


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0099

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	February 16, 2021
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2018
Subject:	Fire blocking in a lowered ceiling
Keywords:	Fire blocking, compartmentation, fire separations, concealed spaces
Building Code Reference(s):	Division B, 9.10.16.1., 3.1.9., 3.1.11.
Question:	Is fire blocking required in a drop ceiling in a single family home that does not have any fire separations?
Interpretation:	<p>Yes under certain conditions.</p> <p>Fire blocking is required to compartmentalize concealed spaces such as ceiling spaces, attics, and between wall and floor assemblies. The intent of these provisions is to limit the potential for fire to grow in spaces that are unoccupied which contain combustible material and do not have detection or sprinklers. The requirements for fire blocking in a lowered ceiling are based on the size of the compartment not on the presence of fire separations.</p> <p>The size limitations of a lowered ceiling space is prescribed in Sentences 9.10.16.1.(5) and (6) and outlined below:</p> <p>9.10.16.1.</p> <p>5) Unsprinklered concealed spaces of combustible construction created by a ceiling, roof space or unoccupied attic space shall be separated by fire blocks into compartments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) not more than 60 m in greatest dimension, andb) where such space contains exposed construction materials having a surface flame-spread rating greater than 25, not more than 300 m² in area. <p>6) No dimension of the concealed space described in Clause (5)(b) shall exceed 20 m.</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.