**Maintain or Modernize Elevators, Escalators?**

Whether a building needs an elevator or escalator to move people up and down, in and out, it's imperative for facility managers to understand the importance of when it's time to maintain or modernize those systems. Doug Heaton, sales executive-modernization for KONE Inc., addressed the many facets of evaluating elevator and escalator technology to keep systems running smoothly or to consider replacement.

Some 45 members and guests attended the lunch-and-learn program on *Elevator, Escalator Modernization and Maintenance* on Feb. 15 at L. Keeley Construction's headquarters.

Doug started the session by busting myths often seen in thriller movies. No, elevators don't drop when cables are cut, nor do passengers face oxygen issues when stuck between floors. The only fact that rings true: Elevator doors do open and shut faster when you push the buttons that allow this.

He then outlined the three types of elevators: Hydraulic, Machine-room Less Traction and Overhead Traction. Hydraulic elevators typically are deployed in smaller buildings with five or fewer floors. Traction elevators climb higher and faster, provide a smoother ride and are more efficient, Doug noted.

Machine-room less traction elevators carry even more benefits, with a lower initial cost, smaller footprint and no machine room to house the needed equipment to move the elevator system.

Doug also provided a wealth of information on Kone's portal for clients that gives details on an elevator's performance and any service requests.

The presentation included an in-depth look at modernization solutions for elevator and escalators.

Hydraulic elevators now afford more reliability, safety, ride quality, performance and reduced operating expenses.

Modernizing traction elevators systems will improve traffic flow, reduce wait times and increase reliability, Doug noted. A new traction system may reduce energy consumption as much as 40 percent while also offering a lightweight and space efficient application. A chart showed the various benefits of Kone's EcoDisc vs. a conventional traction elevator system.

KONE's MonoSpace FLEX elevator system offers a full replacement solution. The complete new gearless traction elevator is designed to fit into existing traction and hydraulic hoistways. It can be installed to retain existing entrances. It features gearless performance and ride comfort up to 350 FPM. The system eliminates machine room code compliance work and also frees up a machine room for other uses.

Kone also offers a cloud-based call system that can be accessed with a smartphone. This provides enhanced security and performance within a building.

Escalators are workhorses but these systems don't last forever, Doug pointed out. Age often leads to parts breaking down and parts may become difficult to find.

Kone offers its EcoMod solution to modernize an escalator system. It begins with the removal of all existing mechanical and electrical components from inside the existing truss. The existing truss is then modified to allow the installation of the new components. This permits quick installation of the latest technology without major disruption to the surrounding features or structure.

Doug noted that finding the right solution for escalators requires careful analysis of the site, existing system, disruption to operations and associated costs such as general contractor work required to replace an escalator system. He showcased several projects that outlined the many factors in deciding whether to use reconstruction or a complete removal and replacement of the elevator systems.

Many thanks to Doug for his informative presentation. We also appreciate the hospitality of L. Keeley Construction.