Interpretations

Of

The

1981 USBC

Interpretation 1/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Sections 306.0 and 308.0 of Article 3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Should homes for adults occupied by non-ambulatory persons as defined in the "Standards and Regulations for Licensed Homes for Adults" of the State Board of Welfare (May, 1981 revision) be classified under Use Group I, Institutional Buildings?

Q. (2) Should homes for adults occupied exclusively by ambulatory persons as defined in the "Standards and Regulations for Licensed Homes for Adults" of the State Board of Welfare (May, 1981 revision) be classified under Use Group R, Residential Buildings?

A. (1) Yes.

A. (2) Yes.

Interpretation 2/81

Issued October 15, 1982
Revised October 25, 1985
Section 306.0 and 308.0, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does a change of use group classification occur if a family begins to provide family day car in its home?

Q. (2) What use group classification applies to homes for family day care if the Board's answer to Question #1 is that a change of use group has occurred?

Q. (3) If current licensing standards with a staff ratio of one adult for every four children below two years of age afford sufficient safeguards to permit assignment of a use group classification less restrictive than that of I-2, Institutional, what would the lesser restriction be?

A. (1) No.

A. (2) Not applicable.

A. (3) When limited to 9 children and licensed in accordance with department of Social Services licensing requirements, the classification shall be Use Group R.

Interpretation 3/81

Issued October 15, 1982
Section 503.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would an exterior deck built of combustible material on a townhouse have to have a six foot separation from the lot line as stated in Section 503.2?

A. No. Section 503.2 regulates exterior walls only, therefore exterior wood decks as floor assemblies with wood guard rails are not subject to the requirements of this section.

Interpretation 4/81

Issued November 9, 1982
Section P-903.0, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would a stack vent or relief vent be required to prevent pressure changes in the stack or soil line?

A. One main stack vent or vent stack is required for each plumbing drainage system. Furthermore, each fixture is required to be vented in accordance with the code. Relief vents are only required on stacks of more than 10 branch intervals in accordance with Section P-910.1.

Interpretation 5/81

Issued November 9, 1982
Section 630.0, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Should anchor stores and covered mall buildings be treated as separate buildings for applying the height area requirements?

Q. (2) Is a fire wall (with all openings protected) required between the anchor store and an adjacent tenant space?

Q. (3) Is a fire wall (with openings protected) required between the anchor store and the covered mall portion of the covered mall building?

A. (1) Yes. The Code defines covered mall building as a single building and specifically states that anchor stores shall not be considered as part of the covered mall building. Therefore, for the purposes of height and area limitations, an anchor store must meet the requirements of Article 5 as a separate building.

A. (2) Yes. The definition of building area when applied to an anchor store establishes the need for a fire wall with opening protectives between it and other adjacent buildings, such as the covered mall building.

A. (3) No. It is appropriate to permit the wall between the anchor store and the covered mall to be unprotected the same as for the wall between a tenant space and the covered mall.

Interpretation 6/81

Issued November 9, 1982
Sections 631.0 and 816.10, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. If the building complies with Sections 816.10 through 816.10.4 concerning communicating floors, is it also required to meet the provisions of 631.0 concerning open wells?

A. No.

Interpretation 7/81

Issued November 9, 1982
Section 810.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Section 810.3 indicates that aisles may be reduced to 36 inches in width when servicing an occupant load of 50 or less. May portions of aisles, such as in a typical restaurant, be analyzed individually such that only the occupant load which would actually traverse that aisle to reach a required exit be used to determine the required width?

A. Yes. When a given aisle does not actually service the entire occupant load of the room, only that portion of the occupant load which would traverse a part of an aisle to reach an exit need be included in determining the total number served by the aisle.

Interpretation 8/81

Issued November 9, 1982
Sections M-312.9.2 and M-312.3.1, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Section M-312.9.2 of the 1981 Basic Mechanical Code specifies a minimum quantity of air in cfm per square foot of hood area for ventilation of restaurant cooking equipment. The approval authority granted to the building official in Section M- 108.4.1 would allow him to accept a system which moves less air than that specified provided adequate evidence of acceptable performance is established. On what basis can he judge acceptable performance?

A. The intent of the Code regarding range hoods exhaust is provided by the performance language of Section M-312.3.1 which states that a system shall be designed to confine cooking vapors within the hood. Section M-312.9.2 also requires adequate collection and exhaust of cooking vapors. Therefore, if a system can achieve this performance with a lesser air quantity, the system would be acceptable.

The ability of a system to adequately exhaust cooking vapors without spillage is dependent on factors which vary for each installation. These factors include such items as thermal air currents, air motion as a result of other hoods or fans, movement of materials or people within the space and room air currents (usually 50 feet per minute minimum). The acceptability of a system moving less air than required can be judged based on a demonstration of adequate performance by a field test of the system using a smoke candle or other method of coloring the air and demonstrating that the system adequately collects and exhausts cooking vapors.

Interpretation 9/81

Issued January 14, 1983
Section 811.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is an exit stairway required to be enclosed at the grade level when discharging into an interior lobby as defined in Section 201.0 and constructed in accordance with Section 811.3?

A. No. Section 816.9.2 requires exit stairs to be enclosed "in fire separation assemblies of the fire resistance rating specified in Table 401." This section identifies 5 exceptions to this requirement. While these exceptions do not include Section 811.3, the lobby itself is part of the exit enclosure. Therefore, within an exit "enclosure", an additional enclosure is not required.

Interpretation 10/81

Issued January 14, 1983
Section 1716.9.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it the intent of Section 1716.9.2 to require all detectors installed within a building to be connected to the automatic fire alarm system when an automatic fire alarm system is required by Section 1716.3?

A. No. The owner/designer may install detectors which are not required by any section of the code. These other detectors are not required to be connected to the automatic fire alarm system, as long as the automatic fire alarm system has detectors spaced in accordance with their listing to cover the areas in which these other detectors are located.

Interpretation 11/81

Issued January 14, 1983
Section 1225.8.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. When an architecturally designed roof system has been approved in accordance with Section 107.2 of the USBC that eliminates the possibility of ice forming and provides for adequate ventilation and required insulation, would the mineral surfaces roll specified by Section 1225.8.3 still be required.

A. No. Unless the approved alternate design requires its application.

Interpretation 12/81

Issued February 25, 1983
Section 515.7, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition, as amended

Q. Does Section 515.7 of the USBC require that the toilet be provided for handicapped, where only one (1) toilet is required as in small office buildings, or mercantile stores, where toilets are for employees only as required under Section P-1202.1 of the Basic Plumbing Code?

A. Yes. Section P-1203.1, Basic Plumbing Code requires that in all toilet rooms containing fixtures required by the Code, at least one water closet, lavatory and miscellaneous accessories shall be accessible to and usable by physically handicapped persons, unless exempt in accordance with Section 515.3 or 515.2 of the USBC.

Interpretation 13/81

Issued February 25, 1983
Article I, Section 100.6 USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Is the construction of a water tank and tower exempt from the USBC if it is owned by a public utility located on property by established rights?

A. No. A water tank/tower is defined in Article 2, USBC, as a structure. Section 100.6 exempts only the distribution equipment installed by a public utility. This would include pumps, lines, valves and etc.

Interpretation 14/81

Issued February 25, 1983
Section 424.19(a)(2), National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does a lock-off device on the circuit breaker in the service panel meet the intent of the National Electrical Code for a disconnecting means if the service panel is not in sight of the furnace?

A. No. Section 424-19(a)(2) c of the National Electrical Code states "where the disconnecting means is not within sight from the motor controller location a disconnecting means complying with Section 430-102 shall be provided."

Interpretation 15/81

Issued April 13, 1983
Section 515.5, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 as amended by
USBC/1981 Edition

Q. In residential occupancies that require units designed for the handicapped, would Section 515.5 permit the installation of the handicapped equipment to be delayed until the specific unit is sold or rented provided that the units are so designed and constructed that ready installation of the required equipment is possible?

A. Yes. The required number of handicapped units may be constructed through the rough-in or framing stage. Installation of required equipment may then be delayed until sold or rented, at which time a final inspection and certificate of occupancy could be issued.

Interpretation 16/81

Issued April 13, 1983
Chapter 8, Article 800-1, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does Article 800-1 of the National Electrical Code/1981 Edition require the wiring for telephone systems within buildings or structures to be installed in accordance with the applicable portions of the building code?

A. Yes. Proper installation such as grounding, penetration, and protection of fire resistant or fire stopped walls, partitions, ceilings, floors, hollow spaces, shafts and ventilating ducts and plenums is required.

Interpretation 17/81

Issued May 20, 1983
R-305 CABO One and Two Family dwelling Code; Section 1315.4.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Both code sections state that where ground water conditions exists, "Drains shall be provided around foundations enclosing habitable or usable spaces located below grade." What is the definition of usable space?

A. "Usable space" is a space within a building with suitable dimensions (height and area) that allow the space to be occupied for purposes such as a work area, storage area, hobby shop or other habitable area. This would require a suitable means of egress, lighting, etc. A typical crawl space with an access door would not be considered a usable space.

Interpretation 18/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Sections 100.4 and 117.6, USBC/1981 Edition Section 36-103, Code of Virginia

Q. (1) Is a child care center, which cared for 6 children in 1961 and 10 children in 1964, subject to meeting the regulations and building restrictions of the BOCA Code as it presently exists in 1983?

Q. (2) Is it subject to the building regulations and restrictions concerning child care centers as of the date it commenced operation?

