

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

File No: 98-0136

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date: April 18, 2006

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 1998

Subject: basement storage garage as a separate building

Keywords: basement storage garage,
separate building

Building Code Reference(s): 3.2.1.2.(1), 9.10.4.3.(1)

Question:

1. Sentence 3.2.1.2.(1) permits a basement used primarily as a storage garage, to be considered a separate building for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.2.

Can such a basement storage garage be considered a separate building for purposes other than Subsection 3.2.2. ?

2. Sentence 9.10.4.3.(1) permits a basement used primarily as a storage garage, to be considered a separate building for the purposes of Section 9.10.

Can such a storage garage also be considered a separate building for purposes other than Section 9.10. ?

3. Can the various buildings situated on top of the basement storage garage designed to Article 3.2.1.2., be considered separate from each of the other above basement buildings, for aspects other than Subsection 3.2.2.; or in the case of Part 9 buildings, Section 9.10. ?

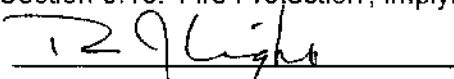
Interpretation:

1. No.

Sentence 3.2.1.2.(1) indicates that its application to consider a basement storage garage as a separate building is for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.2., therefore implying not for any other provisions of the Building Code. For example, for the purposes of Subsections 3.2.4., 3.2.5., 3.2.6. or Section 3.8., the storage garage cannot be considered a separate building. This was illustrated in BC Appeal #1219.

2. No.

For Part 9 buildings over a basement storage garage enclosed by 2h concrete/masonry fire separations, with no openings except as permitted in Sentence 3.2.1.2.(2)&(3); Sentence 9.10.4.3.(1) permits the basement storage garage to be considered a separate building for the purposes of Section 9.10. 'Fire Protection', implying not for any other requirements of the Building Code.



R. J. Light, Committee Chair

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Section 9.10. addresses fire protection aspects for Part 9 buildings, such as fire alarm, sprinklers and standpipes. This allows Part 9 buildings to be considered separate buildings for all of these fire protection aspects, but not for other requirements of the Building Code such as Subsection 9.5.2. and Section 3.8. (Provisions for Persons with Disabilities).

3. Yes.

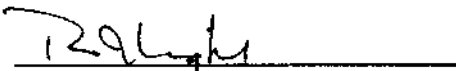
Sentences 3.2.1.2.(1) and 9.10.4.3.(1) address the basement storage garage as a separate building only for Subsection 3.2.2. and Section 9.10. purposes. However, where there are several separate buildings above the basement storage garage, these buildings can be considered separate from each of the other above basement buildings in respects other than Subsection 3.2.2. and

Section 9.10. This is consistent with, and supported by the following areas the Building Code:

Sentence 3.1.10.3.(1) indicates a firewall is permitted to terminate above a concrete slab designed to Article 3.2.1.2. (This implies Article 9.10.4.3. as well. For Part 9 buildings, Sentence 9.10.11.3.(1) for firewalls refers back to Part 3). In such a case the common basement storage garage would not override the ability of the above basement buildings to be separate from each other for aspects of the Building Code other than Subsection 3.2.2. and Section 9.10. Permitting the vertical firewall to terminate above a concrete slab designed to Articles 3.2.1.2. and 9.10.4.3. acknowledges that the 2h concrete slab can separate the buildings above the slab in the same way, consistently, that the firewall does. Sentence 2.1.7.1.(1) indicates that a firewall can be used to create separate buildings for all aspects of the Building Code except as modified in other Parts of the Code. This modification refers to electrical service entrance requirements and also to Sentences 3.2.4.2.(1) and 3.8.1.2.(1). Where a firewall is penetrated by openings as described in Sentences 3.2.4.2.(1) and 3.8.1.2.(1), Subsections 3.2.4., 9.10.17. and Section 3.8. apply to both sides of such a firewall, as if they were the same building. These are the exceptions to the separate buildings concept referred to in Sentence 2.1.7.1.(1). Similarly if there are openings in the slab designed to Articles 3.2.1.2 or 9.10.4.3., for stair or elevator cores for example, such interconnected buildings must be considered the same building for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.4. and 9.10.17. and Section 3.8.

It should be noted that for Part 9 buildings on top of a basement storage garage designed to Articles 3.2.1.2. or 9.10.4.3., without any interconnecting openings, the Part 9 buildings can be considered separate from the basement for the purposes of Subsection 9.10.17. Fire Alarm and Detection Systems. This differs from Part 3 buildings.

