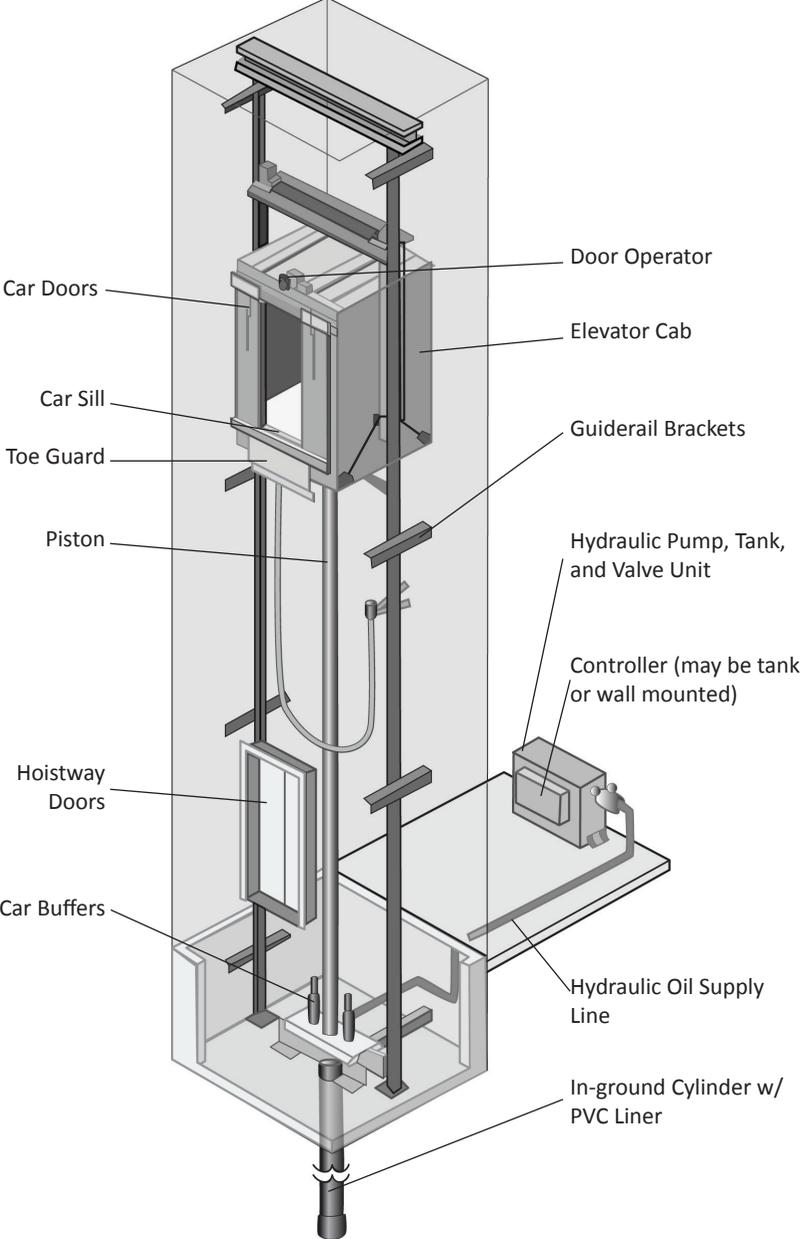
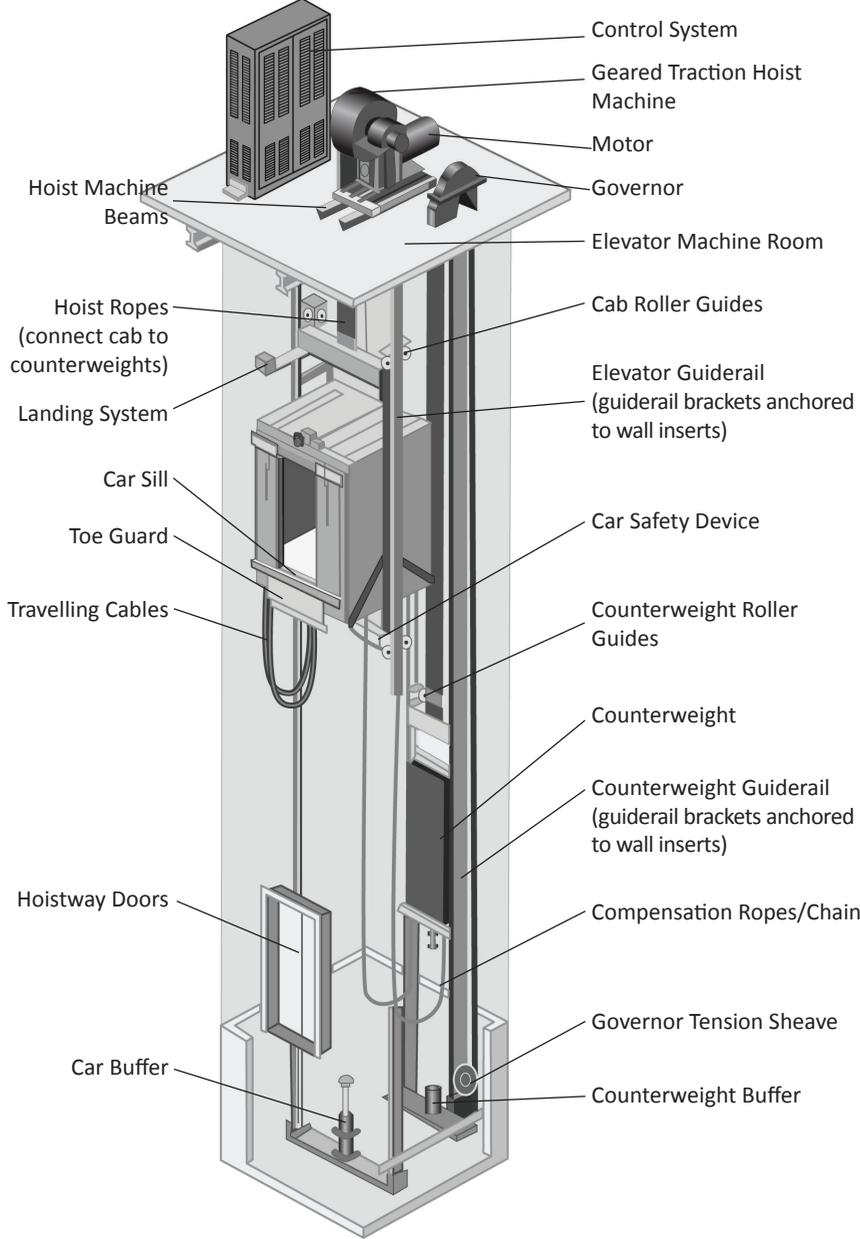