A. (1) No.

A. (2) Yes.

Interpretation 19/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Sections 515.6 and 515.7 of Article 5, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. (1) In a theater with fixed seats, are the spaces designated for wheelchair patrons required to be vacant of other seating?

Q. (2) May the spaces be occupied by unfixed seating to be removed as needed?

A. (1) Yes.

A. (2) Yes. Theaters with fixed seats may be designed in accordance with the Handbook Section of the North Carolina State Building Code/1977 edition, as referenced in Appendix B of Addendum 1 of the 1981 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code. This reference standard allows theaters seating 75 or less to use quick release pedestal chairs.

Interpretation 20/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Article 1405.0, Section 1405.5 BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Section 1405.4 of the 1981 edition of the Code requires that packing and shipping rooms located on or below a floor occupied for Use Group "M" be separated there from by fire separation walls or floor/ceiling assemblies of not less than the fire resistance rating of that type of construction as set forth in Table 401, but not less than 1 hour. Should this separation be applied to unpacking and receiving rooms?

A. Yes. Section 1405 deals with special fire resistance requirements, Section 1405.5 deals specifically with the hazards of packing materials which would therefore be just as hazardous in a receiving and unpacking room as a shipping and packing room.

Interpretation 21/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Section 201, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does the definition of structures include a 20,000 gallon above-ground fuel tank?

Q. (2) What section of the building code requires a building permit to erect a 20,000 gallon above-ground fuel tank?

A. (1) Yes.

A. (2) Section 104.1 of the USBC.

Interpretation 22/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Article 384-2, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is the intent to provide a separate and distinct room for switchboards and panelboards or will a space with the required clearances within a room (such as a mechanical room) satisfy this requirement?

A. Section 304.2 does not require a separate room for equipment; however, the space or room required and dedicated to this equipment must be maintained clear of other equipment, piping and etc.

Interpretation 23/81

Issued July 8, 1983
Section R-213, One and Two Family Dwelling Code/1980 Amendments

Q. Is a landing 3 feet by 3 feet required at all egress doors; the back doors, side doors, sliding patio doors, or just the door that is required by R-213 of the One and Two Family Dwelling Code, 1980 amendments?

A. No. Section R-213 requires a landing on each side of egress doors only.

Interpretation 24/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Article 2, Section 201.0, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does this definition require handrails on exterior steps of three risers?

A. Yes. Steps containing less than 3 risers are not considered as a flight of stairs or a stairway. A flight of stairs containing 3 or more risers is a stairway and would require handrails in accordance with Section 816.5.

Interpretation 25/81

Issued July 8, 1983
Article 5, Section 515, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. A one story church building with a basement and containing approximately 7500 square feet of floor space will have both floors accessible from grade level and equipped with toilet facilities on both floors. Does the Code require handicapped facilities on both floors?

A. Yes. Section 515.7.2(b) require that where toilet or bathing facilities are provided, a minimum of 1 room of each type on each floor accessible to the handicapped shall comply with the standard.

Interpretation 26/81

Issued July 8, 1983
Article 4, Section 401 and Article 14, Sections 1408, 1409, 1402.2 and 1408.3.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does the Building Code require the roof-ceiling construction of a one story building of Type 2C construction to have a fire resistance rating where it occurs over exit access corridors; and if so, what are the construction requirements of the roof and the corridor walls?

Q. (2) Does the Building Code prohibit the use of UL listed 135 degree fusible link louvers in rated fire doors in the walls of exit access corridors?

Q. (3) May fiberglass insulation be used for safing (and firestopping) such as: sealing joints between walls or partitions and structural floors or roofs and walls; and sealing spaces between curtain walls and spandrel beams or floors? If not, why?

A. (1) No.

A. (2) Yes.

A. (3) No. Section 1420 requires firestopping to be approved noncombustible material securely fastened in place. This section identifies the materials to be used.

Interpretation 27/81

Issued July 8, 1983
Section 627.5.5, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Where you come up the steps and step up onto the walkway around the pool, would the walkway be counted as a step?

Q. (2) Would Table 816 for treads and risers be applied for riser and tread width?

Q. (3) Where you have two or more means of egress from the pool and one of the required means of egress is a set of steps, would the steps be required to meet this section of the code, or would they be treated as supplemental?

A. (1) No. The walkway or deck is not considered a part of the stairway. Only the top riser would be considered a part of the stairway.

A. (2) Yes. Table 816 would apply, however, the design criteria for steps, recessed steps and ladders in swimming pools may be found in the standards published by the National Swimming Pool Institute and the American Public Health Association as an alternate design method.

A. (3) Yes. The steps would be required to meet the requirements of Section 816 and 625.5. The standard referenced above may be used as an acceptable standard in accordance with Section 107.2 of the USBC.

Interpretation 28/81

Issued September 23, 1983
Sections 816.4.1, Table 816, 816.5.1.3, 816.5.2.2, 816.5.2.2.1, 816.5.2.2.2, 816.5.2.2.3 and 819.0 of Article 8, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Do these sections of Article 8 apply to stairs (other than required exits), catwalks, equipment access platforms and mezzanines in factory and storage occupancies, Use Groups F and S?

A. Yes. Article 8 covers means of egress; therefore all sections identified would be applicable to stairways which are a means of egress. Section 816.5.2.2.1 which deals with distance between longitudinal rails was changed by the 1982 supplement to permit an opening of 14" in F, H and S Use Groups. Section 816.5.2.2.2 was also changed to permit 14" openings between balusters. Section 800.2 provides that when strict compliance with this code is not practical, the building official may accept alternate means of egress which will accomplish the same purpose, by procedures established permitting modifications of this code, or by adoption of approved rules.

Interpretation 29/81 (Number not used)

Interpretation 30/81

Issued September 23, 1983
Section 1704.8 of Article 17, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. In a new shopping mall or high rise building with automatic fire suppression system installed, the hydrostatic test has been completed on the bulk and cross main system including the tees and blind caps. When the sprinkler system is later extended to another store or floor and there are no tenant control valves installed, would a hydrostatic test of the entire system be required rather than testing of the addition from the point of attachment?

A. No. 1704.8 requires completed water sprinkler systems to be hydrostatically tested. 1704.1 refers to NFPA 13 for installation provisions. Sections 1-11.3 of NFPA 13 requires the hydrostatic test pressure be measured at the low point of the individual system or zone being tested. Section 1-11.3.6 describes the use and special markings for test blanks used to test separate zones or portions of a system. This would allow a new portion of a system to be tested without retesting the original system.

Interpretation 31/81

Issued September 23, 1983
Section P-1202.5 of Article 12, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. In this code section does "central toilet area" mean an area independent, outside of any store, or may it be located in any one of the stores?

A. The term central toilet area for the purpose of this code section means a toilet area located in the shopping center or mall located within 500 feet travel distance and no more than one flight of stairs from the main entrance of any store. The toilet area is required to be available during operating hours of any and all stores and accessible without having to pass through an individual store.

Interpretation 32/81

Issued September 23, 1983
Section P-1202.4 of Article 12, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) In a shopping center, are toilet facilities, drinking fountains, and a service sink required in each store?

Q. (2) Are these facilities considered convenient if they are accessible within 500 feet?

A. (1) P-1202.4 requires toilet facilities for employees be located within the employee's regular work area. A central toilet facility which meets the 500 feet travel distance and no more than one flight of stairs within the same building would be considered convenient and accessible.

A. (2) Drinking fountains are required by Table 1202.1 to be available in the ratio of 1 per 75 employees, 1 for each 1000 customers but in no case less than one per store. Bottle water coolers may substitute for drinking fountains when approved by the plumbing official. Service sinks are required in each store. The plumbing official may grant modifications to this requirement in accordance with Section 107 of the USBC when stores are completely carpeted and/or would have no requirement for a service sink.

Interpretation 33/81

Issued September 23, 1983
Section 1409.0 of Article 14, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) When multiple single family dwelling units are located above and adjacent to other single family units, and separated by a fire separation wall and floor/ceiling assembly of one hour fire resistance rated construction, may plumbing piping from bathrooms penetrate and be contained in the fire separation wall and the floor ceiling assembly of Type 4 construction?

Q. (2) May electrical outlets occur in the fire separation walls?

Q. (3) a. If such installation and penetrations are allowable, are there any restrictions on materials, sizes of piping, or method of construction of fire separation walls?

b. May PVC piping and fittings be used for the plumbing installation?

A. (1) Yes, when tested and approved for that purpose. Several assemblies have been tested utilizing 1 hour assemblies with typical ABS and PVC drain, waste and vent plumbing tree installed (OSU #5473 and 5474.

A. (2) Yes. Listed single and double gang metallic outlet and switch boxes with metallic or nonmetallic cover plates may be used in bearing or non bearing wood stud walls or non bearing steel stud walls with ratings not exceeding 2 hours (See UL Fire Resistance Directory). Nonmetallic outlet boxes may also be installed in walls and ceilings of up to 2 hours fire resistance rating when of an approved type and installed in accordance with the manufacturers instructions and its listing (See National RESEARCH Board Reports N. NRB 202 and 203).

A. (3) a. Yes. The materials, sizing and method of construction must be as approved in the tested assembly and the manufacturers instructions.

b. Yes. See 1 above.

Interpretation 34/81

Issued September 23, 1983
Section P-1202.5, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. In Section P-1202.5 does "individual stores" mean each store, one or more stores, or stores with an area exceeding 5,000 square feet provided the travel distance is not more than 500 feet?

