

**BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE
AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC**

INTERPRETATION

Interpretation Date:	March 27, 2002	File No: 98-0033
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 1998	
Subject:	<i>Major occupancy fire separations</i>	
Keywords:	Existing <i>building</i> ; change of use; <i>major occupancy fire separation</i>	
Building Code Reference(s):	1.1.2.3.(1); A-1.1.2.3.(1); 3.1.3.1.; & 3.1.7.3.(2)	Page: 1 of 1

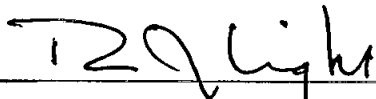
Question:

In the case of a renovation to an existing *building* (i.e. tenant improvement) where the *fire-resistance rating* is required to be increased because of a change in *occupancy*, and the adjacent *suites* are occupied, does the building code require that the increased *fire-resistance rating* be achieved based on fire exposure on both sides of the vertical *fire separation*?

Interpretation:

Not Necessarily.

In the case of applying any code requirement to an existing *building*, Appendix note A-1.1.2.3.(1) clarifies that "it is not intended that the code be used to enforce the retrospective application of new requirements to existing *buildings*,...". This application in question requires judgement on the part of the designer and *Authorities Having Jurisdiction*. For this application, it may be reasonable to upgrade the demising wall between tenants on only the side of the tenant improvement. Consideration should be given to the specific circumstances such as, safety measures including fire alarm system, sprinklers, type of construction, extent of renovation (I.E., number of *suites*, percentage of *floor area*), practicality of upgrading.



R.J. Light, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee of AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, and POABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.