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UNIFORM FIRE PREVENTION AND BUILDING CODE

Code Interpretation 2011 - 2

Code Effective Date: December 28, 2010 (2010 Edition)

Source Document: 19 NYCRR 1225 - *Fire Code of New York State (FCNYS)*

Question: A code enforcement official has asked the question: Does Section 903.2.10 of the 2010 *Fire Code of New York State*, entitled “**Windowless stories in all occupancies,**” apply to the specific areas and buildings identified in Sections 903.2.10.1 through 903.10.3, only if the story in which the area is located is windowless?

Interpretation: NO.

The 2010 *Fire Code of New York State (FCNYS)* is a publication incorporated by reference in 19 NYCRR Part 1225, and is a portion of the amended and updated version of the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code that took effect on December 28, 2010.

2010 FCNYS Section 903.2.10, is entitled “**Windowless stories in all occupancies**” and states:

903.2.10 Windowless stories in all occupancies. An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed in the locations set forth in Sections 903.2.10.1 through 903.2.10.1.3.

Exception: Group R-3 and Group U.

The Sections referred to in Section 903.2.10 (Sections 903.2.10.1 through 903.2.10.3) provide as follows:

903.2.10.1 Stories and basements without openings. *An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed in every story or basement of all buildings where the floor area exceeds 1,500 square feet (139.4 m²) and where there is not provided at least one of the following types of exterior wall openings:*

1. Openings below grade that lead directly to ground level by an exterior stairway complying with Section 1009 or an outside ramp complying with Section 1010. Openings shall be located in

each 50 linear feet (15 240 mm), or fraction thereof, of exterior wall in the story on at least one side.

2. Openings entirely above the adjoining ground level totaling at least 20 square feet (1.86 m²) in each 50 linear feet (15 240 mm), or fraction thereof, of exterior wall in the story on at least one side.

903.2.10.1.1 Opening dimensions and access. Openings shall have a minimum dimension of not less than 30 inches (762 mm). Such openings shall be accessible to the fire department from the exterior and shall not be obstructed in a manner that fire fighting or rescue cannot be accomplished from the exterior.

903.2.10.1.2 Openings on one side only. Where openings in a story are provided on only one side and the opposite wall of such story is more than 75 feet (22 860 mm) from such openings, the story shall be equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system or openings as specified above shall be provided on at least two sides of the story.

903.2.10.1.3 Basements. Where any portion of a basement is located more than 75 feet (22 860 mm) from openings required by Section 903.2.10.1, the basement shall be equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system.

903.2.10.2 Rubbish and linen chutes. *An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed at the top of rubbish and linen chutes and in their terminal rooms. Chutes extending through three or more floors shall have additional sprinkler heads installed within such chutes at alternate floors. Chute sprinklers shall be accessible for servicing.*

903.2.10.3 Buildings 30 feet or more in height. *An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout buildings with a floor level having an occupant load of 30 or more that is located 30 feet (16,764 mm) or more above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access.*

Exceptions:

- 1. Airport control towers.*
- 2. Open parking structures.*
- 3. Occupancies in Group F-2.*

It is clear that notwithstanding its title, Section 903.2.10 applies to more than “windowless stories.” The title of Section 903.2.10 should be “**All occupancies except Groups R-3 and U**” (The same as *Fire Code of New York State* 2007 edition Section 903.2.10).

Therefore, in all occupancies other than Group R-3 and Group U, even if a sprinkler is not required by any other applicable provision of Section 903.2:

- stories and basements without openings must be provided with automatic sprinkler systems as provided in Section 903.2.10.1;
- rubbish and linen chutes must be provided with automatic sprinklers as provided in Section 903.2.10.2; and

- buildings with a floor level having an occupant load of 30 or more and is located 30 feet (16,764 mm) or more above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access must be provided with automatic sprinklers as provided in Section 903.2.10.3.

In addition, compliance with all other applicable provisions of Section 903.2 is required.

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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