A. "Individual stores" means each store. This section requires every store exceeding 5000 square feet to have customer facilities or be within 500 feet or one flight of stairs of a central toilet facility.

Interpretation 35/81

Issued January 4, 1984
Section 1711, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Please refer to paragraph 1711.7.1. Would it be interpreted by the Board that the supply for a standpipe system, with any number of risers, be 500 gallons per minute?

Q. (2) Does paragraph 1711.7 apply only to interior piping?

A. (1) No. Paragraph 1711.7.1 addresses pressure requirements. Paragraph 1711.7 addresses the water supply requirements for a standpipe and requires that the water supply and all common supply piping be sufficient to provide 500 gpm for the first standpipe and 250 gpm for each additional stand pipe up to a total not to exceed 2500 gpm.

A. (2) No. 1711.7 applies to the piping in the entire system. The piping must be sized to supply the capacity specified by this section. There must also be an adequate water supply.

Interpretation 36/81

Issued January 4, 1984
Section M-312.1, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) What is the definition of the words "commercial purposes" as used in Section M-312.1?

Q. (2) Would a domestic range installed in a church hall for occasional use by the congregation be considered a commercial use?

A. (1) Commercial purposes, as used in Section M-312, means cooking on a frequent or regular basis which produces grease laden vapors comparable to that produced by commercial cooking equipment in restaurants.

A. (2) No. A single domestic range, ventilated in accordance with the code for domestic ranges, and used for occasional cooking would not be considered commercial use.

Interpretation 37/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Table 401, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Are the partitions that separate storage cubicles in a self-storage mini-warehouse (use Group S-1) considered as vertical separations of tenant spaces, and therefore required to be one-hour rated for Type 2B construction?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 38/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Section 506.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it the intent of Section 506.2 to allow tabular area increases for only excess building perimeter containing 18' wide fire lanes?

A. No. Building perimeter unoccupied space not less than 30 feet in width accessible from a street by an 18 feet wide fire lane may be used to calculate tabular area increases.

Interpretation 39/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section 809.4, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition
Section R-211, One and Two Family Dwelling Code/1979 Edition

Q. May a window sash or center mullion between casement windows which can be removed from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or excessive force be utilized to satisfy the net clear opening requirements of Section 809.4 of the BOCA Basic National Building Code and Section R-211 of the One and Two Family Dwelling Code/1981 Edition.

A. Yes, provided the sash, bars, grilles or screens can be removed from the inside without the use of key, tools or excessive force.

Interpretation 40/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Figure A-9, One and Two Family Dwelling Code/1979 Edition
Section M-703.2.2, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is mortar required between the flue liner and the flue block in fireplace construction?

A. No. Only enough mortar is required to make a good joint and hold the liner in place. The mortar fill between the flue liner and block shown in the detail in Fig. A-9 is considered as reinforcement and is required only in seismic zone 3 (see note 2, figure A-9).

Interpretation 41/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Chapter 9, 1 & 2 Family Dwelling Code/1979 Edition
Sections M-703.2.1 and M-704.2, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is refractory mortar required in the installation of the firebox and flue linings of chimney and fireplace construction?

A. Yes. Refractory mortar or other approved materials that will resist corrosion, softening or cracking from temperatures up to 1800 degrees F shall be used in the installation of the firebox and flue linings of chimney and fireplace construction.

Interpretation 42/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Section 1716.3.4, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it the intent of Section 1716.3.4 that a single station detector may be substituted for the system detector in guest room suites or sleeping areas of Use Group R-1 buildings? If the answer is no, are both required?

A. No. the smoke detectors required by Section 1716.3.4 are in addition to any automatic fire alarm system required by Sections 1716.3.2 and 1716.3.3.

Interpretation 43/81

Issued January 27,1984
Section 306.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) There are many facilities which provide housing, care and supervision of non-related children including orphanages, sheltered homes, children's homes, and even private high school dormitories. Ages range from birth to age 18. Would all be considered I-2, regardless of age?

Q. (2) Would the residential classification be more appropriate for older children? If not, what age would be considered suitable for residential use?

A. (1) No. Only those facilities meeting the requirements of Sections 306.1 and 306.3 would be classified in the I-2 Use Group.

A. (2) The residential classification would be appropriate for dormitories. See Sections 308.2 and 308.3. Use Groups are not determined solely by age of the occupants except for the distinction between a day care center and a day nursery. Those buildings used for shelter, boarding and lodging and not otherwise classified in the A or I use groups and the occupants are 2 1/2 years or older, fully ambulatory and capable of following evacuation instructions could be classified in the R Use Group.

Interpretation 44/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Sections 812.3 and 816.6.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Section 812.3 speaks of a minimum 32-inch clear width for a door "opening". It also refers to a 40-inch "door" for 2 units of egress width, and a 44-inch "door" for Use Group I. Because of door stops, panic hardware, etc. the clear width "opening" would be less than 40 or 44 inches in most cases. Section 816.6.1 also speaks of door width rather than a clear opening width. Because of the different working in the code regarding door widths and clear door openings, please define the intent of Section 812.3 for the minimum size of doors. If the intent is "clear opening" would this eliminate the use of the frequently used 32-inch door except in dwelling units.

A. The intent of Section 812.3 is to require that all single door openings have at least a 32 inch clear width. Door stops, hinges, hardware and the door in the open position shall not protrude into the required 32 inch clear opening. The remainder of the section addresses door size not door opening.

Interpretation 45/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Article 8, Means of Egress, 816.4.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) What is the definition of the word "tread" as applied to the minimum tread dimension?

Q. (2) How is the tread dimension defined for closed riser stair and open riser stair?

A. (1) Refer to Answer #2.

A. (2) The width of the tread is measured horizontally from the nose to the vertical plane of the nose of the tread above.

Interpretation 46/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Sections 305.0 or 309.0, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Which Use Group would a warehouse come under that is to be used primarily for storage of automobile type batteries?

A. Use Group H, in accordance with Section 305.1, if acid is stored in or with the batteries. Use Group S if the batteries are stored dry.

Interpretation 47/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Section P-1106.1, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Are the locations spelled out in this section the only places manholes are required?

Q. (2) Are manholes required at the base of the stack and at the junction of the building drain for underground piping eight inches or larger?

Q. (3) Are cleanouts required at the junction of the building drain and sewer and at the base of the stack for underground piping eight inches or larger?

A. (1) Yes.

A. (2) No.

A. (3) Yes, except when the cleanout for the stack is within 10 feet of the junction of the building drain and building sewer.

Interpretation 48/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Section P-1002.6.2, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) What is a commercial laundry?

Q. (2) Are coin operated laundry machines located in a apartment complex considered a commercial laundry?

Q. (3) Are laundry machines located in hotels, motels, nursing homes and homes for the elderly considered commercial laundries?

A. (1) Laundries using machines with a nominal rated loading capacity in excess of 15 lbs. are to be considered commercial laundries.

A. (2) and (3) see 1 above.

Interpretation 49/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Section 515.5, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition as amended by USBC

Q. TRB Interpretation 15/81 dated April 13, 1983 states,"Installation of required equipment may then be delays until sold or rented, at which time a final inspection and certificate of occupancy could be issued." What is the meaning of the word "equipment"?

A. Fixtures and equipment as specified by the applicable code sections and the ANSI standard.

Interpretation 50/81

Issued January 27, 1984
Section 515, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition as amended by USBC

Q. (1) TRB Interpretation 15/81 dated April 13, 1983 stated, "Installation of required equipment may then be delayed until sold or rented, at which time a final inspection and certificate of occupancy could be issued." Does this mean the living unit may, under some conditions by equipped and arranged in a more conventional manner?

Q. (2) If the answer to 1 above is yes, what are the conditions?
A. (1) No.

Interpretation 51/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Section 1716.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it the intent of Section 1716.3 that the automatic fire alarm system meets the requirements for "total coverage" as specified in Section 2-5.6 of NFPA Standard 72E, 1978 Edition? If the answer is no, please define the intent of type of coverage required.

A. No. Section 1716.2 requires the detecting devices in an automatic fire alarm system to be smoke detectors. Installation shall be in accordance with Section 1716.3 and Chapter 4, NFPA 72E.

Interpretation 52/81

Issued March 23, 1989
Section 515, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Does the USBC require all levels of Use Group A, including mezzanines, balconies and exterior decks to be accessible to the handicapped?

A. Section 515.1 requires buildings to be designed and equipped for use by the handicapped and aged persons, while Sections 515.6 and 515.7 identify specific areas, functional spaces and facilities which are required to meet the needs of the handicapped. The code does not specifically address such areas as mezzanines, balconies or decks.

Interpretation 53/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Section 109.9 of Article 1, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Is it the intent of Section 109.9 to automatically require cancellation of permits issued to subcontractors when the subcontractor has not been able to conduct work for a period of six months due to the general contractor's inability to progress, and the general contractor's permit for the building remained valid because he has continued working on the project during the six month period?

Q. (2) Does preparatory work such as planning wire installation on a job site, which does not invoke the actual physical act of installing equipment, constitute "work" as required by Section 109.9 of the USBC?

A. (1) No, the main permit shall govern.

A. (2) Any activity related to the progress of that particular job may be considered as work after the permit is issued.

Interpretation 54/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Sections 200-7 and 220, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) May two wire (14-2) Romex cable be used as travelers between 3 and 4 way switches?

