



Code Interpretation - Number 2006 - 01

Code Effective Date: January 1, 2003

Source Document: 19NYCRR 1221 Building Code of New York State (BCNYS)

Background: An existing two-story building of Type VB construction, 4,890 square feet on the first floor, is to be renovated along with the addition of 400 square feet on the second floor so that each story is the same floor area. The first floor is A-2 occupancy and the second floor is accessory office and storage. Additionally, part of the second floor will be used for A-2 occupancy. In accordance with section K301.3 of BCNYS Appendix K, the registered design professional has chosen to comply with section 3410 (Compliance Alternatives) of BCNYS in lieu of Chapters K4 through K10 of Appendix K.

Question: Does the Building Code of New York State Chapter 34, entitled "Existing Structures," section 3410.2.3, entitled "Additions," require the addition to comply with the provisions of BCNYS section 903.2.1, and require the entire building to be provided with an automatic sprinkler system?

Interpretation:

YES. BCNYS section 3410.2.3 states:

Additions to existing buildings shall comply with the requirements of this code for new construction. The combined height and area of the existing building and the new addition shall not exceed the height and area allowed by Chapter 5. Where a fire wall that complies with section 705 is provided between the addition and the existing building, the addition shall be considered a separate building.

The first sentence requires the addition to comply with all the new construction requirements of the code. The second sentence does not limit the construction requirements to height and fire area. The third sentence states that the installation of a fire wall allows the addition to be regulated as a separate building. However, in this case, the existing building and the addition will not be separated by a firewall. After construction of the addition, each story will have a floor area of 4,890 square feet, regardless of whether the floor area is divided into different fire areas.

With regard to the automatic sprinkler system, the addition is required to meet all the requirements applicable for new construction. Section 903.2.1, Group A, states:

An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout buildings and portions thereof used as Group A occupancies as provided in this section. The automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout the floor area where the Group A occupancy is located, and in all floors between the Group A occupancy and the level of exit discharge. [emphasis added]

BCNYS section 903.2.1.2, Group A-2, states:

An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided throughout a fire area containing a Group A-2 occupancy where one of the following conditions exists:

1. The fire area exceeds 5,000 square feet (465 m²).
2. The fire area has an occupant load of 100 or more.
3. The fire area is located on a floor other than the level of exit discharge. [emphasis added]

The second floor is above the level of exit discharge. Therefore, BCNYS Section 903.2.1.2 requires the entire floor area to be protected by an automatic sprinkler system. Furthermore, BCNYS section 903.2.1 provides that when automatic sprinklers are required for Group A occupancies, all floors between the level requiring sprinkler protection and the level of exit discharge shall be protected. Therefore, both the first and second floors of the building in question are required to be protected by an automatic sprinkler system.

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