

# BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

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

File No: 12-0012

INTERPRETATION

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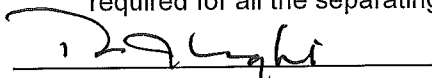
Interpretation Date:	February 18, 2014
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2012
Subject:	Shared laundry room, fire separations for single family dwelling with a secondary suite
Keywords:	Shared laundry room, secondary suite, fire separations, exceptions
Building Code Reference(s):	9.10.9.14.(1), 9.36.2.15.(1), 9.36.2.16.(1)

## Question:

1. Sentence 9.10.9.14.(1) requires that residential suites be separated from adjacent rooms and suites by 3/4h fire separations (1h for dwellings consisting of 2 or more storeys including basements).  
Does this include all walls between a shared laundry room and remainder of a building, containing a secondary suite, whether access into the shared laundry room is via the suites or via a shared egress / access corridor?
2. Secondary suites are required to comply with Part 9 except as permitted in Section 9.36. Does this mean that the exceptions or alternatives given in Sentence 9.36.2.15.(1) can be applied to the separation walls of a shared laundry room serving suites of a building containing a secondary suite?
3. Would the assembly above a shared laundry room be required to have the same fire separation requirements as indicated for the enclosing walls?

## Interpretation:

1. No.  
The Appendix B commentary A-9.36.1.2 indicates Part 9 requirements apply to the construction of a secondary suite, except as referenced under Subsection 9.36.2.  
For a building containing a secondary suite, Article 9.36.2.15 addresses the fire separation requirements for suites and Article 9.36.2.16 addresses the fire separation requirements for public corridors. The intent of these Articles is to provide for alternative methods of maintaining adequate fire separations between the suites. Often the shared laundry room can be considered an integral part of the main suite, as illustrated in the attached drawings #2 & #3. However if a shared laundry room is not considered part of a suite, such as when it is accessed only off a shared public corridor, then it must be separated from the adjacent suites and public corridor. For this latter situation, there are 3 options available for the grade of fire separation required for all the separating walls of the shared laundry room:

  
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.

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- a) 3/4h fire separation
- b) 1/2h fire separation if suites are equipped with smoke alarms in accordance with Article 9.36.2.19.
- c) Unrated fire separation if building is sprinklered.

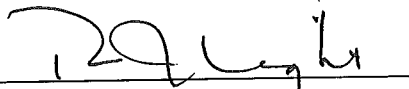
2. Yes.

Refer to the answer given to question 1.

3. Yes.

If the construction assembly over the shared laundry room forms part of a required fire separation between the shared laundry room and the suites or shared egress space for the building, such assembly must be consistent with the requirements for the vertical fire separation enclosures.

Note that effective December 19, 2014, Section 9.36 will be repealed and replaced with Section 9.37, in accordance with the Province of British Columbia Local Government Act, Ministerial Order No. M111.



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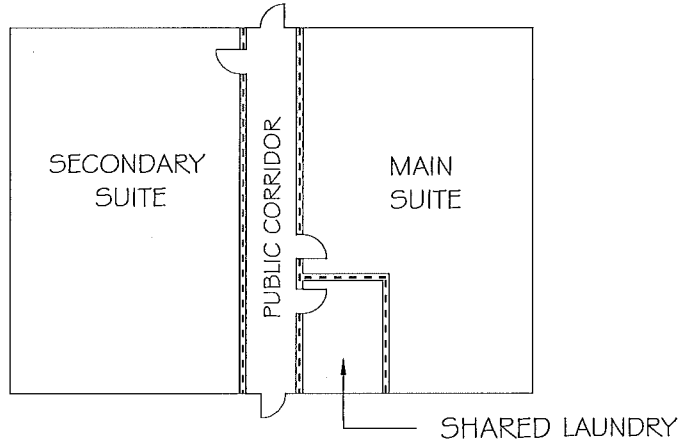
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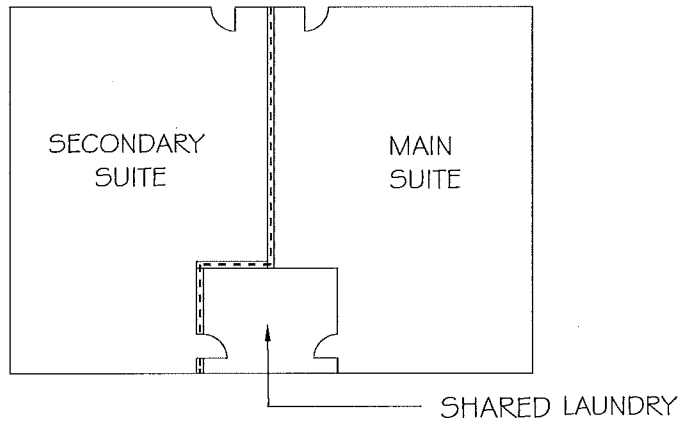
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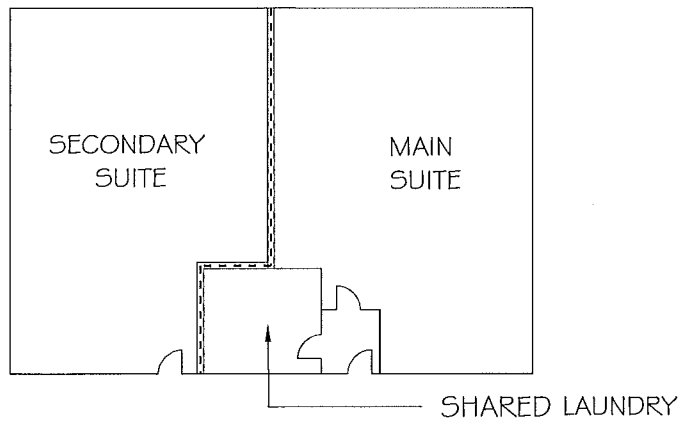
DRAWING 1



DRAWING 2



DRAWING 3



----- INDICATES REQUIRED FIRE SEPARATION

*TRAC*