Q. (2) How many outlets are permitted on a 2 wire, 14 circuit in a single family dwelling?

A. (1) Yes, wiring between switches must have all three conductors within the single raceway or cable only when the cable or raceway is metal (see 380-2 and 410-23).

A. (2) Any number of outlets may be connected to a branch circuit provided the loads are calculated in accordance with Section 220-2 and Table 220-2(b).

Interpretation 55/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Sections 816.2.1 and 816.5, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition
Section 515.1, USBC/1981 Edition, and ANSI 117.1, Section 4.9.4

Q. Does the handicapped requirement for two (2) handrails, ANSI 117.1 Section 4.9.4, take precedent over Section 816.2.1 of the Basic Building Code which would allow only one (1) handrail with occupancy of 50 or more persons or less?

A. No. Section 515.1 requires the building to be accessible and usable by the handicapped. All elements or functional spaces required to be accessible to the handicapped must be accessible by means of elevators, ramps or lifts. Stairways, while usable by people with certain physical disabilities, would not be acceptable for use by the handicapped.

Interpretation 56/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Sections 115.2.1, 201.0, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition
Section 111.5, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Is there a set of procedures or an approved list whereby a building official may determine the acceptability of an inspection (testing) agency?

A. No. Sections 103.4 and 111.5 of the Uniform Statewide Building Code provide that the building official may accept reports of inspections and tests by qualified agencies and individuals.

Interpretation 57/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Section 680-22, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it required to bond metal parts of non-electrical equipment associated with a swimming pool water circulating system, when the equipment is located more than five (5) feet from the inside wall of the pool?

A. No. See 680-22.

Interpretation 58/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Sections 303.1 and 306.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is Use Group "B" business the proper use classification for an "outpatient surgical hospital" as defined in Section 20.22.1, and further described in Section 800.0 of the "Rules and Regulations for Licensure of Hospitals in Virginia"?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 59/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Sections 201.0 & 502.2, Table 502, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would Table 502 require the exterior walls of adjacent buildings of 2C or 3C construction to be 60 feet apart when located on the same lot within a fire district when the exterior opening protectives have a fire resistance rating of O?

A. No. Table 502 requires 30 feet between the exterior wall and the lot line or from any building.

Interpretation 60/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Section 518-3 of Article 518, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does Section 518-3, exception #1, permit a church of type 4A or 4B construction with an occupancy load of 500 to be wired in Romex?

A. Yes, except portions of the building required to be fire rated construction in accordance with Table 401, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981.

Interpretation 61/81

Issued March 23, 1984
Section 515.3, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. In a two story building with S-1 Use on the first, B Use on the second floor - is the B Use required to have handicapped facilities and access?

A. No. The main use of the building would be the S-1 use Group when the S-1 Use and B Use have the same floor areas. Section 515.3 does not require the S-1 portion of the building to meet the handicap requirements. Section 515.3.2 provides that the second floor need not be made accessible, therefore handicap requirements would not apply to either floor.

Interpretation 62/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Sections M-301.0, M-302.4, M-409.13, M-301.1, M-302.2.1, M-302.2, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Is the intent of the Code to limit the amount of combustibles found in a plenum?

Q. (2) Are duct liners, duct wrap and pipe insulation allowed in plenums?

Q. (3) Would fibrous glass duct, meting the fire hazard classification of UL 181, NFPA 90A and 90B be considered acceptable in plenums the same as duct wrap, duct liner and pipe insulation permitted by Section M-301.1?

Q. (4) Would the use of fibrous glass ducts in plenums be consistent with the spirit and intent of the Code?

A. (1) Yes.

A. (2) Section M-301 exception allows duct and pipe insulation in plenums.

A. (3) See Interpretation 183 (Revised November 16, 1984).

A. (4) See Interpretation 183 (Revised November 16, 1984).

Interpretation 63/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Sections M-302.0, M-302.2.4 and M-302.2.5, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would an aluminum flexible air duct which has been certified by Underwriters Laboratory as meeting the requirements of UL 181 and is rated as a Class I duct and connector, be permitted in a ceiling plenum.

A. No. See Interpretation 183 (Revised November 16, 1984).

Interpretation 64/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section 107, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. May the 1984 Editions of the BOCA Basic/National Codes be considered as a basis for granting modifications to the 1981 USBC?

A. Yes. Section 107.0 of the 1981 USBC gives the building official the authority to modify the provisions of the USBC provided he finds that the proposed alternatives are satisfactory and comply with the intent of the provisions of the USBC. The consideration of updated editions of nationally recognized model codes and standards in granting modifications to the 1981 USBC would also be consistent with the intent of Section 101.1 to permit buildings to be constructed at the least possible cost yet still comply with recognized standards of safety, health, conservation, and handicapped provisions.

Interpretation 65/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section 1412.1 of Article 14, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. In type 4A construction with multi-family units located above and adjacent to other dwelling units separated by one hour separation , do typical galvanized steel HVAC duct penetrations of the rated assembly required fire dampers?

A. Yes. See Section M-315.2.4. Where proper fire test have shown that fire dampers are not necessary to maintain the integrity of the fire resistance rated assembly, dampers may be omitted (Ref. M-315.1).

Interpretation 66/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section 1410.4, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

This section requires that combustible pipes connecting two (2) or more stories be enclosed with fire resistive construction of at least 1-hour.

Q. (1) Is it permitted for the combustible pipe, thus enclosed, to penetrate the enclosing construction at every floor?

Q. (2) If so, is there any limitation on the number or size of such penetrations?

A. (1) Yes, provided the fire resistance of the shaft meets the requirements of Table 401.

A. (2) There is no limitation on the number of penetrations, provided the annular opening in the shaft wall around the lateral is sealed. Unless otherwise tested and approved, the maximum size combustible pipe penetration is two inches (See OSU test 5473, 5464 and NBX Building Science Series III).

Interpretation 67/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Article 110-16, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does Article 110-16 apply to the disconnecting means for HVAC systems when there are no live parts accessible at the disconnecting means?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 68/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Article 250-23(a), National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

A building containing four apartments has a four gang meter on the outside with the SE conductors running directly into each apartment.

Q. (1) Is it permissible to install one grounding electrode for one of the panels which would serve the entire service lateral?

Q. (2) Does the code require a ground to each individual panel?

A. (1) No. If the service is grounded at the load end of the service-entrance conductors, a separate grounding electrode conductor must be installed from each of the four panelboards to a grounding electrode system in lieu of a single grounding electrode conductor from just one of the panelboards.

A. (2) Yes. A single grounding electrode conductor is acceptable for the service for the building where the grounding electrode conductor is connected to the grounded service conductor at the load end of the service drop or service lateral and run to a grounding electrode system in accordance with Section 250-23(a). This included the connection of the grounding electrode conductor to the grounded service conductor within the four-gang meter if approved by the electric utility when the electric utility owns the four gang meter. In this case, no grounding electrode conductor is required to be run from any of the four panel boards to a grounding electrode system.

Interpretation 69/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section 1410.4, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Must non-combustible piping with horizontal combustible branch lines be enclosed in a rated shaft assembly as required by this section?

A. Except in Use Group R-3, non-combustible vertical pipes are required to be installed in fire resistance rated enclosures only when installed in groups of two or more, occupy more than one square foot and penetrate two or more floors.

Interpretation 70/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Sections 619.1, 619.2 of Article 6 (Ref. NFPA-102)
BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Are handrails required on center aisles of grandstands?

A. No. Center or vertical aisles in grandstands are not considered egress stairways.

Interpretation 71/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Sections 810 and 825, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does the USBC allow vents or grilles of any type to be installed in the floor of aisles or corridors which are used as a means of egress in a church?

A. All components installed within a means of egress corridor must meet the requirements of Section 810 and 825 of the BOCA Basic Building Code.

Interpretation 72/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section P-308.3 of Article 3, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would the installation of 3 1/2" foil faced fiberglass batt insulation between the exterior wall and a water line meet the intent of Section P-308.3 for this area?

A. Under normal conditions within a heating building, the heat through the building walls interior covering will penetrate into the wall cavity and provide sufficient heat to the water line to offset the cold penetration through the exterior wall and insulation. However, there may be circumstances under which the above application is not adequate. Such things as exterior wall materials, thickness and orientation to the weather, building height, walls above and below and the amount of heat available in the area adjacent to the pipes would have to be considered.

Interpretation 73/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section 410-58(d), National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Several carnival and circus electrical hook ups are being made with individual conductors between the power source and the panelboard utilizing cam-lock connectors as shown in attached illustration.

Q. Does this type of device meet the intent of Section 410-58(d) when the current carrying conductors can be connected before the grounding conductor?

A. Yes. The wiring method shown on the attached sketch is covered by Article 305 (Temporary Wiring) of the 1981 National Electrical Code. The requirements of Section 410- 58(d) do not apply. The general concept of wiring as shown in the sketch 305-2(b); the branch circuit conductors are installed per Section 305-2(c); the suitable disconnecting means are installed per Section 305-2(e) and the camlock plug connectors are listed by UL or other recognized testing agency. Section 305-2(e) recognizes the plug connectors as disconnecting means for ungrounded conductors.

Interpretation 74/81 (number not used because of duplication

Interpretation 75/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Sections M-905.7 of Article 9 and Section 1507.7, Figure A-9
BOCA Basic Mechanical Code and BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Editions

Q. Is it the intent of these code sections to require the back wall of the smoke chamber to be a minimum of 8 inches thick when all three code sections permit the adjoining chimney to be 4 inches thick when constructed with a fire clay lining/

A. The back wall of the smoke chamber may be 6 inches thick when constructed in accordance with the One and Two Family Dwelling Code and the chimney is constructed of 4 inches masonry, spaced one inch away from a fire clay flue liner. All smoke chamber walls other than above are required to be 8 inches thick.

