


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC

File No: 12-0079

INTERPRETATION

Page 1 of 2

Interpretation Date:	May 16, 2017
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2012
Subject:	Accessible Doors
Keywords:	Sliding Doors, Clearance Beside Doors, Adaptable Dwelling Units
Building Code Reference(s):	3.3.1.13.(10), 3.3.4.7.(1), 3.8.5.4, 3.8.5.5.(1), 9.9.6.4.(1)
Question:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is a non-powered sliding door, such as a pocket door, permitted to be used for access in an adaptable dwelling unit in a Part 3 building?2. If the answer to question 1 is yes, what clearances are required beside the latch?3. If the answer to question 1 is yes, what type of door handle should be used for the non-powered sliding doors?
Interpretation:	<p>1. Yes.</p> <p>Subsection 3.8.5 includes requirements for adaptable dwelling units. Sentence 3.8.5.4.(1) requires doorways providing access to common living areas and at least one bathroom and one bedroom to have a clear opening width of not less than 800 mm. Sentence 3.8.5.4.(2) requires the floor area on both sides of those doors to conform to Clause 3.3.1.13.(10)(b), which establishes requirements for clear and level areas at doors that are required for access by disabled persons. That Clause includes requirements for powered and non-powered swinging doors and for powered sliding doors, but does not refer to non-powered sliding doors.</p> <p>Due to floor area constraints that would limit the door swing in many dwelling units, pocket doors that slide into a wall cavity have often been installed in the doorways of bathrooms in adaptable dwelling units. Pocket doors have also been used at other locations in dwelling units.</p> <p> _____ R. J. Light, Committee Chair</p>
<p>The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing 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 <i>Authority Having Jurisdiction</i>. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.</p>	

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC

File No: 12-0079

INTERPRETATION

Page 2 of 2

Non-powered sliding doors are not directly addressed in the Building Code. For Part 3 buildings, Sentence 3.3.4.7.(1) refers to Section 9.8 for requirements for stairs, ramps, landings, handrails and guards within a dwelling unit, but there is no similar cross-reference for doors within a dwelling unit. Sentence 9.9.6.4.(1) requires doors in means of egress, except doors within dwelling units, to swing on a vertical axis. Based on this provision, sliding doors are permitted within dwelling units in Part 9 buildings, and since powered sliding doors would not normally be installed in a dwelling unit, they are assumed to be non-powered sliders. Within a dwelling unit, there would be no functional difference in the use of a door whether it is in a Part 3 building or a Part 9 building. Therefore, it is interpreted that non-powered sliding doors can be used within dwelling units in Part 3 buildings.

2. The BC Building Code does not have requirements for latch-side clearances for non-powered sliding doors. Additional reference information can be found in the CSA standard CSA-B651 "Accessible Design for the Built Environment". This CSA standard is also referenced in the National Building Code 2015 as an acceptable design standard.
3. The Building Code does not contain any specific requirements for handles of sliding doors in an adaptable dwelling unit. Clause 3.3.1.13.(10)(c), which requires accessible doors to be operable by devices that do not require tight grasping or twisting of the wrist as the only means of operation, is not referenced by the adaptable dwelling unit requirements of Subsection 3.8.5. Additional reference information can be found in CSA-B651 "Accessible Design for the Built Environment".

Subsection 3.8.5 of the BC Building Code 2012 contains requirements that are different from those of the National Building Code 2010. The Interpretation Committee contacted the BC Building and Safety Standards Branch and they have confirmed the intent of the applicable Subsection 3.8.5 requirements for this interpretation. The Interpretation Committee has recommended that the BC Building Code be revised to more clearly address these issues.


R. J. Light, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing 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.