


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0052

INTERPRETATION

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| Interpretation Date: | May 19, 2020 |
| Building Code Edition: | BC Building Code 2018 |
| Subject: | Activation of Smoke Dampers |
| Keywords: | Smoke Dampers, Smoke Detectors |
| Building Code Reference(s): | 3.1.8.11.(3), 3.1.8.5.(3) |
| Question: | <p>If a smoke damper activated by a smoke detector is installed in a building that does not otherwise require a fire alarm system, does the smoke detector installation mean that a fire alarm system must also be installed?</p> |
| Interpretation: | <p>No.</p> <p>Sentence 3.1.8.11.(3) requires that, with one exception, smoke dampers and combination smoke/fire dampers shall be configured to close automatically upon a signal from an adjacent smoke detector located as described in CAN/ULC-S524 "Installation of Fire Alarm Systems".</p> <p>This requirement refers only to the location of the smoke detector, and does not mandate compliance with any other fire alarm system requirements. The applicable Code requirements for fire alarm systems are in Subsection 3.2.4, which does not require installation of a fire alarm system if a smoke detector is installed due to other provisions of the Code.</p> <p>In addition, Sentence 3.1.8.5.(3) requires smoke dampers or combination smoke/fire dampers to be installed in conformance with NFPA 105 "Smoke Door Assemblies and Other Opening Protectives". NFPA 105 does not require smoke detectors used to control smoke dampers or fire/smoke dampers to be part of a fire alarm system.</p> <p>However, the Code defines a smoke detector as a type of fire detector, and a fire detector is defined as a device that "...detects a fire condition and automatically initiates an electrical</p> <p></p> <hr/> <p>Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair</p> |

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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signal to actuate an alert signal or alarm signal...". An alert or alarm signal would require a fire alarm system.

It would be onerous to install a fire alarm system because of a smoke damper, in a building where Subsection 3.2.4 does not require a fire alarm system. It is interpreted that the smoke detector referenced in Sentence 3.1.8.11.(3) is intended to function as part of the damper, and not to trigger a requirement for a fire alarm system.



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

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