Interpretation 76/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section 384-3(c), National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

A single family dwelling with attached garage has a 200 amp main panel located within the dwelling and a sub-panel located in the attached garage.

Q. (1) Is a 4 wire cable required between the main and subpanels?

Q. (2) Would 3 wire SE Cable with a separate grounding electrode be adequate?

Q. (3) Does Section 384-3(c) relate to a fourth conductor from the subpanel to the main panel?

A. (1) Yes. Section 338-3(b) prohibits the use of SE cable as a branch circuit or as a feeder within a building without individual insulation on the grounded circuit conductor (See Sections 250-57(b), 310-2(a).

A. (2) No. See Section 310-1(a).

A. (3) No. Section 384-3(c) requires a bonding jumper in a panelboard used for service equipment to connect the grounded neutral or grounded phase leg to the equipment grounding conductor (The metal frame or enclosure of the equipment).

Interpretation 77/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section P-308.3, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Does the USBC require a new single family dwelling unit to have a heating system other than a wood stove?

A. No. The USBC requires that Use Group R buildings meet the requirements of Article 25 when those buildings are heated or mechanically cooled (See Section 2502.2).

Section P-308.3 of the USBC requires plumbing piping in exterior walls be protected from freezing by insulation, heat or both. A wood stove properly sized and installed would meet the intent of Section P-308.3 when the plumbing piping is properly insulated.

Interpretation 78/81

Issued November 16, 1989
Article 550, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Is it mandatory that a mobile home be classified as to its use group when installed with permanent foundation, with running gear removed and made so as not to be readily moveable?

Q. (2) If the answer to question 1 is yes, what is the proper use group classification of the house?

Q. (3) If the home is reclassified to a residential use group under the BOCA Basic Building Code, would the requirements of Article 550 of the National Electrical Code still apply?

Q. (4) Specifically, after reclassifying the home, could the meter base for electrical service be mounted directly on the home?

A. (1) Yes.

A. (2) R-3 or R-4 in accordance with Section 308 of the BOCA Basic Building Code.

A. (3) No. See Section 550-2, "Mobile Homes".

A. (4) Yes. See Article 230 of the National Electrical Code.

Interpretation 79/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Section 113.0, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Does the USBC provide authority for the building official to charge a penalty for violations of the USBC?

A. No. A person, firm or corporation must be convicted of a violation before being punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. Conviction may be obtained only through appropriate legal proceedings in accordance with Section 113.0.

Interpretation 80/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Section P-701.1.4 and P-701.1.5, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Does the building code regulate the discharge of condensate drain into the sanitary sewer system?

A. No. The USBC does not require clear waste water drainage into the building drain. Condensate may be drained into a separate storm sewer system, building drainage system or to other safe place of disposal satisfactory to the building official.

Interpretation 81/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Table P-1202.1, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. In office building use, are URINALS required to be accessible to handicapped persons in Men's public toilets?

A. Yes. In office building where urinals are required in accordance with Table P-1202.1, at least one shall be for the handicapped in accordance with Section P-1203.1 and paragraph 4.18, ANSI A117.1-1980.

Interpretation 82/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Section P-1206.2, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does a urinal, with a removable beehive strainer removed, meet the requirements of the USBC?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 83/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Section M-701.3.1, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does a factory built chimney for low heat appliances have to be enclosed in a rated shaft when it penetrates a fire resistance rated floor/ceiling, when it will penetrate through one or more dwelling units above?

A. Yes. Section 1412.4 requires the rating of a fire resistance floor/ceiling assembly to be maintained when a penetration is made. Section 1410.1 governs the installation of vertical shaft enclosures and Section 1401.3 requires the enclosing walls to be of approved materials with the fire resistance rating specified in Table 401. Table 401, line 5 requires shafts to be 1 hour rated in 4A and 4B construction. Section M-701.3.1 requires metal chimneys extending through a story above to be enclosed with a continuous enclosure.

Interpretation 84/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Section 102.0, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Would it be a conflict of interest for an inspector within the department of building inspection to engage in private business constructing residential buildings for sale within the jurisdiction in which he is employed as an inspector?

A. Yes. See Section 102.8.

Interpretation 85/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Section 630.12, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Is it the intent of Section 630.12 of the code to require an actual demonstration of the fire emergency ventilating system for a covered mall building?

Q. (2) Is it the intent of Section 630.12 of the code that a demonstration of the operation of devices to activate the emergency ventilating system and confirmation of the design the capability of the system to produce six air changes per hour computed on a volume measured to a height of 13 feet above each pedestrian area sufficient?

A. (1) The system must be designed to meet the requirements of Section 630.12 as a condition of issuing the building permit. Testing of the system is required to determine that the system equipment is properly installed and functions as designed. Testing is required by paragraph 2- 5.2.1, NFPA 72E as referenced in Section 630.12.1. Actual demonstration of smoke removal is not required.

A. (2) Confirmation of the systems capability to provide six air changes per hour must be computed in accordance with the requirements of 630.12, actual demonstration of smoke removal is not required.

Interpretation 86/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Sections 104.8 and 105.1, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Would a 3 bay garage, Use Group S-1 having masonry walls, a pit and engineered roof trusses require plans be prepared by an architect or engineer?

A. Buildings classified in Use Group S which do not exceed 15,000 sq. ft., 3 stories or 40 feet in height are exempt from the requirement that plans be prepared by an architect or engineer, however, the building official may require the plans be prepared by an architect or engineer in accordance with Sections 104.8 and 105.1 of the USBC and Section 54- 37.2, Code of Virginia.

Interpretation 87/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Sections 506.2, 1406.4.1, 1406.4 and 1406.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Premises: Rectangular building, one story high, 240' wide by 250' deep. Building fronts to a public road with a parking lot between the front of building and road. Three (3) other sides of building face an open area larger than 30' wide. These open areas are covered with grass and with a few trees:

Q. (1) Do the sides and rear perimeter of the building qualify under Section 506.2 for excess exposed perimeter?

Q. (2) Is a fire lane required from the front of the building running within the open areas along the sides of the building and terminating at the rear of the building?

Q. (3) If this building has door openings across the front and side, two door openings across the rear and no opening on the remaining side, is this building considered an "enclosed building" and as required under Section 1406.4.1 be required to have fire access panels at 125' maximum spacing?

Q. (4) What is the definition or guideline to determine if a building is an "enclosed building" required to meet Code requirements 1406.4 and 1406.2?

A. (1) Yes, provided they are accessible from the street by a fire lane.

A. (2) No.

A. (3) Yes, the building is an enclosed building. The building would require access panels.

A. (4) An enclosed building is a building enclosed on all sides with independent exterior walls or party walls.

Interpretation 88/81

Issued January 11, 1985
Section 1507.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

The structural walls of fireplaces are required to be at least eight inches thick where the firebox is lines with low duty refractory brick or equivalent:

Q. How thick must the wall be between the firebox and a flue liner passing through the side of the fireplace below utilizing the same chimney?

A. There must be a minimum of four inches of solid masonry between the flue liner and the firebrick and four inches between the flue liner and the outside of the fireplace or chimney. The fireplace walls and foundation must be designed to support the chimney load.

Interpretation 89/81

Issued January 11, 1985
Sections 507, 507.3, 630.0 and Article 507, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does Section 507, particularly 507.3, apply to a covered mall or a covered mall building?

Q. (2) Is there an area limitation of a covered mall building designed and constructed in accordance with Article 630.0?

Q. (3) Does Article 507 and specifically Section 507.3 apply to the one story anchor store?

A. (1) No. The intent of Section 630.12 is to provide a fire emergency ventilation system in covered malls in lieu of roof vents required by Section 507.3. Roof vents may be incorporated in to a smoke removal system.

A. (2) No.

A. (3) The anchor store is not a part of the covered mall. The anchor store would be required to comply with Section 507.1 for exit facilities, 507.1.3 for travel distance, 507.2 for fire separation, 507.3 for roof vents (except when a fire emergency ventilation system is provided in accordance with 630.12) and Section 507.4 when applicable (see TRB Interpretation 5/81).

Interpretation 90/81

Issued January 11, 1985
Sections 1716 and 1716.9.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

An existing seven story office building owner has installed a halogenated system to protect computer equipment in one room. The building is not sprinkled but has standpipes and a manual alarm system:

Q. (1) Does Section 1716.9.2 require retroactive compliance?

Q. (2) Does Section 1716.9.2 require the halogenated system be tied to the existing manual alarm system?

Q. (3) Does the code require elective systems installed for property protection be installed in accordance with the code?

Q. (4) Would Section 1716 require the installation of an automatic fire alarm system due to the addition of the halogenated system?

Q. (5) Does the code require an elective local extinguishing system to activate a manual alarm system if an automatic alarm system is not otherwise required?

A. (1) No.

A. (2) No.

A. (3) Yes.

A. (4) No.

A. (5) No. See applicable standard for equipment installed.

Interpretation 91/81

Issued January 11, 1985
Section M-301, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) May flexible air duct meeting the requirements of UL Standard 181 for Class O Air Duct be used in air ceiling plenums?

