

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0017

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	April 16, 2019
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2018
Subject:	Highrise Measures with a 3.2.1.2. Basement Storage Garage
Keywords:	High building, basement storage garage
Building Code Reference(s):	3.2.1.2., 3.2.6.

Question:

This project consists of a 40m noncombustible high building plus a 3 storey combustible Part 3 building over top of the basement storage garage that is designed as a separate building per Article 3.2.1.2.

1. Must the basement storage garage be designed as a high building per Subsection 3.2.6.?
2. Must the 3 storey Part 3 combustible building be designed as a high building per Subsection 3.2.6.?
3. Do the requirements of Article 3.2.6.3. for "Connected Buildings" apply between the basement storage garage and the 40m noncombustible high building?
4. Do the requirements of Article 3.2.6.3. for "Connected Buildings" apply between the basement storage garage and the 3 storey Part 3 combustible building?
5. Does the 3 storey Part 3 combustible building require a highrise fire alarm system c/w central alarm control facility and voice communication?

Interpretation:

1. Yes

Article 3.2.1.2. permits a basement storage garage to be treated as a separate building for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.2. and Sentences 3.2.5.12.(2) and (3). It does not permit the basement storage garage, or the buildings located above the storage garage to be treated as separate buildings for the purposes of Subsections 3.2.4. (fire alarms) or 3.2.6. (highrise measures). The basement storage garage must be designed to the highrise measures per Subsection 3.2.6.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. 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.

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2. Yes – see answer #1, which also applies to the 3 storey Part 3 combustible building.

3. No

Since the basement storage garage cannot be treated as a separate building for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.6., the basement storage garage and the 40m noncombustible high building are treated as a single building. Therefore, the requirements of Article 3.2.6.3. do not apply.

4. No

Since the basement storage garage cannot be treated as a separate building for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.6., the basement storage garage and the 3 storey Part 3 combustible building are treated as a single building. Therefore, the requirements of Article 3.2.6.3. do not apply. For the purposes of Subsection 3.2.6., the entire project is treated as a single building (any height, any area).

5. Yes

Since the basement storage garage cannot be treated as a separate building for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.4. or 3.2.6., the 3 storey Part 3 building would require a highrise fire alarm system c/w central alarm control facility and voice communication.

It should be noted that the 1992 BC Building Code included a “unique to BC” code change to Article 3.2.1.2. that permitted a basement storage garage to be treated as a separate building for the purposes of Subsections 3.2.2., 3.2.4. and 3.2.6. Many design professionals and AHJs think that this is the true intent of Article 3.2.1.2. and is more appropriate when there is a combination of high buildings and low buildings above a basement storage garage.

Many AHJs are accepting alternative solution reports to justify not treating a 3 storey Part 3 low rise building as a high building with a highrise fire alarm system.

Refer to Interpretation 18-0008 regarding Part 3 and Part 9 buildings above a 3.2.1.2. basement storage garage.



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