Therefore, consistent with the above, spatially separated buildings above a common basement storage garage designed to Articles 3.2.1.2. or 9.10.4.3. can be considered separate from each of the other above grade buildings.



R. J. Light, Committee Chair

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Article 3.2.6.3. and Appendix B-3.2.6.3.(1) contemplate separate above grade buildings connected by means of pressurized vestibules ("Measure N") at the common basement storage garage, used for smoke control. Again the common basement storage garage does not override the ability of the connected above grade buildings to be separate for purposes of the Building Code other than Subsection 3.2.2. or Section 9.10; provided the provisions of Article 3.2.6.3. and related

Appendix B-3.2.6.3.(1) are met where the above grade building cores for stairs and elevators penetrate the basement storage garage. It should be noted that where above grade stair or elevator cores or other such openings, penetrate the slab designed to Articles 3.2.1.2. or 9.10.4.3., continuity of the 2h concrete or masonry slab must be maintained by enclosing assemblies and closures consistent with the slab designed to Articles 3.2.1.2. or 9.10.4.3.

Refer to attached diagram.



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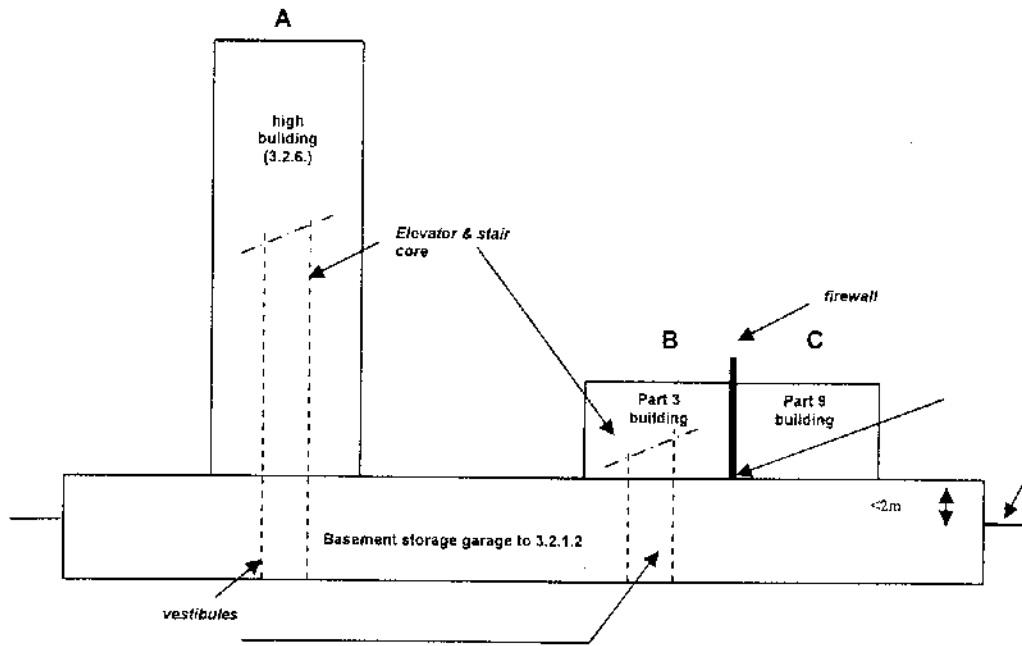
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The foregoing issues indicate that a variety of situations and combinations is possible, resulting in complexity in application of the pertinent code provisions. It may be necessary to resolve certain aspects of the separate buildings concepts by use of Building Code Equivalencies under Section 2.5.

- Basement parkade is not exempt from building A requirements such as for high building, standpipe, fire alarm & sprinklers.
- Basement parkade is not exempt from building B requirements such as for standpipe, fire alarm & sprinklers.
- Basement parkade can be considered separate from building C for fire alarm, sprinklers and standpipe requirements. However if there are interconnecting openings in the parkade slab such as for elevator and stair cores and vestibules, building C and the basement parkade will be considered as if the same building for fire alarm requirements.
- Above parkade buildings A, B and C separate from each other in all respects, except that if there are interconnecting openings in the parkade slab; fire alarm issues will consider such connected buildings to be as the same building (not separated).
- If the *firewall* shown has interconnecting openings, fire alarms provisions in buildings B and C will be continuous on both sides as if in the same building, irrespective of the *firewall*.

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