Q. (2) Is aluminum duct considered to be noncombustible for the purposes of this section?

A. (1) Flexible air ducts must meet the requirements of ASTM E- 136 for non combustibility when installed in a plenum. Class O ducts may or may not meet this requirement.

A. (2) When the particular duct has been approved in accordance with ASTM 136 as noncombustible (see Section 1403.4.1.1, BOCA Basic/1981.

Interpretation 92/81

Issued February 22, 1985
Table 401, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

The front wall of a one story shopping center of 3C construction requires the storefront to be 2 hour rated. The roof is not required to be rated. A 19 foot 1/2 truss roof canopy is supported by the storefront and by steel columns and beams over the sidewalk:

Q. (1) Would the steel beam on top of the storefront be considered a part of the bearing wall?

Q. (2) Would the freestanding steel columns and beams supporting the end of the roof canopy in front of the store be considered a bearing wall requiring a 2 hour rating?

A. (1) Yes.

A. (2) Yes.

Interpretation 93/81

Issued February 22, 1985
Section 230-2, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Two buildings, located on the same lot and under the same ownership/management are each supplied by a separate 120/240 volt, 3 phase overhead service. The owner has installed 4-750 MCM underground conductors between the two buildings for the purpose of supplying a large motor in building number 1 from the service in building number 2.

Q. (1) Is building Number 1 in violation of Section 230-2 of the NEC which states that "A building or other structure served shall be supplied by only one service?

Q. (2) If the answer to question 1 is yes, will the installation of permanent plaques or directories provide compliance with the NEC?

A. (1) The building would not be in violation provided it meets the requirements of exception 4a, 4c or 5, Section 230-2.

A. (2) Installation of a permanent plaque or directory is required when more than one service is permitted by Section 230-2, it is not a substitute for compliance with 230-2.

Interpretation 94/81

Issued February 22, 1985
Section 424-20, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Do thermostats which control fixed baseboard electric heaters have to be marked with an off switch and break all ungrounded conductors if the only other disconnect is the circuit breaker in the main switch panel in a single family or multi-family dwelling?

A. No. Section 424-20 requires a marked "off" position only when serving as controller and disconnecting means. This type thermostat is desirable to prevent inadvertent heat output during the summer months (see Section 424-20(B), National Electrical Code.

Interpretation 95/81

Issued February 22, 1985
Section 120.5, USBC/1985 Edition

Q. Is the building official obligated or have the authority to inspect construction classified as ordinary repairs when requested to do so by the homeowner?

A. No. Section 111.2 of the USBC requires inspection after the issuance of permits. Building officials may inspect specific items when requested by the owner, however the inspection would not be mandatory nor place any obligations on the owner for corrective action for those items considered ordinary repairs in accordance with Section 120.5 of the USBC.

Interpretation 96/81

Issued February 22, 1985
Sections 1319.4 and 1319.4.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does Section 1319.4.3 require exterior wall systems to be mechanically anchored to the building frame to prohibit failure in bond as a result of fire, wind load or other conditions?

A. No. Exterior wall systems must be an approved type, tested to meet the requirements of 1319.4.3 and installed in accordance with its approval and the manufacturers specifications (see Section 106.1, USBC).

Interpretation 97/81

Issued April 19, 1985
Revised June 28, 1985
Section 515.7, USBC/1981 Edition

Q.Does the USBC require each parking space reserved for the handicapped to have its own above ground sign?

A. No. Section 515.7 requires the spaces be identified by above grade signs. These signs must indicate which spaces are reserved for the handicapped.

Interpretation 98/81

Issued April 19, 1985
Sections 614.0, 506.2 and 1702.9, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does Section 614.0, Public Garages, control the construction of an airplane hangar?

Q. (2) Does Section 506.2 allow for an area increase to Table 505 if a structure contains 10,636 square feet and has a 20 foot posted fire lane around the entire perimeter?

Q. (3) Would this structure be required to have a fire suppression system as required by Section 1702.9?

Q. (4) Could this structure be constructed with 3 hour fire wall subdivisions in lieu of sprinkler system?

A. (1) Yes, under Section 311.1 and 616.1 the building official should consider airplane hangars the same as public garages.

A. (2) No. A 30 foot fire separation is required by Section 506.2.

A. (3) Yes.

A. (4) Yes, within the limits of square footage for unsprinkled buildings.

Interpretation 99/81

Issued April 19, 1985
Sections 102.6 and 111.5, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Would the qualifications established by Section 102.6 of the USBC satisfy the qualification requirements for inspection agencies or individuals referenced by Section 111.5?

Q. (2) Would it be permissible to utilize a contractor or his employee to inspect and certify their own work?

A. (1) Qualifications and reliability of the inspection agency or individual must be determined by the building official, based on the type inspection to be performed and the knowledge, skill and experience required to adequately perform the inspection. Therefore compliance with Section 102.6 may or may not be deemed adequate by the building official.

A. (2) No. An individual or agency while actually performing inspections for the building official, whether paid or unpaid, is connected with the building department and must comply with Section 102.8 of the USBC?

Interpretation 100/81

Issued April 19, 1985
Sections 812.5.1 and 812.5.3, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does Section 812.5.1 prohibit double cylinder dead bolts on egress doors?

Q. (2) Does 812.5.3 prohibit double cylinder dead bolts on egress doors in Use Group "R"?

A. (1) Yes. Except for dwelling units, all draw bolts, hooks, latches and other similar locking devices are prohibited.
A. (2) Yes, but only the door is a required means of egress.

Interpretation 101/81

Issued April 19, 1985
Section 516, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. A building designed and constricted as a single family dwelling has been declared a historic building. The building is to be converted to an A-3 use Group. Does Section 516 apply to this building when the use change is completed?

A. Yes. The building remains a historic building subject to Section 516 for as long as the building is declared a historic building in accordance with the procedures established by ^U15.1-503.1, Code of Virginia.

Interpretation 102/81

Issued April 19, 1985
Section 631.3.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) What should be considered as an atrium, and when should an open well be classified as a floor opening?

Q. (2) Does Section 4-4.8.2.3 of the NFPA-13 apply to both atriums and floor openings, or only to floor openings as per 1981 BOCA Code, Section 631.3.2?

A. (1) Open wells which penetrate one or more floors to create an open effect within a building should be classified as atriums. Open wells which penetrate one or more floors for the purpose of providing openings for supplemental stairways, escalators, servicing pits in service stations and etc. would be classified as floor openings.

A. (2) Section 4-4.8.2.3 of NFPA-13 does not apply to atriums or floor openings.

Interpretation 103/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section 906.0 and Table 906, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. In Table 906, the uniform live load for sleeping rooms in one and two family dwellings is shown as 30 PSF. Does this 30 PSF uniform live load also apply to the live load for hallways, bathrooms, and closets in the immediate area of the bedroom?

A. No. Closets within a sleeping room are considered a part of the room. Bathrooms and hallways are not considered a part of the sleeping room. While 40 PSF is the minimum uniformly distributed live load in accordance with Table 906, where it is anticipated that the floor area is to be subjected to increased concentrated loads such as hot tubs, water beds and etc., Section 906.1 requires the structural elements be designed for such loads.

Interpretation 104/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section 210-52 (A), National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. In some split foyer style homes, a guard rail is used along the edge of the living room to protect against someone falling into the entrance foyer or stairs from the entry up to the living room area. Would this railing be considered as "wall space" or a "fixed room divider" and if so, would a floor receptacle outlet be required if the end of the railing is more than six (6) feet from the nearest wall receptacle outlet?

A. Where open guardrails are installed receptacles are not required.

Interpretation 105/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section M-310.4.3, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. What size screen is required in a bathroom mechanical ventilation system exhaust outlet?

A. The screen and outlet must be sized to allow for one air change every 12 minutes and to prohibit the entrance of rain, snow and insects. Ref. Sections 711.4, 711.6, 1509.1, M-302.9.5 of the BOCA Basic Building and Mechanical Codes.

Interpretation 106/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section 602.1 of Article 6, USBC/1981 Edition

Section 602.1 states that storage facilities for volatile flammable liquids shall be constructed and installed in accordance with NFPA Standard 30 and the Fire Prevention Code.

Related definitions from Section 201 state that flammable means subject to easy ignition and rapid flaming combustion. Combustible material was defined as a material which cannot be classified as noncombustible in accordance with that definition.

Q. (1) Does Section 602.1 apply to tanks that contain flammable and combustible liquids as defined in the Fire Prevention Code referenced by this section (Section F201 and Article 29)?

Q. (2) Since Section 602.1 addresses main storage systems, does it include the supply tank and piping to a stationary internal combustion engine such as a gasoline driven generator?

A. (1) Yes. The definition of combustible material found in Section 201.0, BOCA Basic Building Code applies to building materials referenced by Sections 1403.4.1, 1403.4.1.1 and 1403.4.1.2. Section 602.1 deals with flammable/combustible liquids.

A. (2) Yes. Except for tanks which are an integral part of an approved piece of equipment or appliance.

Interpretation 107/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section 602.1, USBC/1981 Edition

Section 602.1 references the Fire Prevention Code along with NFPA Standard 30 for the construction and installation of volatile flammable liquid storage facilities.

A 660 gallon steel tank is welded to steel support which, in turn, is welded to a wide flange steel frame resting on the ground. Also mounted on the steel frame is an electric listed petroleum dispenser which is located next to a convenience store. This assembly is used to dispense a combustible liquid (kerosene) to the public at the store.

