

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0061

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	October 20, 2020
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2018
Subject:	Separate Signal Circuits for Fire Alarm Audible Devices Within Dwelling Units
Keywords:	Separate Signal Circuits, Audible Devices, Dwelling Units
Building Code Reference(s):	3.2.4.18.(7), 3.2.4.18.(8), 3.2.4.18.(11)

Question:

Where the requirement for manual fire alarm signal silencing within a dwelling unit can be waived for devices that are on a separate signal circuit, is the term "separate signal circuit" intended to refer to a circuit that serves devices that are within a single dwelling unit?

Interpretation:

Yes.

Sentence 3.2.4.18.(7) requires that audible signal devices within a dwelling unit must include a means for them to be manually silenced for up to 10 minutes, except as permitted by Sentence 3.2.4.18.(11).

Sentence 3.2.4.18.(8) provides two options for the connection of audible signal devices within dwelling unit, to a fire alarm system. These devices can either be connected such that

- (a) a single open circuit at one device will not impair the operation of devices serving other dwelling units, or
- (b) the audible devices within a dwelling unit are on separate signal circuits that are not connected to devices in any other unit or public corridor (i.e. Class A wiring).

Sentence 3.2.4.18.(11) allows audible devices within a dwelling unit to be silenced automatically for 10 minutes, with other conditions as stated in that Sentence, where the devices within the unit are on a separate signal circuit. The BCBC does not define "separate signal circuit".



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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However, this term is also referenced in Sentence 3.2.4.18.(8) with respect to a circuit that serves devices within only one dwelling unit. This meaning is also consistent with the exception in Sentence 3.2.4.18.(7), which, in combination with Sentences (8) and (11) means that audible signal devices that are on circuits serving only one dwelling unit can be silenced automatically, while these audible devices that are on circuits also serving other units or areas must have a means for manual silencing. The conclusion is that a "separate signal circuit" means that the audible devices within a dwelling unit are on a circuit serving only that one unit.



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