



Building Standards and Codes

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CODE INTERPRETATION – 2018-03

Date of Interpretation:	September 17, 2018
Code Effective Date:	October 31, 2017¹
Source Documents:	2015 International Building Code, as amended by the 2017 Uniform Code Supplement²
Question:	A code enforcement official has asked: Are Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings required in R-2 buildings with more than one exit?
Interpretation:	No.

The 2015 International Building Code (2015 IBC), as modified by the 2017 Uniform Code Supplement (the Supplement), regulates *“the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal and demolition of every building or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures,”* with the following exceptions:

- 1. Detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses not more than three stories above grade plane in height, one-family dwellings converted to owner occupied bed and breakfast dwellings with five or fewer guest rooms, and their accessory structures not more than three stories above grade plane in height shall comply with the provisions of the 2015 IRC.*
- 2. Agricultural buildings, including barns, sheds, poultry houses and other buildings and equipment on the premises used directly and solely for agricultural purposes ... excluding any structure designed, constructed or used, in whole or in part, for human habitation, as a place of employment where agricultural products are processed, treated or packaged, or as a place used by the public.*

Additionally, according to Section 101.2.1 of the Supplement,

Owner-occupied lodging houses with five or fewer guestrooms shall be permitted to be constructed in accordance with the 2015 IRC where equipped with a fire sprinkler system in accordance with Section P2904 of the 2015 IRC.

Group R-2 occupancies are described in Section 310.4 of the 2015 IBC; the terms *emergency escape and rescue opening* (EEROs), *dwelling unit*, and *sleeping unit* are defined in Section 202 of the 2015 IBC.

The requirement for EEROs is found in Section 1030.1 of the 2015 IBC. The first sentence of the provision indicates the occupancies where EEROs are required; the remainder of the provision indicates the specific locations within those

¹ The “Code Effective Date” for this Technical Bulletin is October 31, 2017, which is the effective date of the current version of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (the Uniform Code). However, the Uniform Code provisions referenced in this Code Interpretation were not changed from the previous version of the Uniform Code, which became effective on October 3, 2016. Therefore, this Code Interpretation applies both to the version of the Uniform Code that became effective on October 3, 2016 and to the version of the Uniform Code that became effective on October 31, 2017.

² The 2015 International Building Code (2015 IBC) is a publication incorporated by reference in 19 NYCRR Part 1221. The 2017 Uniform Code Supplement is a publication incorporated by reference in 19 NYCRR Parts 1219 through 1228. The 2015 IBC, as amended by the 2017 Uniform Code Supplement, is part of the Uniform Code.

occupancies where they are required. Section 1030.1 reads, in part, as follows:

In addition to the means of egress required by this chapter, provisions shall be made for emergency escape and rescue openings in Group R-2 occupancies in accordance with Tables 1006.3.2(1) and 1006.3.2(2) and Group R-3 occupancies. Basements and sleeping rooms below the fourth story above grade plane shall have at least one exterior emergency escape and rescue opening in accordance with this section. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency escape and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room, but shall not be required in adjoining areas of the basement. Such openings shall open directly into a public way or to a yard or court that opens to a public way. [See exceptions; emphasis added]

As it pertains to EEROs in R-2 occupancies, Section 1030.1 directs code users to two tables: Table 1006.3.2(1), applicable to R-2 occupancies consisting of "dwelling units", and Table 1006.3.2(2), applicable to R-2 occupancies consisting of "sleeping units." See footnote "b" to Table 1006.3.2(1) and footnote "c" to Table 1006.3.2(2) of the 2015 IBC.

Further, Section 1006.3.2 of the 2015 IBC provides in part that "*a single exit or access to a single exit shall be permitted from any story or occupied roof where*" the occupant load, number of dwelling units, and common path of egress travel distance does not exceed the values in Table 1006.3.2(1) or 1006.3.2(2).

Both Tables 1006.3.2(1) and 1006.3.2(2) of the 2015 IBC permit one exit in stories of R-2 occupancies that are equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA 13 or NFPA 13R and are "*provided with emergency escape and rescue openings in accordance with Section 1030,*" where the other provisions of the respective Tables are met. See footnote "a" to both Tables.

Interpretation

Buildings with an R-2 occupancy need to provide either:

1. The number of exits per story indicated in Section 1006.3.1 and Table 1006.3.1 of the 2015 IBC, or
2. One single exit per story plus EEROs in accordance with Section 1006.3.2, Section 1030.1, Table 1006.3.2(1), and Table 1006.3.2(2) of the 2015 IBC.

Accordingly, EEROs are not required in stories of R-2 occupancies with multiple exits or access to multiple exits from a story.

EEROs are required in stories of R-2 occupancies with a single exit or access to single exits from a story, in accordance with Section 1006.3.2, Section 1030.1, Table 1006.3.2(1), and Table 1006.3.2(2) of the 2015 IBC.³

This Code Interpretation is issued pursuant to Executive Law §376(4). Pursuant to Executive Law §376(4), subsequent enforcement of the Uniform Code shall be consistent with this Code Interpretation.



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³ The International Code Council issued "IBC Interpretation 03-17" which interpreted Section 1030.1 of the 2015 IBC as not requiring EEROs in R-2 occupancies where the story has more than one exit. See https://www2.iccsafe.org/cs/committeeArea/pdf_file/BU_15_03_17.pdf.