Q. (1) Does this assembly constitute a container or portable tank under Section F-2905.1 of the Fire Prevention Code referenced by Section 602.1?

Q. (2) If no, would the same assembly, with a hand suction pump on top of the tank, quality for this classification?

A. (1) No. A container is a closed vessel of 60 gallons or less used for transporting or storing liquids. A portable tank is a closed vessel over 60 gallons capacity and not intended for fixed instillation.

A. (2) No.

Interpretation 108/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section 602.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Section 602.1 references the Fire Prevention Code along with NFPA Standard 30 for the construction and installation of volatile flammable liquid storage facilities. Section F-2093 of the Fire Prevention Code states that above ground storage tanks for the storage of combustible or flammable liquids shall be prohibited, except as "specifically provided for in this Code".

Q. (1) Does this portion of the Fire Prevention Code modify the Building Code, limiting those areas where such a tank may be erected? NFPA Standard 30, also referenced, does not include such broad limits.

Q. (2) Can a jurisdiction which has adopted the BOCA Basic Fire Prevention Code enforce this section?

Q. (3) Does the term storage tanks include tanks serving appliances and equipment (e.g. internal combustion engines and generators)?

Q. (4) Does this section prohibit all above ground storage tanks other than bulk, processing, and industrial plants (Section F-2902) and fuel oil tanks to heating equipment as stated in Section F-2903.3?

A. (1) The Fire Prevention Code does not modify the Building Code. Section 602.1 of the BOCA Basic Building Code requires all flammable/combustible liquids to be stored in tanks constructed and installed in accordance with NFPA-30 and the Fire Prevention Code.

A. (2) Yes. The building official is responsible for enforcement of Section 602.1 of the BOCA Basic Building Code which refers to the Fire Prevention Code for construction and installation of the tanks. Where adopted, the portion of the Fire Prevention Code dealing with maintenance of existing tanks is the responsibility of the fire official or others as designated by the municipality.

A. (3) Section 602.1 would apply to all tanks storing flammable/combustible liquids except those which are an integral part of equipment or appliances.

A. (4) The location and use of above ground tanks and underground tanks are to be determined by the use of NFPA-30 and the Fire Prevention Code.

Interpretation 109/81

Issued June 28, 1985
Section 115.0, USBC/1981 Edition
Section 801.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Are courtrooms required to be posted with the permissible occupancy load?

A. Yes. Section 115.2 of the USBC requires every room constituting a place of assembly to be posted. Courtrooms are a place of assembly, usually within municipal office building, Use Group B.

Interpretation 110/81

Issued September 20, 1985
Section 336-8, National Electrical Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Is a crawl space considered to be the same as an unfinished basement for the determination of how and what size type NM and NMC conductors can be protected?

Q. (2) If not, how should conductors be protected in crawl spaces?

A. (1) No.

A. (2) Conductors installed in a crawl space shall be protected in accordance with Sections 300-4, 336-4, or 336-7 of the NEC, as appropriate.

Interpretation 111/81

Issued January 24, 1986
Section 515.0, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does a mezzanine require handicap access?

Q. (2) Does a mezzanine require handicap facilities?

A. (1) No.

A. (2) No. Such facilities would not be required if the area of the mezzanine is less than 33% of the area of the floor below because the building is still a one story building. If the area of the mezzanine is more than 33%, it must be considered as a story, in which case the provisions for the handicapped would be applicable.

Interpretation 112/81

Issued January 24, 1986
Section P-900.0, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. In a one story single family dwelling, is it permissible to tie the vent pipe from the kitchen sink into the main 3" vent in the attic space?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 113/81

Issued January 24, 1986
Section 118.0, USBC 1981 Edition

Q. Is the local Board of Building Code Appeals limited to five members, or is a six man board plus alternate allowed?

A. No. Section 118.1 requires not less than five members be appointed. More than five members may serve at the discretion of local government.

Interpretation 114/81

Issued March 21, 1986
Section P-1202.5, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Given: A 50,000 square foot shopping center has 20 individual stores. Each store has less than 5,000 square feet of area.

Q. (1) Define the term "shopping center."

Q. (2) Are toilet facilities for the public required in a shopping center even though each individual store is less a than 5,000 square feet in area?

Q. (3) If public toilet facilities are required in a shopping center, should they be installed in each individual store since access to a central toilet area would require a person to go outdoors?

A. (1) For purpose of Section 1202.5 of the Plumbing Code, the term shopping center shall mean a covered mall.

A. (2) Yes. Table P-1202.1 specifically addresses customer facilities for mercantile occupancies (see Note J).

A. (3) No. Facilities are required only in stores exceeding 5,000 square feet (see Note J of Table P-1202.1). If centrally located facilities are not provided, then individual stores do require customer toilets.

Interpretation 115/81

Issued March 21, 1986
Sections 816.2.1 and 816.3.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) a. Does the egress width reduction to 3'-0" apply to each 50 person/egress provided?

b. If you have 100 persons and two egress paths, may both be 3'-0" in width?

Q. (2) Does the word "required" mean that additional width provided beyond the required width may be varied as required by the design, so long as the required width is maintained in accordance with the code?

A. (1) a. No.
b. No.

A. (2) Yes.

Interpretation 116/81

Issued March 21, 1986
Section 1716.3.4, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Are smoke detectors required to be installed on all levels of a multi-story single family dwelling?

A. No, under Section 1716.3.4 of the 1981 BOCA Basic Building Code. No, under Section R-216 of the 1979 One and Two Family Dwelling Code.

Interpretation 117/81

Issued April 18, 1986
Section P-1202.1, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does P-1202.3 and Table 1202.1 require that the occupant load be divided, or the total number of fixtures for the specific occupancy be divided?

A. The fixtures are to be divided based on the specific occupancy and its capacity.

Interpretation 118/81

Issued April 18, 1986
Section 1704.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition
Section 4-1.1/NFPA 13

Q. Does a walk-in refrigerator or freezer located in a building that require a sprinkler system need to be sprinkled on the inside?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 119/81

Issued April 18, 1986
Section 1913.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does Section 1913.1 apply to portable ground signs?

A. No.

Interpretation 120/81

Issued April 18, 1986
Sections 1717 and 1718, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. In buildings required to have a manual fire alarm system installed, is the manual alarm system required to be connected to an approved central station system, proprietary system, proprietary system, or remote station?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 121/81

Issued September 26, 1986
Section P-1202.4, TRB Interpretation 32/81 (1), BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) a. Does the travel route to employee toilets have to be within the exterior walls of the building?

b. Could toilet facilities with only an exterior access be acceptable?

Q. (2) Is Interpretation 32/81 (1) applicable to the 1984 BOCA Basic/National Code?

A. (1) a. No.

b. Yes, provided the external access is in the employees' regular working area.

A. (2) Yes.

Interpretation 122/81

Issued September 26, 1986
Section 1702.9 and 1711.2.4, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Does the open parking structures exception mean that no fire suppression systems are required under paragraph 1702.9 and if this answer is "yes" does this also mean that a standpipe system is not required under Section 1711.2.4?

A. Fire suppression systems are specifically excluded by 1702.9 unless open parking structures are part of the high rise complex, then sprinklers would be required.

Standpipe systems are not fire suppression systems, and are required for open parking structures pursuant to the items listed in Section 1711.2.4.

Interpretation 123/81

Issued September 26, 1986
Section 2206.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it the intent of this section to prohibit the installation of wood flooring, or carpet floor covering, in bathrooms?

A. No.

Interpretation 124/81

Issued September 26, 1986
Section 1716, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Given: A multi-family elderly housing project is being constructed. Under the 1981 BOCA Basic Building Code, owners decide to install an elective automatic fire alarm system.

Q. (1) Must the installation of the elective automatic fire alarm system be in conformance with Section 1716.0?

Q. (2) Are the components of the system required to be approved by an independent testing agency for that use?

A. (1) No. Elective systems must be installed according to Section 110.2 of the USBC; however this does not require that elective systems be designed according to Section 1716.0 of the USBC.

A. (2) No. The components are required to be approved by the building official as meeting the intent of the USBC in accordance with Section 106.1.

Interpretation 125/81

Issued November 21, 1986
Section 1420.0, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. In a new building of Type 2A protected non-combustible construction does Section 1420 of the 1981 BOCA Code require firestopping or draftstopping in a metal stud partition at any location between the floor and the floor or roof level above?

A. Yes. 1420.6.1 requires firestopping at the ceiling and floor or roof levels, unless a modification is granted in accordance with Section 107 of the USBC for equal protection.

Interpretation 126/81

Issued February 20, 1987
Revised April 17, 1987
Sections 515.3 and 512.1, both Exception 3, USBC/1981 and 1984 Editions

Q. In a restaurant with an occupancy load of less than 50, are the following facilities required to meet the provisions of ANSI A117.1?

(1) Restaurant entrance in a stand alone building.
(2) Restaurant entrance within a larger building.
(3) The entrance to seating areas although less than 50 seats.
(4) Seating facilities.
(5) Entrance to toilet rooms.
(6) Fixtures within toilet rooms.
(7) Other public facilities within the restaurant governed by the ANSI code such as drinking fountains or telephone.

A. (1) Yes
(2) Yes.
(3) Yes.
(4) Yes.
(5) Yes.
(6) Yes.
(7) No.

Interpretation 127/81

Issued May 20, 1983
Section 908.2, Rule 109.1, Rule 1400.2-1, ANSI A-17.1/1977

Q. Does isolation of space below counterweight by installation of permanent wall, satisfy requirements of Rule 109.1?

A. Yes. The intent of Rule 109.1 is to protect against injury to personnel below the counterweight and to protect the area from structural damage as a result of impact from the counterweight.

