

# BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing  
**AIBC, EGBC and BOABC**

**File No: 12-0125**

**INTERPRETATION**

**Page 1 of 1**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Interpretation Date:        | June 19, 2018   |
| Building Code Edition:      | BC Building Code 2012   |
| Subject:                    | Tactile Warning Strips  |
| Keywords:                   | tactile warning strips, exit stairs, access for persons with disabilities |
| Building Code Reference(s): | 3.4.6.8.(11)(b), 3.8.3.11   |

### Question:

For a multi-storey building served by 2 enclosed exit stairs and having an elevator at the entrance lobby, are tactile warning strips required at the exit stairs?

### Interpretation:

Yes, with exceptions.

Sentence 3.4.6.8.(11) requires that stairs be provided with tactile warning strips conforming to Article 3.8.3.11, unless the stairs are exit stairs not normally used for access purposes.

This is further explained in the Building Access Handbook 2014, p47, indicating that "tactile warning strips are required for stairs that provide access", and that "stairs intended primarily for emergency egress do not require tactile warning systems. Situations other than those described here will inevitably occur and the question to be asked is whether or not these stairs are in such a location as to necessitate a tactile warning to persons with visual impairment."

Exit stairs are typically used only under emergency conditions, however they are often used by occupants for access even when there are elevators available, and some occupants make this choice. The stairs are also the only option when elevators are not functioning or are being serviced.



R. J. Light, 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.