

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing

AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 18-0122

INTERPRETATION

Page 1 of 1

Interpretation Date:	June 15, 2021
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2018
Subject:	Limiting Distance in an Area with a Volunteer Fire Department
Keywords:	Limiting Distance, Fire Department
Building Code Reference(s):	9.10.15.3, A-3.2.3.1.(8)

Questions:

Is the limiting distance for spatial separation purposes required to be halved for all unsprinklered buildings in areas where there is a volunteer Fire Department?

Interpretation:

No, this depends on the capability of the local Fire Department.

Sentence 9.10.15.3.(1) requires the limiting distance to be halved where:

- a) the time from receipt of notification of a fire by the fire department until the first fire department vehicle arrives at the building exceeds 10 min in 10% or more of all calls to the building, and
- b) any storey in the building is not sprinklered.

There is a similar requirement in Part 3, and Sentence 9.10.15.3.(1) refers to Note A-3.2.3.1.(8). This Note mentions that the BCBC response objective is essentially consistent with NFPA 1710, "Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments", and the Note also mentions other response objectives from NFPA 1710.

NFPA 1710 is a standard for professional Fire Departments, not volunteer Fire Departments. There is no equivalent NFPA standard for volunteer Fire Departments. However, the references to NFPA 1710 are in the Note, not in Part 3 or Part 9, and therefore they are advisory only. If a volunteer Fire Department can respond so that the first Fire Department vehicle arrives at the building within 10 minutes of receipt of notification of a fire, for at least 90% of all calls to the building, the limiting distance is not required to be halved.



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.