Interpretation 128/81 (Number not used)

Interpretation 129/81

Issued July 8, 1983
Section R-924, One and Two Family Dwelling Code, 1979 Edition

Q. Item 3 of above section allows for use of factory built hearth extensions 3/8" thick of noncombustible materials to be placed on subfloor. Does the Code also allow raised brick hearth extensions of masonry fireplaces to be placed on subfloor?

A. No. Section R-924 applies to factory built fireplaces only. Section R-919 applies to all masonry fireplaces and requires a hearth extension to carry its own weight and all imposed loads. All combustible materials supporting the hearth during construction must be removed. BOCA Basic Building code Section 1507.10 and BOCA Basic Mechanical Code Section M-905.10 provide the same requirement.

Interpretation 130/81

(Number not used)

Interpretation 131/81

Issued January 4, 1984
Section R-402.6, One and Two Family Dwelling Code/1979 Edition

Q. (1) Does Section 402.6 apply to the outside enclosure around the factory constructed metal chimneys for the "zero" clearance fireplaces?

Q. (2) If so, does the building official have the authority to require a fire stop horizontally and vertically (a minimum of one layer of 5/8" sheetrock) to separate the chimney enclosure from the remainder of the structure in one, two, and multi-family structures?

A. (1) Yes. Section R-402.6 applies to firestopping in all portions of a building. This section requires firestopping to cut off concealed draft openings and to form a fire barrier between stories and between the top story and the roof.

A. (2) Firestopping is required at every ceiling and floor level to provide a fire barrier between stories and between the top story and the roof space. The space within the chimney enclosure must be separated from the dwelling throughout its entire height, including the attic space, to prevent draft openings. However the vertical separation material need not be 5/8" sheetrock. Approved factory constructed metal chimneys shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturers specification.

Interpretation 132/81

(Number not used)

Interpretation 133/81 (Number not used)

Interpretation 134/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section R-902 and Figure A-9, One and Two Family Dwelling Code/ 1979 Edition

Q. Does Figure A-9 require the corbeling of the smoke chamber in a fireplace to be parged?

A. Yes. The smoke chamber and smoke shelf requires a smooth finish.

Interpretation 135/81

Issued November 16, 1984
Section R-208, One and Two Family Dwelling Code/1979 Edition

Q. (1) Does this section of the One and Two Family Dwelling Code require non-absorbent sheetrock (Greenboard or equal) as a base material for shower stalls and for walls around tubs?

Q. (2) Is non-absorbent base required if the material is covered with tile or other non-absorbent finish?

A. (1) R-208 requires a smooth, hard, non-absorbent surface to be installed in accordance with the standards listed in S-26-208. When applying ceramic tile over gypsum, water resistant gypsum backing board complying with ASTM C-630 shall be used.

A. (2) Tile may be installed over other approved materials in accordance with ANSI A 108, specifications for installation of ceramic tile.

Interpretation 136/81

Issued February 22, 1985
R-112, One and Two Family Dwelling Code/1979 Edition

Q. In the enforcement of Section R-211, may the building official grant exceptions to the window size requirements?

A. No. Exceptions are not permitted; however, modifications are permitted in accordance with Section 107.0.

Interpretation 137/81

(Number not used)

Interpretation 138/81

(Number not used)

Interpretation 139/81

Issued March 20, 1987
Sections 4.3.4.7 and 4.1, ANSI-A117.1/1980 Edition

Q. (1) At what point does an accessible route begin?

Q. (2) If an accessible route encompasses both 4.7 (curb ramps) and Section 4.8 (ramps), does the curb ramp have to comply with Section 4.8.4 (Landing) Paragraph (2)?

A. (1) Accessible routes originate within the property line of the buildings which are being made accessible pursuant to Section 512 of the USBC.

A. (2) No.

Interpretation 140/81

Issued September 20, 1985
Section P-905.4 and P-906.1, Article 9, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. Do Sections P-905.4 and P-906.1 allow the use of side inlet 1/4 bends directly under a water closet for the purpose of draining or venting additional fixtures?

A. No. Section P-905.4 applies only to side inlet closet bends. Section P-602.2.1 and P-602.3.2 cover the use of 1/4 bends and other fittings in the drainage system.

Interpretation 141/81

Issued September 20, 1985
Section 602.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does Section 602.1 of the BOCA Basic Building Code require diesel fuel tanks to be installed underground for the purpose of dispensing fuel oil from tank to motor vehicles at service stations and convenience stores and other places serving the public?

Q. (2) Does Section 602.1 of the BOCA Basic Building Code require diesel fuel tanks to be installed underground for the purpose of dispensing fuel oil from tanks to motor vehicles at a private owned trucking company not serving the public?

A. (1) Yes. See NFPA 30 and the Fire Prevention Code referenced by Section 602.1.

A. (2) Yes. See NFPA 30 and the Fire Prevention Code referenced by Section 602.1.

Interpretation 142/81

Issued October 25, 1985
Section 1702.12, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would an 8000 square foot area within a post office utilized for gathering, sorting and distributing ail and designated as a workroom require a fire suppression system in accordance with Section 1701.12 of the BOCA Basic Building Code?

A. No.

Interpretation 143/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Section 1405.9, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. What is the required fire rating for a nonbearing partition within a tenant space of a Use Group B building?

A. Nonbearing partitions, other than those designated for vertical separation of tenant spaces and dwelling unit separation, are not required to be rated in accordance with Section 6 and 7, Table 401 and Section 1405.9.

Interpretation 144/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Section 1411.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. To what extent and to what rating must a support beam be protected when passing through a rated vertical pipe or duct shaft?

A. Floor/roof support beams shall be protected over their entire length in accordance with the rating requirements of Section 10 and 11, Table 401, regardless of the rating of the shaft through which it passes (see 1411.2).

Interpretation 145/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Section 1702.0, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. In buildings required to have fire suppression systems, may rooms housing electrical panels or switchgear be enclosed in fire rated construction in lieu of the required suppression system?

A. No.

Interpretation 146/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Sections P-1501.12.4 and P-404.1.3, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Given: Fire suppression system is supplied from the potable water service. The suppression system pipe is black pipe and is not listed in Section P-404 as an approved water distribution pipe.

Q. Would this fire suppression (sprinkler) system be subject to the requirements of Section P-1505.12.4 since it is nonpotable line?

A. Section 1704.1 of the BOCA Basic Building Code requires a water sprinkler system be installed in accordance with that code and NFPA 13. Section 3-1.1.1 of NFPA 13 permits the use of black pipe complying with ASST A 120; therefore black pipe is an approved material for use in sprinkler systems and would require compliance with Section P-1501.12.3.

Interpretation 147/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Section P-1505.12.4, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would Section P-1505.12.4 apply to a large sprinkler system since fluctuations in pressure and/or temperature could cause back pressure?

A. No.

Interpretation 148/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Section 630.12, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it the intent of this section to require uniform movement of smoke from the mall?

A. Yes.

Interpretation 149/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Section 630.12.1, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Should supply air be provided uniformly, similar to the requirement for exhaust in Section 630.12.1?

A. The emergency ventilating system must be designed so that supply and exhaust air is provided in sufficient quantity and locations to allow the six air changes per hour throughout the mall area.

Interpretation 150/81

Issued October 25, 1985
Sections M-302.10 and M-302.10.1, BOCA Basic Mechanical Code/1981 Edition

Q. Are air handling systems having a capacity of 2000 CFM or less required to have a high temperature shut of control?

A. No.

Interpretation 151/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Sections P-1603.2 and P-1605.1, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. Would Section P-1605.1 allow the installation of the pressure switch, gauge and tank in the top of a bored well?

A. Yes, provided the pump remains accessible for removal or repair.

Interpretation 152/81

Issued December 13, 1985
Section P-1504.2.9, BOCA Basic Plumbing Code/1981 Edition

Q. (1) Does Section P-1504.2.9 apply to water heaters?

Q. (2) Would a top feed water heater located on an upper floor with fixtures below require a vacuum relief valve?

A. (1) No.

A. (2) No.

Interpretation 153/81

Issued November 9, 1982
Section 1702.7, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Is it the intent of Section 1702.7 that exceptions 1 and 2 also apply to nursing homes?

A. No. Exceptions 1 and 2 of Section 1702.7 refer only to hospitals, rather than to the other occupancies that fall in Use Group I-2. The intent if to limit applicability of these exceptions to hospitals in order to reflect the level of safety inherent in this particular occupancy.

Interpretation 154/81

Issued November 9, 1982
Section 1406.4.2, BOCA Basic Building Code/1981 Edition

Q. Are roof vents required in a one story building of Type 1 construction that has exit doors, overhead doors or windows spaced not more than 125 feet apart in all of the exterior walls?

A. No. The roof vent requirements of Section 1406.4.2 apply only to buildings that are completely enclosed without exterior openings for the purpose of fighting fire. A building with exterior openings that comply with the required spacing would not be considered completely enclosed; hence, Section 1406.4.2 would not apply.

Interpretation 155/81

Issued December 14, 1984
Section 515, USBC/1981 Edition

Q. Is "An Illustrated Handbook of the North Carolina State Building Code/1977" listed in Appendix B of the 1981 USBC an acceptable alternate standard to comply with Section 515 of the USBC?

A. Yes.

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