Elevator Anatomy

There are many different types of elevator configurations, but the majority of passenger elevators fall into one of two categories; hydraulic or traction. The primary difference is that a hydraulic elevator uses a hydraulic piston to raise and lower the elevator car, while a traction elevator uses a geared or gearless hoist machine along with a counterweight to control the travel of the car.



Hydraulic Elevators - a configuration where a hydraulic cylinder(s) are used to raise and lower the car. Hydraulic systems are typically limited to buildings that are three stories tall or shorter.



Traction Elevators - a motor driven configuration where cables are attached to the car and looped over a drive sheave to a counterweight. The counterweight is located in the hoistway and rides a separate rail system.

Case Components

Having an expert involved early in your case will assist in ensuring you obtain the necessary records/documentation. Understanding elevator and escalator industry terminology and how companies structure their operations is key. Simply asking for the “maintenance” records for the equipment in question is not enough. Knowing what additional information may be useful to your case is another reason why retaining an expert early is important.

As with any accident, many different factors may play a part in identifying causation. Having an expert with the technical expertise to help you understand the complexities of elevator ownership, maintenance, and certification requirements is critical to the development of your case.

Identify the Owner

It will be necessary to identify the property owner or owner’s property management firm. One of these parties will have contracted with the elevator maintenance service provider. Each is obligated to exercise reasonable care in maintaining the premises. Having an expert retained early in your case will assist you in identifying the role of the owner or owner’s management firm as it relates to your case.

Site Inspection

No matter the timeframe from accident to your being retained as either plaintiff or defendants counsel, it is important that you arrange for your expert to make an inspection of the equipment and site conditions as soon as possible. This will enable your expert to have a better understanding of the physical conditions that may factor in when determining causation. Having an expert with the experience to identify and understand the operating characteristics of most elevator and escalator manufacturer’s (major and independent) equipment and applications will help you better understand the technical aspects of your case.

Applicable Codes

While location of the equipment will determine the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), the applicable Code is determined by the date of installation or last modernization of the equipment. Knowing the applicable elevator Code(s) as they relate to your case is not enough. You will need an expert with extensive knowledge of the appropriate related building, fire, electrical, and life safety codes as applicable to the building and equipment involved.